

DAIRY FOR 2013



PLOT NUMBER 1

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CONTENTS

GENERAL DAIRY

JANUARY TO DECEMBER

COMPOST - A SHORT GUIDE

HOURS WORKED ON ALLOTMENT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PLANTING WIDTHS

OUTLAY

JANUARY

It is the 5th January and my first day down on the plot for this new season of gardening. There is nothing special but to see what has to be done. I will be getting canes ready for the peas. I have made some from 4ft pieces of wood roughly 4ftx1in instead of bamboo canes this will be stronger. It has been a really cold day.

On the 7th decided to paint the cabin. One side was covered with a green moss and needs to be washed first. It's been a cold but sunny day.

The 9th I started painting. Then the drizzle came, so I decided to call it a day.

It's now the 11th and decided to make a stronger gate to replace the old one out of a bit of fencing.

On the 15th I finished the gate, and it looks a lot better than what was there. I put on new locks, bolts and hinges, not bad for a novice.

The 19th did a few small jobs also painted the gate, looks good now,

better deterrent than before.

Today is the 23rd and even with the bad weather I still went down but it was too bad to carry out any work.

FEBRUARY

2nd I did a bit of work but weather had got better of me. On the 7th went down for $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour then had to go home same as yesterday.

The 14th and 15th did general jobs and painted the doors on the cabin looks quite good.

On 16th painted the floor of the cabin. Hoping it will dry as very cold still.

17th At last a decent day managed to dig over $\frac{1}{2}$ of one of the four areas. The next three days carried on digging over.

The 21st bought main crop potatoes “red cara” blight resistant and onion sets “sturon” set them out on the bed to chit.

What is wrong with the climate its 23rd and started to snow you can't win.

24th & 25th turned over as much as I could before the weather turns again.

26th Maggie came down today to take a video of me on the plot to show to her Mum in England, not much to show yet but showed the size of plot.

27th and 28th finished off the rest of the digging.

MARCH

2nd of March and it is still cold but managed to turn over the contents of one compost bin.

3rd The same as yesterday turning out another compost bin ready for later it's looking really good. This saves a lot of money if done right.

4th 5th and 6th did general weeding and cleaning up, but the bitter cold got the better of me, so called it a day.

It's now the 13th and the first dry day for a while so made the most of the day and raked over another area of the plot.

On the 21st I spread grow more down, then went home, chilled to the bone, never known the climate so bad.

Another cold but dry day but managed to rake in fertilizer, before I called it a day.

Good Friday, not able to do much, so chited the potatoes that are still in the back bed room. What we need is some warm weather.

30th Raked over another bed, waiting to get some grow more.

31st No plot today as the bike let me down had to get son in law to sort it for me ‘bless his cotton socks’.

APRIL

1st It is Easter Monday. I'm giving the plot a miss today.

2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th planted 4 rows of potatoes (red cara) 20 rows Onion sets (sturon) then raked in grow more, four goods days of work.

7th decided to put the netting back up to the full height, hopefully this will help stop the wind.

10th Carried on with the netting it got a bit cold, so decided to go home.

19th Took the covers off the potatoes, fed with grow more, same with the onions, all looking good and growing at last.

20th I Finished fixing the netting around all fencing its now back to full height.

26th and 27th Very undecided what to do before the rain starts again, but managed to spread compost around the potatoes and onions, then a few little jobs to do before going home for a well-earned cup of tea.

30th Planted 70 (red baron) onions, a good days work.

MAY

On the 4th - 7th weeded around all paths and outside of the plot, it's now looking good.

16th Earthed up the potatoes, raked and weeded between onions, fed both with grow more. The soil was to wet to plant the carrots.

19th Planted the carrots today (autumn king). Good days working.

On the 25th did some general weeding and a general clearing up was a.

30th and 31st weeded around the front of plot. Put feed on the onions, and carrots. I wanted to plant more produce but it started to rain, so leaving for another day.

JUNE

1st - 9th Planted dwarf beans, beetroot and sweet corn. Had plenty of weeding to do as the weather has been quite good and everything is growing fast.

The next few days was bad weather so sorted out pea netting, what a palaver I think it would have been easier to build a fence!

14th -17th bad weather, gave plot a miss.

18th -21st Planted 4 rows swedes, aerated ground, laid down compost between rows, then fed all crops.

I lost a few of the crops, so re-planted peas, carrots, beetroot and also sweet corn, are hopefully going to grow this second time around.

JULY

This month has been the same as last, not very good, been watering, keeping the weeds down and hoping that the produce that I planted will start to mature.

We have had rhubarb this year for the first time, so it has been nice to have a few pies.

One of my fellow plotters has been away so watered the plot for them. Managed to cut more twine for the peas but will not be doing that next year.

