



July/August Newsletter 2020

Easing of Lockdown

All of us who work on the farm and those who visit the farm as beneficiaries are delighted that the farm is beginning to return to some degree of normality, all be it a very modified form. We have been taking baby steps and some of us would prefer never to see another risk assessment. However, if we are to proceed safely for the next few weeks and months we realise, quite rightly, they are going to be part of our lives!

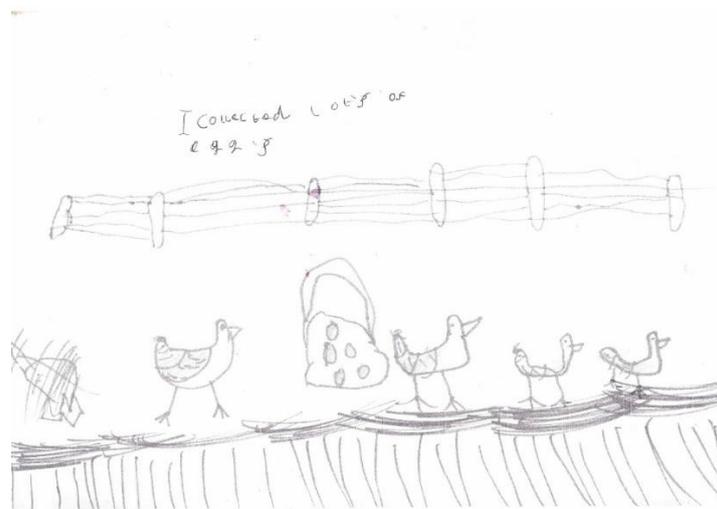
Firstly, the teenagers who come on a Tuesday and Wednesday came back as individuals and then as pairs. This went well and we then felt we could begin to have out Care Farming /Farmers' Five participants back on Mondays and Fridays, it is great to have these folk back, almost like 'old times'. The big differences are that all activities including meals and snacks take place out of doors, there is constant hand washing and attention to social distancing at all times. Our biggest challenge is that Susan's Farm is not on one site, we therefore need to move folk about from one part of the farm to another. How very fortunate we are to have our splendid minibus, masks are worn by those travelling in the minibus .

The delivery of 'meals on wheels' continues as at the time of writing an individual is only visiting the farm once a fortnight, and the keeping in contact by telephone is also continuing. This means that



Danella is very busy cooking meals for 4 days a week as well as delivering meals twice a week. We are extremely grateful to the Cumbria Community Foundation and the Prince's Countryside Fund who have enabled the farm to deliver this much appreciated service. To quote one person "I live alone and have been unable to visit family for some time now, so the communication with the farm enables me to feel part of a community and less isolated".

At the beginning of July, we felt able to restart school visits with small groups of children in their 'bubbles', Ruth our education officer having been brought back from furlough.



Alfie's drawing of hens/collecting eggs, following a socially distance visit to the farm

Growing Changes

Susan's Farm engages people in horticulture who have an offending background. Each week, we work alongside ex-offenders growing fruit and vegetables. We call the project Growing Changes. We have about an acre of land which is separate from Susan's Farm's other sites - mainly for safeguarding reasons. We aim to engage them in something positive and active, where they can see the results of their work and be part of a small group of people working towards the same goal.

We were able to keep going through lock-down, but only with two people working together at any one time. Now that restrictions are starting to lift a little, we have begun to have a few more together again.

Even with the restrictions on our numbers, we are still growing strawberries, raspberries and other soft fruit; apples, pears, damsons; a range of fresh vegetables along with chives, parsley, mint and coriander. We encourage those who come to take home what we grow. For many, cooking is a new skill.



We love to grow things, but our focus is primarily on the people rather than on the produce. Seeing people change and grow is

what excites us most.

My heartfelt thanks go to tireless support of a small group of amazing volunteers. Growing Changes is only possible because of their help and love.

News from the farm

In these extraordinary times, there is great comfort in the seasons passing by, we now have meadows full of summer flowers, the lambs are finishing well and to date we have 8 excellent

Longhorn calves with names from Sid to Summer. How fortunate we were to make excellent hay at Houghton on those 2 very hot days in June, we now have 4 fields still to cut at Armathwaite.

Farmers' Market



After a gap of 3 months, the first Farmers' Market was held in Houghton on 11th July on the village green. The next one will be on Saturday 8th August. Please support your local producers, "Eat Local, Eat Fresh".

Looking Ahead

Family sessions on the farm are being planned by Ruth, our education officer. A family or household group, 6 maximum, arrives at a pre-booked time on the farm and is given a bag of goodies with a range of activities to do whilst exploring the farm. The first visitor pays £5 and gets the bag full of activities, other members of the group each pay £3.00. This is a wonderful way to explore the farm, see the animals and the organic orchard, and spend time in parts of the farm not seen from the public and permissive paths. Bookings are being taken from Monday 20th July: see www.susansfarm.co.uk/visit-us or contact the office on 01228 548336 for more details.

Thank You

A big, big thank you to all those who have supported the farm in the last few months. Many people have given their time and skills working over lockdown and we are hugely grateful for those who have been supporting the farm by buying our produce.

If you'd like to order some meat please call the farm on 01228 548366, email orders@susansfarm.co.uk or use an order form on the website www.susansfarm.co.uk.
145 Houghton Road, Carlisle, CA3 9SP. Registered Charity Number: 1183223



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