



Overbury Enterprises



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Overbury Farms is an arable and sheep farm set within the Cotswold AONB on the historic slopes of Bredon Hill on the Worcestershire/Gloucestershire border. It forms part of the Overbury Estate which has been in the same family since 1722. Covering 1,538 hectares, it surrounds the picturesque villages of Overbury and Conderton.



The Farm

The farm has a long tradition of farming to the highest standards of environmental stewardship combining the best of traditional farming with modern technology to produce quality crops and healthy animals. Overbury Farms joined LEAF in 2003, became LEAF Marque certified in 2007 and were launched as a LEAF Demonstration Farm in 2012.

Crops for food

We grow a wide range of crops including wheat, barley, oilseed rape, beans and grass. Areas of the farm are also let out to specialist growers for potatoes, onions and peas. Following Integrated Farm Management is all about attention to detail through careful management - seed varieties that have natural resistance to disease, sound crop rotations, good soil management and only using fertilisers when they are absolutely necessary and applied using precision farming techniques.



Livestock

We run a 1,200 strong sheep flock of North Country Mules and home bred Texel cross Mules. We keep them outside as long as possible, grazing on grass and stubble turnips until lambing in April. Our arable and sheep enterprises are fully integrated. The sheep play a really important part in the arable rotation acting as 'mobile fertiliser spreaders' returning valuable organic matter and fertiliser back to the soil helping improve its structure and nutrient value. This, in turn, means that our soils are more stable and better able to resist winter rainfall. All our lamb is LEAF Marque certified and is sold to Sainsbury's as well as to local markets and food outlets.

Conservation

One of our key objectives is careful management of our precious resources. We harvest rainwater from the lambing shed roof to provide water for the sheep when they are being housed. Fuel use is monitored and matched to specific field operations helping reduce our energy consumption. Protection and enhancement of the farm's wealth of environmental features is a huge part of how we farm at Overbury. Examples of our conservation work include tree planting, field margins, skylark plots and use of nectar rich areas, wild bird seed mixes and wildflower margins to encourage birds and insects. All have brought immense benefits to the overall biodiversity of the farm.

Visits

We enjoy sharing what we are doing at Overbury with other farmers and members of the public. We have started a community orchard and have very close links with the local community, hold a lambing day every year, regularly host farm visits, and we are proud to be part of LEAF Open Farm Sunday. Also, through our farm notice boards, and Farmer Jake's twitter, YouTube and blogging, our message of farming with care for the environment is being heard far and wide!



About LEAF Demonstration Farms

LEAF Demonstration Farms are commercial farms, which show the beneficial practices of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) to a broad range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM in order to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. For more information, visit www.leafuk.org.