



# October 2012 Newsletter

## Bonfire Party 3rd November

Autumn is a special time here on the farm: plenty of crops to harvest and enjoy (check out the size of some of our squash and pumpkins!); and of course that seasonal smell too: pure, wholesome, leafy woodland floor. The occasional bright day also helps. Our pigs are certainly relishing the season: we've moved them to the woods near the apple orchard, so they're now happily snuffling around together in the dropped leaves, and foraging among the roots and plants in the dappled sunshine. We're hoping that they find some truffles and make us all rich!

We have just welcomed more pigs to the farm too (see overleaf): cute Saddleback x Large Whites, and they are settling in well. It's great to have more livestock in the woods again; where they belong. It makes us so cross when we think of conventional pigs stuck in tiny pens in industrial 'farms', some not even able to turn round. It's certainly true that the only way to be sure that your pork has come from pigs with a high welfare standard is to choose organic.

We've also been rooting around in the mud this month, but probably less enthusiastically; this prolonged wet spell has meant that we're behind with a number of things, such as putting in over-wintering green manure, and, more urgently, getting our potatoes out and stored for winter. There is talk of a dry spell coming though, so fingers crossed (as always)...

### Bonfire Night

Celebrate the season in style at our free Bonfire Night party, Saturday 3rd November, 4-8pm. As well as fireworks, sparklers and a bonfire to keep you toasty, we'll have jacket spuds, hot veggie soups, coffees and cakes too. The Farm Shop will also be open for late shopping.



## Christmas Market 1st-2nd December, 10am-4pm

Everyone is also welcome at our special Christmas Market, to be held in the Veg Shed and Farm Shop, on the first weekend in December. It's the perfect place to get gift inspiration, with local crafts and hampers on display; plus treats for you too. We still have space for a few more stall holders for both days: let us know if you'd like to take a stall, by email or on Facebook. We hope to have a wide variety of homemade and handmade presents available to buy, and we'll also have teas and coffees, plus lots of festive cheer, a mince pie and a glass or two of mulled wine on offer...

## Game Boxes £25

Don't forget that we're into game season now; as well as stocking game in the Farm Shop, Game Meat Boxes are also available at the end of the month, for just £25 each! They include a generous selection of the freshest game available, from venison and rabbit to pheasant and partridge – so order a box today.

## Farm Shop Update

Following on from the Libby Chan trials, created locally by Miki Cameron, check out some of the other tried and tested eco-friendly products available. Lemon juice and vinegar are traditional natural methods for cutting through grime and grease, and can be found in the range of cleaning, dishwashing and laundry products that we stock. Forget strong smells of bleach and the need to use rubber gloves when doing the housework. We have laundry liquids with lavender and marigold extracts, or unscented, all of which do a brilliant job. Wave dishwasher gel is just as powerful as conventional versions but without the harsh chemicals (amazing for leaving glasses streak-free – Ed). We also have range of orange oil multi-surface cleaners and polishes. Packaging is re-usable and recyclable: the toilet paper and kitchen roll packs are made of plant material which break down quickly if you cut up first with scissors before placing in your compost. We don't have facilities yet for refilling; but can order bulk 5litre containers for many products. Just ask in the shop, or contact us in the office.

*The farmer: Rowie Meers*



# Spicy Roast Squash

*This recipe works well with squash or pumpkins (if you have anything left after Hallowe'en!) and the sweet richness of the squash goes so well with spicy chillies and salty bacon. Serve on its own with some garlic and sour cream dip; or as a side vegetable for a hearty dinner. You could leave out the bacon and add some extra butter and paprika for a veggie version.*

## Serves 4-6

1 squash  
1 fresh chilli, chopped & deseeded  
1 tbsp coriander seeds  
3-4 cloves garlic, crushed  
sprig fresh rosemary  
pinch paprika  
pinch garam masala  
6 rashers back bacon  
1 tbsp olive oil  
sea salt & black pepper



Cut the squash in half with a large, sharp knife and remove the seeds (you can roast these separately for a snack). Cut the squash halves into quarters, then into long thin chunks and place in a large roasting tray. Crush together all the spices, salt and pepper and sprinkle over the squash. Add the garlic, rosemary, olive oil and bacon snipped into chunks. Toss it all together well, and roast at 200C for about 30 minutes, until the squash is tender and starting to turn golden. Serve with sour cream dip.



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# Moroccan Mince & Couscous

*We had lamb tagine again the other week (squash is lovely in that too); and it reminded us how yummy North African dishes like this are: marrying sweet flavours with subtle spices and fresh meaty flavours from our own beef herd this month: gorgeous! This recipe is based on one on BBC's Good Food website: try it with spelt couscous from the shop for a real taste of sultry Marrakesh to warm up on these mizzly days. You could also have some small spicy roast squash chunks mixed into the couscous.*

## Serves 4

2 tbsp sunflower oil  
2 medium onions, diced  
400g mince  
1 tbsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
2 tsp ground turmeric  
100g unsulphured dried apricots  
600ml vegetable stock  
handful toasted cashews  
(optional)  
fresh mint



Heat the oil in a large pan, wok or tagine, add the onions and cook over a moderate heat until soft. Turn up the heat and add the mince and spices; stir and cook until browned. Snip the apricots into small chunks or quarters, and add to the pan with the stock. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, until reduced. Make up the couscous according to the packet instructions (usually add twice as much water as couscous to a pan, boil and remove from heat, leaving the lid on for a few minutes until the couscous has absorbed all the water. You could add more stock, tinned tomatoes, lemon juice or fresh mint to the couscous at this stage.) Season to taste. Serve the mince with the couscous, and sprinkle the cashews over the top if using, with a little chopped mint.



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