

Frequently Asked Questions

How big is Beechenhill Farm, and how many fields are there?

Beechenhill is 92 acres (37.2 ha) in 16 fields at an altitude of around 1000 ft (300m) above sea level.

How many miles of stone walls are there on the farm?

There are 4.3 miles (7km) of stone walls.

How much are the stone walls worth?

At today's prices it would cost £140,000 for all the stone and £140,000 to build all the farm walls, a total of £280,000.

How many cows are there and how much milk do they produce?

There are 40 Friesian dairy cows, each cow produces about 20 litres a day at 2 milkings, 6-7.30am and 5-6.30pm

What time do you get up?

5.30am, then I have a cup of tea and listen to the farming programme, before going out to milk.

Do you have to milk twice everyday?

Yes

Do you even milk on Christmas day?

Yes, it gets me out of the washing up!

How much fat is in milk?

4%, whole milk is 96% fat free.

How much is a farmer paid for milk?

The 2001 conventional milk price to farmers is 16p-18p per litre. The organic milk price to farmers is 29.5p per litre.

Why do cows make milk?

Cows make milk to feed their calves, so they have to have a calf before they can produce milk.

How old are cows when they have a calf?

Cows are 2yrs 3 months when they have their first calf, then they have one every year.

What happens to the calves?

Female calves are kept on the farm eventually to join the milking herd.

Male calves are sold.

What do cows eat in winter?

From Oct to April cows live inside, they eat silage (preserved grass) and concentrated cow food. In June half the farm is mown for silage, a second cut of quarter of the farm is made in August.

How many sheep are there at Beechenhill?

There are 35 ewes on the farm; they are North Country Mules and Texels

What do sheep produce?

They each produce 1 to 3 lambs worth £30 every year and a fleece worth £2 (it costs £1 to shear a sheep). A fleece makes 3 jumpers.

Sheep don't make very much money, why keep them?

Sheep are very good for the land; they help control certain weeds, in particular, ragwort.

When is lambing?

Lambing starts in April, lambs are sold in August/September

Are all the animals on the farm females?

No, we have a ram and usually a few male calves and Shep the dog.

If you did keep a bull would he have to be organic too?

No, a single male animal could come from a conventional background, but once on the farm would be kept under organic standards.

How old is Shep?

Shep the sheep dog was born on 18th September 2000, he came to Beechenhill in January 2001.

What is the cat's name?

Scrabble, she was born in 1992