

Welcome to our Autumnal October WHAg Mag

Happy Hallowe'en Folks!

Not everyone is into the *Trick or Treat* thing are they? - for some of us Grumpy Old Woman/Man Syndrome kicks in! (What's the All Hallow's Eve equivalent of *Bah Humbug!*?) However, there are certain October traditions we CAN get enthusiastic about - we've picked the last of our apple harvest (anyone for bobbing?) and we've shared our pumpkins with the hens. What could be more seasonal?

And with October's darker nights and shorter days, *Whole Health* farmer Pammy's freezer is totally 'beefed up' ready for the winter with one of her home reared, slow matured beasts. She provides a useful 'How To' guide for any cattle owners thinking of filling their freezer in likewise manner and also shares a warming Goulash recipe perfect for Halloween (or should that be Ghoulish?). Nothing goes to waste from Pammy's bullock - read on and watch the dog having a cracking good time - (*Not cheese though, Grammet!*).

Pammy explains her philosophy around rearing her own meat:

"I may appear very jolly about putting one of my own beasts in the freezer, - and I am, - but my attitude to meat was not always thus. Before I grew my own, I was the sort of cook who stood arms length from a hot pan and dropped the meat in out of a plastic wrapper, probably with a grimace of disgust on my face. What an admission!

Now, because I have loved and cared for the animals I eat, have witnessed their whole lives and often been there at their end too, my attitude is one of total gratitude. But beyond that, what I have loved most is their spirit. It's the looking-after, caring for that bullock, pig, chicken spirit so it can grow and express life to the maximum within the confines of my little farm that puts my mind at rest. I enjoy my meat now, and genuinely so, because that is my gift from them, and I gave them MY gift in their life circumstances, honouring them without crushing their spirit."

Also featured this month - Hints from a Herbalist on looking after your Winter Wellness. To complement that we have a good news story of one intelligent farmer's foray into the herbal and homeopathy world in search of sensible alternatives to boost her sheep's health instead of the too widely used reach-for-the-antibiotics strategy. Liz Morgan's mention of Stockholm Tar got us all dewy eyed, as we love the smell and it brought back memories of goo-ed-up brushes, sticky hands and ponies' feet ahhh.

Anyway, that's enough rambling from us - read on and enjoy!
The WHAg team

(P5 As always, we'd love to hear from you at secretary@wholehealthag.org with your own top tips, recipes, news and views, so do drop us a line)



It's all bullocks!

Well, actually a fat heifer but locally anything going for meat in our neck of the woods is called a bullock! We need food for ourselves and from our tiny herd, this one was ready at the right time. Our bullock: a home bred, pasture fed Red Devon, taken with love on a last short journey to the local abattoir and stored on the hook for 28 days. Watch the videos to get the full story!

FARMERS: These are the instructions given to the butcher and are relevant whether you have a half or whole (twice as much...eek!) body of beef back. It's a guide, only in case it is something you have not got round to doing for yourself. Ask for what suits your family but give the butcher some leeway, cutting is an art not a science.

THE CUTTING LIST:

Fifth quarter or offal
This may be called plucks or another local term; expect oxtail, tongue, heart, some skirt, liver (unless it is rejected from fluke damage) and kidney. Ask well before you take your beast in what the rules are about releasing offal, usually within 24 hours after kill, this meat spoils quickly. Think about the extra journey. Is it worth it for you?

Body of beef

Make an arrangement for hanging time. We usually ask for about 3 weeks, give or take a week depending how busy the butchers are.

Joints

Topside, top rump, silverside, and slow roast joints like brisket, boned and rolled about 2kg, or less.

Ribs

In twos max, boned and rolled. (Keep them on the bone if you like.)

Steaks

Fillet, sirloin and rump.

Packed in twos.

Casserole and stewing meat

Chuck, shin, braising, skirt and stew. Local names crop up too, in Cornwall they call skirt, pasty beef, it is loose grained and cooks quickly compared to shin, for example. 500g packs

Mince

All the rest of the edible meat. 500g packs

Bones and trim

This will automatically be considered waste unless you request it. The trim is excess fat and any dried edges as the carcass is quartered to hang up. We have all this back for dogs and stock but it has to be dealt with at home. Trim is cut up into dog sizes meals, bones sawn into terrier mouth sizes.

