



November 2013 Newsletter Facing Down Winter

Well autumn was nice while it was here for a week or two; but now the weather seems to have taken a short-cut straight to winter! We had a brilliant time on 2nd November at our joint Bonfire Night and Hallowe'en party, and it was lovely to see so many of you veg box and farm shop customers there too. The vibe was amazing, helped along by the brilliant live music, and we all enjoyed rocking the night away, helped along with some hot food and a cheeky drink or two!

Now the temperature has dropped and seems to be staying there, we're closing up the polytunnels for winter to keep all the winter salads and chard that we've planted nice and cosy. We're planning on making some new doors for a few of the tunnels that need them, and cleaning out the irrigation system too, so we don't get any icy drips down the salad's necks. We've been busy harvesting veggies for winter storage such as celeriac, parsnips and beetroot; plus covering other crops still in the fields, such as brassicas, against the pesky marauding pigeons who start to get hungry about now.

Our lovely and hard-working apprentice Dangerous Dave (below) is sadly going to leave us: he's completed his two-year apprenticeship, and is planning on travelling to New Zealand over the New Year and working on some organic farms there. A huge thank you to him for all his hard work, and we wish him luck – hopefully see you again soon Dave!

Christmas Deliveries

Please note the following changes to your Christmas deliveries.

During the week commencing 16th December, veg and fruit boxes will be delivered as normal, except our Friday Cirencester round, which will be delivered a day early on Thursday 19th. These veg boxes will have a good variety of light veg for simple and quick meals. The usual monthly meat boxes



will also be delivered this week. Because we will be closed from Wednesday 25th through to the end of the following week (beginning 30th December), we will be delivering double veg and fruit boxes full of Christmas fruit and veg such as parsnips, red cabbage, Brussels sprouts, chestnuts and dates (as well as the usual staples) to weekly customers during the week beginning 23rd December, so you have produce to keep you going until we resume deliveries as normal the week beginning 6th January (please let us know if you don't want a double box). **Fortnightly customers due a delivery during the week of 30th December will not receive a box this week**, and their next delivery will be the week beginning 13th January; so please let us know if you'd like to either change your fortnightly delivery week, or order a one-off box (of any size) to keep you going over the festive period. Fortnightly customers due a delivery the week beginning 23rd will get their usual box (still with lovely Christmas veg), just a few days earlier than normal (see below); and then in a fortnight as normal.

Our usual delivery days will shift forward for the week beginning 23rd: deliveries due on Wednesday and Thursday will be delivered on Monday 23rd December; deliveries due on Friday will be delivered on Tuesday 24th.

Any special Christmas meat orders (see enclosed leaflet) will be delivered on these two days too. If you would like to order a turkey or any other Christmas meat, please fill in the attached form and post back or leave in the Farm Shop, give us a ring, or drop us an email by Friday 6th December. If you'd like to make any alterations to your veg box deliveries over the Christmas period, please let us know by Wednesday 11th December at the very latest.

The Farm Shop will be open as usual Tuesday-Sunday the week beginning 16th December; and will also be open all day on Monday 23rd, and Tuesday 24th December until midday, so you can pick up veg boxes and meat orders, and grab some last minute essentials too.

Farm Shop Goodies & Treats

If you're stuck for present ideas, try our range of ethical picnic baskets and willow hampers and then add whatever you like; the hampers are very reasonably priced from £10-£20, plus we have a new range of attractive cardboard options too. Fill your hamper with our extensive choice of locally made jams, honey, chutneys, chocolates, oils, juices, cheese, biscuits...

We have some lovely artisan willow products made locally by Linda Rees of Willow and Wire too. Linda ran her first course last week in the Purton House Kitchen which was very successful. We also have beautiful Somerset bread sauce and stuffing mixes, gravy stock, Christmas puddings, mince pies (including gluten-free), and a festive range of cheese. So stock up now!

The farmer: Rowie Meers

Hearty Smarty Winter Stew

This week you could use up a bit of everything in your box in this stew if you fancied it: this recipe, based on a Delia version, uses beef – but you could use pearl barley or green lentils instead (or as well!) to give it extra body. Serve with Delia's onion-crusted dumplings which are a bit special (stop sniggering); or usual herby dumplings with suet, self-raising flour, salt, water and herbs will work just as well.

Serves 4-6

1kg stewing beef/shin cut into chunks
50g plain flour
pinch dried mixed herbs
2 tbsp oil
200g carrots, peeled & cut into chunks
200g swede, peeled & cut into chunks
200g squash, peeled & cut into chunks
150g turnip, peeled & cut into chunks
2 onions, peeled & cut into quarters
200g celery (optional), cut into chunks
bottle dry cider,
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
salt & black pepper



Season the flour in a large bowl and add the herbs; toss the chunks of meat in the flour, then toss the chunks of veg in any remaining flour. Heat the oil in a casserole dish or large wok, and fry the beef off until brown all over. Add the veg, cider, Worcestershire sauce, water if needed to cover, and season. Bring to a gentle simmer before covering and cooking in the oven at 160C for a good three to four hours. When it's almost ready, mix suet, self raising flour, herbs and seasoning together, then add some cold water to mix well, and make 8-12 dough balls. Place the dumplings on top of the stew and cook at 200C uncovered for 25-30 minutes, until the dumplings are golden brown. For more people, serve with roast spuds and parsnips, and steamed greens.



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Christmas Market

Sat 30th Nov-Sun 1st Dec

10am-4pm Free entry 

As well as our well-stocked farm shop,
visit a great range of local producers'
stalls for fantastic treats & gift ideas!

- ✧ Free face painting ✧ Santa's grotto
- ✧ Free arts & crafts activities
- ✧ Hot soup, teas, coffees & cakes

Purton Farm Shop
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Purton
Farm Shop

