

FARMING DIARY FOR JANUARY 2013

Happy New Year to all our readers!

Well, our children have got the snow they wished for!! It might not have been here for Christmas but they got a day off school on the 18th so they were happy sledging and making a snowman!!



Snow covered fields.



The cows in the collecting yard waiting their turn to go into the parlour to be milked.



Here are the calves glad to be in their warm and dry cubicles.



Bulling heifers looking out over at the snow.

Thankfully all our animals are housed at this time of year so it's easy to get food to them, although they do eat more! Like us, the animals burn extra calories in keeping warm, and the cows are eating an extra half a tonne of forage a day! Touch wood, the temperatures haven't been low enough for the water troughs in the sheds to freeze yet, so drink hasn't been a problem either.

To prevent the milking parlour from freezing, we've made roller blinds for each end of the parlour, and installed a space heater which runs for quarter of an hour each hour during the night to maintain a reasonable temperature in the parlour.



Tyres on the silage clamp - just thought this looked a pretty pattern!



A brave clover poking through.

Up until now the grass growth during the winter has been above average with the mild winter temperatures. However this cold spell will now stop the grass growing and if it remains at sub zero temperatures the grass may even disappear or get burnt by the ice/frost (turn brown). This will affect the early spring turnout. Clover is very important on an organic farm and requires the soil temperature to be 10 degrees for it to continue growing.

Here's looking forward to Spring!