Maurice contacted me said cabins had been broken into again, but it was only the lock thank goodness. Nothing stolen, son in law sorted out an extra lock for me (good lad).

Did a lot of watering, weeded thinned out the beetroot, and then checked the potatoes, looks like it could be a good crop this year.

At the end of the month the rains came with a vengeance, the rain came up to the edge of my cabin. It subsided as quickly as it came, so I cleaned out the cabin as it was too wet to do much else.

AUGUST

2nd – 5th Blustery winds, but still managed to get some work done; apparently there is flea beetle in the turnips and swedes, so having to get something to treat them. I Fed all crops with Epsom salts.

7th – 12th went down every day, very busy with the weeding. General clearing the plot, and hopefully all the produce planted will have been saved even after all the storms.

14th – 30th went down every day except for three days off; really busy so making the most of the weather, not much to report except keeping on top of general chores at this time of year.

SEPTEMBER

This month, finished off pea strings, watered the entire plot. Started to lift potatoes average 16 to a tuber, I thought that was really good. Left most of the potatoes, covered with earth, in the shed to pick up later in the year. Bagged all the stalks for the skip. At the end of this month, most of my produce has been lifted and taken home, and weighed. The empty spaces left, I have dug over ready to leave for the cold winter months.

OCTOBER

Only managed 11days working down on the plot this month, not really that much to do except make sure all is ready for digging over

later in Jan/Feb hopefully the weather will be kinder.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

This month I will be sorting out the compost bins, spraying weed killer and tidying up for the winter. There will be a few things to do at home, like layouts, what to plant for the new seasons ahead, and hopefully eat most of the foods taken back. The chutney has come in very handy as it will be nice taster for the cheeses at Christmas.

HOME COMPOSTING - A SHORT GUIDE

Making your own compost can save you money, and will help to keep moisture in the soil.

Placing the ventilated container in the sun will increase the temperature inside and will help to accelerate the breaking down of products.

Items which CAN be composted

Grass cuttings
Hedge clippings
Old plants
No cooked vegetable waste
Fallen leaves
Fruit remains
Tea bags (break up)
Coffee grounds
Cut flowers
Crushed egg shells
Newspapers (shredded)

Items which CAN NOT be used

Cooked & uncooked meats and fish
Cat and dog faeces
Plastic & metals
Any garden waste that has been treated with weed killers

MONTH	HRS WORKED	TOTAL
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JANUARY	24 ½	24 ½
FEBRUARY	60	84 ½
MARCH	40	124 ¾
APRIL	49 ½	174 ¼
MAY	37 ½	211 ¾
JUNE	91	302 ¾
JULY	102	404 ¾
AUGUST	91 ½	496 ¼
SEPTEMBER	63 ¾	561
OCTOBER	29 ½	590 ½
NOVEMBER	26 ½	616 ½
DECEMBER	20	636 ½

PLANTING (just a short guide that I use)

PRODUCT	WIDTH	DEPTH	DISTANCE
BEANS	2 x 9ins	2 inches	1 ft. between rows
BEETROOT	4ins apart	1 inch	9 ins between rows
CARROTS	Thinly	1 inch	9 ins between rows
ONIONS	4 ins apart	3 inches	Approx.11 per row
PEAS	4ins apart	2 inches	18ins between rows
POTATOES	2ft apart	6 inches	15ins apart
SWEDE	As carrots		
SWEET CORN	18ins apart	1 inch	2 seeds in each corner
TURNIP	As carrots		

OUTLAY approx. spent for 2013 was £108

Phrostrogen	4 pks Pea Netting
Sturon Onions	Cara Potatoes
Growmore	Dwarf Beans
Shears Sharpened	Turnip (golden ball)
Swede(best of all)	Sweet corn(john Innes)
Peas(meteor)	Carrots(autumn king)
Scarlet Perfection	Onion(red baron)
Bromophos	Compost Activator
Phostrogen	Knee pads
Mustard cress compost	

CHUTNEY MADE IN 2013

- 5 Courgette, Swede, Onion, Green Beans**
- 5 Courgette, Onion, Apple**
- 7 Swede, Marrow, Onion, Fruit**
- 6 Swede, Bean, Onion, Fruit**
- 6 Beetroot, Onion, Apple, Fruit**

PRODUCE	WEIGHTS
Beetroot	28 lbs
Beans (dwarf)	11 lbs
Carrots	2 lbs
Onion (red)	3 lbs
Onions (white)	15 lbs
Peas	15 lbs
Potatoes	190 lbs
Rhubarb	9 lbs

Sweet corn	Lost the lot
Turnip	4 lbs
Courgettes	Had given to me for chutney

SUMMING UP

This past year has been very trying, weather wise, also losing a lot of produce, this can be very disheartening, but come next year things will be different again, have two years are never the same the same.

HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL IN 2014