



## Welcome to the September WHAg Mag

Dear WHAg Farmer

This month, the WHAg team have been travelling.....and cooking up balm recipes for sore feet, (animal not human).

Our Director Karen, during a visit to her home country Norway, took time to meet up with some of the farmers and trainee advisers who we support there.

And, while Karen has been out and about, Pammy's been putting homemade balm recipes to the test as part of our 'Farmacy' programme in an attempt to help save farmers money and find an effective solution to the problem of tricky foot conditions such as digital dermatitis, CODD, 'foot rot' etc. We think Pammy's recipes would help our chapped hands too AND they make perfect Christmas presents.

With the passing of the Autumn Equinox and the Harvest Moon, we can now start to welcome changing colours, shorter days, and cooler nights. Is it time for steaming mugs of hot chocolate yet?

Until the next episode, we wish you all a happy Autumn.

*The WHAg team*

*ps If you enjoy this month's read, please forward it to others who might appreciate it too, not forgetting to remind them to **subscribe**....*



### Karen visits WHAg farmers in her home country

If you ever dreamt about visiting Norway, the Hardanger Fjord with its mountains, waterfalls and fruit trees is well worth a detour. It is located an hour's drive to the east of Bergen and is known for its high quality local produce from livestock and apple cider farms. In spite of its mild and rather wet climate, the region is popular among tourists due to its natural beauty.

I first visited sheep farmers and WHAg CHA volunteers Cecilie and Tarjei in Øystese in August 2021. They took over their sheep farm/Tarjei's family farm Bjørnebruket (the "Bear farm", Bjørne is also a man's name) in 2006 and live there with their two youngest children Timre (16) and up and coming sheep farmer Undine (4). They also have an adult daughter who has moved away from home. They are part of World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) Norway and have had several international young people staying at their farm taking part in the everyday work and life.



In Eidfjord, further into the fjord, lives Dutch sheep farmer Eric Kuijf and his wife Inge. Eric, inspired by the international HAWL course which he did in 2017, Eric took an initiative last year to arrange a WHAg course in Eidfjord. Since then we have created a Norwegian "club" of farmers and homeopaths interested in arranging an in person WHAg course in Norway once international travel gets a little bit easier (so far postponed to November 2022). Eric now serves as my "chief sheep adviser" and has already provided **useful advice about preventative protocols** to reduce the problem of internal parasites.

Cecilie and Tarjei both grew up on farms and are passionate about farming, food, health and the environment. They already have good knowledge of alternative medicine, are certified organic, and integrate homeopathy and other alternative medicine in their farm health management. Tarjei describes himself as the farmer and Cecilie as the health manager, but from my meetings with them they are both eager to manage health and to learn, and also to teach me as I am new to sheep farming. According to their website: "The more Loving you are, the more intelligent you become".

At the farm, there are 80 sheep plus offspring, most of them Norwegian white and some Old Norwegian Spelsau, a few chicken and wool pigs, and a dog. At the farm, they make their own products such as sausages, salted, dried and smoked meat. As for health management, they use Neem oil, herbs, spices and homeopathy around lambing, ear tagging, castration (pigs) and to reduce the problem of parasites.



At my first visit, most of the sheep were in the mountains where they spend two months every summer. To get to the summer grazing, they have to travel by lorry, ferry and then walk up the hill at the other side of the fjord. The farmers insist this is not stressful for the sheep, as they repeat this journey every year. The photos show the sheep on their way back.

In our discussions so far, we have come up with the main events throughout the year where preventative protocols may be useful. Just as important is to define areas where the results of learning and introducing more homeopathy and other alternatives are easily measurable, such as live births. The most urgent protocols we will introduce are preventative protocols to control pests and parasites- especially Clostridium and Haemonchus.

It is likely that there is also more to learn more about wool pigs as these are relatively new to the farm.

Importantly, some problems need to be sorted out as to whether they are in fact breeding problems and not to do with health management. One such problem is "vomiskinn"- the womb falling into the skin (like a hernia) during the last three weeks of pregnancy.

It is a privilege to be part of this joint learning opportunity; a warm thank you to Cecilie, Tarjei and their family.

Visit their website to find out more: [www.bjornebruket.no](http://www.bjornebruket.no)



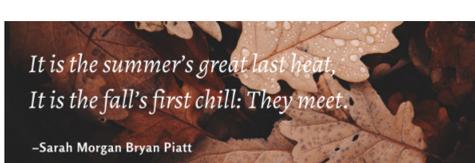
### A Sticky Solution to a Sticky Problem



At Whole Health Agriculture (WHAg), we are all about coming up with alternative solutions to everyday challenges in farming, at best by proactively preventing the problems in the first place - that is a large part of the new WHAg programme which trains up Complementary Health Advisors to help avoid repeat problems.

Digital Dermatitis, is one of those niggling ongoing challenges that accounts for about 25% of lameness in UK dairy cows. Varying species of the bacteria Treponema manifest as warts or ulcers in and around the claws. Pammy Riggs says "I've seen the evidence - uncomfortable cows and varying degrees of lameness. I know it is a tricky one for the herd manager to conquer if only because of the everyday environment. A dairy cow is inevitably marching through a soggy bacterial-laden soup daily. No chance to keep clean, that's for sure."

In our **Farmacy blog**, Pammy takes us through alternative solutions to this nagging challenge, with recipes for making your own balm. Proprietary 'natural' solutions are available, but they tend to be rather costly when upscaling to a whole herd! Do give it a go and let us know how you get on.



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