The pet/hide

You pay a levy for disposal of the hide, if you have a leather curing station nearby or want to give it a try yourself make sure your wishes are known, your curer alerted and instructions for delivery or pre delivery salting followed.



Good Luck, if you grow good quality meat you deserve to eat it too.
Pammy Riggs - Providence Farm

Recipe: Pammy's Hungarian Goulash- Devon Style

Pammy writes: Recipes are always a bit vague in our household because it does depend on what we have loads of, and what just a little. (Of course we do buy food in too.) At the moment I am working my way through the onions that were in the bed that contained lots of borage. Because we have bees, and the borage was such a big hit with them, I refrained from weeding, or in this case de-boraging, one of the onion beds. The consequence is that those onions are not storing well which means plenty of onions for the goulash. (You get the picture? - this is an adaptable feast!)

So avail yourself of a decent portion of cubed chuck type beef, (as much to feed your needs) sized beef, (as much to feed your needs) until browned. Keep an ovenproof casserole dish nearby and spoon in the browned meat. If the beef is fatty enough it won't need extra fat in the pan, but keep things oiled if necessary.

Onions and garlic next - tons! Fry this until soft, adding a teaspoon of caraway seeds, a couple of tablespoons of your favourite paprika; smoked, sweet, Hungarian, it all tastes delicious. If you have a herb garden choose what's in season. Amazingly we still have lots growing but a generous teaspoon of dried herbs also works wonders. Mix these ingredients into the onions and allow it to cook just until the smells are released. Pour all this into the casserole dish too, rinsing out every last scraping of the paprika mixture with a little water as part of the stock. Top up now with home grown tomatoes, (tinned ones do the job too), and add enough liquid to cover the meat and veg - use bone broth, a stock cube if you like a bit of salt, or perhaps a teaspoon of yeast extract, definitely a twist in black pepper.

At this point I add pickled garlic for a dash of the umami (I had an excellent year for garlic once upon a time!). A splash of balsamic would do the same, or for wine drinkers get sloshing!



Now cook this long and slow, several hours at 170 degrees C., or until the meat falls apart. Don't be afraid to cook it one day and cool it, refrigerate overnight, and reheat adding the last ingredients half an hour before eating. If it needs thickening at this stage, a little maize flour and water will do the trick.

The most authentically Hungarian version should contain sweet pepper and button mushrooms, and have a blob of sour cream to mash into plain boiled potatoes. But a fine plate of whatever is ready in the garden will not offend a true Hungarian peasant, and that is what this is, sound peasant food to sustain a hungry worker or anyone else for that matter. Serve with a good red wine or craft ale. Cheers!!



Herbs for Humans: Winter Wellness

Boosting Your Immunity



Registered Medical Herbalist Diana Lee, provides simple advice on boosting immunity as we enter the Winter season. Diana co founded the veg box scheme Hothouse Organics way back in the 1990s. Her partner Rob being the major grower on their smallholding. Diana's love of all things herbal, and belief that Nature offers healing solutions informed a gradual move towards herb growing and now she makes many of her own herbal preparations at ceridwenherbs.co.uk.

[Read more....](#)

Herbs for Sheep: Liz Morgan

A farmer's foray into herbs and homeopathy



Liz first became interested in herbal medicine around 2015, when she met some people who were using both herbal medicine and homeopathy for themselves and their livestock. She says that:

"Herbalism tends to treat the disease rather than the whole animal in the way that Homeopathy does. In that respect they differ but they have similarities too. E.g. both use plants like Calendula and Arnica for healing.

My medicine cabinet could easily double as my kitchen cupboard, for in it you will find ginger, cloves, thyme, marjoram, cinnamon and sage to name but a few. Like all the best medicine cabinets it also contains red wine and brandy, after all, I always reckon, if it is good enough for the sheep then it must also be good for the shepherd!"

Liz is not a qualified herbalist but simply a stock person and farmer who uses herbs with her animals to keep them healthy and happy.
[Read more....](#)

Trick or Treat just isn't the same now!



Before you go....do take our latest WHAg poll

Do you think that gene editing has a role in achieving a healthy farming and food system?

[Click to vote](#)

Food Provenance

knowing where food was grown, caught or raised

knowing how food was produced

knowing how food was transported

