



Whole Health Agriculture



Linking Farming, Food and Health - Wholistically!

Weaving the Web of Health

Dear WHAg Farmer

"The health of soil, plant, animal and man is one and indivisible."
— Lady Eve Balfour

This month we weave our way through the above quote and address the importance of health 'from ground to gut' with features on growing healthy crops, livestock health and people's health.

We examine the importance of soil health in an interview with Tolly, a pioneer in organic animal-free farming who talks to our chair, Lawrence Woodward, about what sustainability really means, and how soil health can be optimised without the need for animal inputs, whilst still providing healthy nutritious food year upon year.

Next organic farmer and relief milker, Pammy Riggs, chats to holistic vet Edward de Beukelaer about the Obsalim method for monitoring livestock health. Edward is at the forefront of this unique technique, and set up **Ruminant Health Ltd** with pharmacist Tony Pinkus with the mission to 'improve ruminant farming and profitability through the Obsalim technique'.

Then our WHAg Chair answers the first part of some very pertinent questions from a young GP on the important of sourcing the right meat and dairy, for the health of her patients.

And, whilst some of the WHAg team have been beavering away interviewing and answering questions, others have been enjoying the sunshine filming our exciting new farm education videos that will be offered via our *Farm Health Hub* soon. It's a serious affair this filming - as you can see when you scroll to the bottom of our mag!

We hope you enjoy this month's read, and please do forward it to others who might appreciate it too, not forgetting to remind them to [subscribe](#)....

The WHAg team

Farmer Feature - Soil Health

The Importance of Soil Health and Sustainability interview by Lawrence Woodward

Iain Tolhurst (Tolly) has farmed at **Tolhurst Organic** - located on the Hardwick Estate in south Oxfordshire - since 1976. It's one of the longest running organic vegetable farms in England and was the first to attain the 'Stockfree Organic' symbol in 2004. Tolly is a pioneer in plant-based agriculture who farms on the basis of being fully sustainable by using the fertility generated by his own land, and by using organic plant-based matter rather than importing animal-based matter.

In a recent interview, our WHAg Chairman Lawrence Woodward asked Tolly two pertinent questions relating to the concept that *the health of soil, plant, animal and man is one and indivisible*:

Q: "Why is the soil health more important than the crops that you grow?"

A: [Listen here >>>>](#)

Q: "What do you mean by appropriate nutrients?"

A: [Listen here >>>>](#)

You can find out more about animal-free farming and the sustainability of this approach by watching the video (below) which explains the concept in more depth.



Farmacy Feature - Ruminant Health

Obsalim - Putting the Farmer Back in the Driving Seat interview by Pammy Riggs



WHAg's Pammy Riggs talks to Veterinary surgeon Edward de Beukelaer about "the genius of Obsalim" and how it shows you the health of your animals in REAL TIME. Edward explains this exceptional method of disease prevention.

Obsalim is a form of observation which puts the farmer back in the "driving seat" by learning the language of the cow and how the health of the rumen is shown immediately by the ruminant.

The farmer may see indications of how rations are performing a week or even months down the line but by then it could be too late and the changes made may not have prompted the effects hoped for. By this time, the animal has already lost condition. With Obsalim, you can see what is happening in their digestive system right now - there is no need to wait.

Signs are seen not only in skin condition and cow pats, but also in how the coat lies, foot condition, the appearance of the eyes and nose, how animals ruminate, reproduce and graze. These observations enable the farmer to see in real time what is going on with their animals and what changes in nutrition or management need to be made to achieve optimum health, production and product quality.

To watch Edward's interview, click the image below:



Food & Health - Questions from a GP



Asiya, a young London GP - who we first met at the Real Food Gathering, an event organised by the British Holistic Medical Association - asked us a number of questions about the implications of good quality food on our health and wellbeing.

- Why is buying ethical and sustainable raised meat and dairy important to my health, and my patients?
- How is all of this important to the health of the person consuming milk and meat?
- What signposting can I give to patients about eating well when it comes to a) consuming, and b) purchasing meat and dairy?
- What small changes can I make in my lifestyle to ensure that I contribute/ buy ethical and sustainably raised meat and dairy?
- What are the differences on self, soil and animals of buying organic vs non-organic?

Whilst the answer to her questions are long and complex, we attempt to address these in the first part of our series.

[Read more....](#)

WHAg Caption Competition

What was our videographer finding so funny whilst on our recent filming expedition to Wales? Send your captions to secretary@wholehealthag.org and we'll announce a winner in the May WHAg Mag.



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