

Hensley Farming Diary For April

Turn Out

As we run an extended grazing system we like to turn the stock out as early as possible to make use of the Spring grass. Although the winter had been quite wet it was also mild, creating ideal conditions for grass growth, so by the second half of February there was plenty to eat. This year the first animals went out on the 20th. This was a group of in-calf heifers that the vet had PD'd (pregnancy diagnosed) to calve in September. The rest of the heifers were turned out in two groups, two weeks and four weeks later, as they were also PD'd positive.

On 28th February the cows enjoyed their first frisk out in the Spring sunshine! We gradually increase the number of hours they spend grazing outside and they spent their first night out to grass on 23rd March. Sadly towards the end of April the weather has deteriorated and the cows are now back inside by day and night as the fields are so wet.



Our baby calves (5-6 months old) experienced their first taste of grass on 1st March. The photo shows them running the boundaries of the field! For the first time, we have freeze-branded the calves with individual management numbers at this age (in the past this has been done at approx 15 months). We have been told we should get clearer and bigger numbers by doing them while they are still growing, we will wait and see!