



Articles

*Phil's
Report
Brexit - a
Year to go!*

*GDPR
at
Fourayes*

*Where
it all
began*

*Fourayes
European
Crops*

*New at
Fourayes*

*Fourayes
help is
just a CLIC
away*

*Ian's
Orchard
Report*

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Fourayes meets the Beast from the East



As with much of the UK, the Beast from the East caused disruption throughout our local area.

The main impacts were on staff getting to and from the factory as well as road traffic jams affecting lorry movements. Everyone who was not involved directly in product manufacturing joined in the efforts to clear the site of snow and to get everything back to normal as fast as possible.



Phil's Report Brexit – a Year to Go!



BR **EXIT**

On 29th March 2018 it was officially just one year to go until Britain will exit the European Union.

Whilst the news media is variously filled with positive and negative assessments of the progress of the negotiations, we've been regularly assessing the potential impact on our own business and our customers' businesses.

At Fourayes we are both a Bramley apple grower and processor (of Bramley apples and a wide range of other fruit) so we'll be affected in a number of ways ranging from raw materials supply to staffing. For some time now we've been reviewing and managing change in our supply chain to ensure we remain competitive and, with the fall in the value of the £ following the Brexit vote, many of our products offer tremendous value both in terms of those exported to mainland Europe and those replacing imports from the European continent.

We employ a number of people in both the Factory and, during Harvest, in the

orchards, from mainland Europe so we've been working hard to ensure that Brexit doesn't mean we lose these hugely talented people - Fourayes isn't just a family owned and operated business it's also one big family.

Looking ahead to 29th March 2019 we've developed a range of new products for both the UK market and for mainland Europe. Our delicious strawberry puree is just one example and, already, we're seeing high levels of demand on both sides of La Manche.

Over the coming months we'll continue to work hard in order to ensure that Brexit has the minimum effect on our customers and, where possible, offers them an advantage. After all, every major change is an opportunity to look at things differently and that's something we're always keen to do.

Phil. (Managing Director of Fourayes, Vice Chairman of English Apples & Pears, Fruitician and Mad Scientist).

GDPR at Fourayes

GDPR or the General Data Protection Regulation applied from 25th May 2018.

Its purpose is to expand the rights of individuals to control how their personal information is collected and used; placing new levels of accountability on organisations for the gathering, storage and use of personal data.

Despite a brief flurry of rumours that GDPR might cease to apply once Britain leaves the European Union, that simply isn't the case: GDPR is here to stay and we've been preparing for its arrival for a while now.

And as we're on the subject, if you would like to opt out from receiving your copy of Fruit Focus please tell us by emailing: GDPR@fourayes.com

If you'd prefer to keep receiving news from us could we ask you to let us know by emailing 'yes' to the same address – that way you'll never miss out on the latest news and innovations from Fourayes.

Where it all began. (The original Bramley apple tree)

Who would have thought that the whole Bramley apple industry, and all those wonderfully delicious Bramley apple pies, pastries and the like, started with just one tree – and that it still exists today. In 1809, Mary Ann Brailsford, a young girl, planted some pips in the garden of a cottage in Southwell, Nottinghamshire. Incredibly the pips grew into a strange fruit-bearing tree.

In 1846 the cottage, together with its unusual tree, was sold to the local butcher – a man called Matthew Bramley

Fast forward ten years to 1856 when nurseryman Henry Merryweather, passing the cottage, noticed the apples growing on Matthew Bramley's tree and

asked if he could take cuttings and then sell the fruit.

Mathew Bramley agreed, provided that the apples would bear his name. That decision spawned the whole of the Bramley story.

Every single tree that exists today was grown from grafts that can be traced back to the original tree. What other fruit can make that claim?

Even more surprising is the fact that the Bramley apple tree hasn't been 'improved' over the 209 years of its existence – it really is that good.

Sadly the original Bramley apple tree is now suffering from a terminal infestation of Honey Fungus. Nottingham Trent

University is undertaking work to extend the life of the tree for as long as possible; as well as securing the future of its DNA.

We contacted Nottingham Trent University to offer any help we can (after all we've been growing great-tasting English Bramley apples for almost 60 years) and took the opportunity of a visit to undertake our own pilgrimage to the tree.



European Crops

Whilst Fourayes is well known for Bramley Apples, other fruits are also a huge part of the business.

Red fruits are continuing to grow in popularity as evidenced by the types of fruit farmers are planting. Strawberry still remains the largest 'red fruit' on worldwide terms but this is now closely followed by Blueberries with Raspberry coming in third.

The majority of red fruits are mainly grown for the fresh market, the exceptions being Blackcurrant and Redcurrant both of which complement the larger deciduous fruits such as Apples and Pears and often are used in fruit juices.

The days of 'cheap' red fruits are over with Europe's main grower – Poland – moving more and more to the fresh market. Even 5 years back the infrastructure in Poland did not lend itself to transporting fresh fruit to other than the local town but now with EU investment the cold storage and transport facilities have changed the landscape.

Strawberry is the first red fruit, with Morocco and Spain leading the way. The early season was wet and cold and processors do not have time to catch up the amounts lost in this period. This means prices are 15 – 20% higher than last year. The UK crop follows with serious volumes starting early June.

Rhubarb is the first Polish crop and in 2017 prices were very high and should ease back slightly. Currently all crops in Poland look good but picking costs

are escalating where manual labour is necessary.

In general farmers are now much more commercial than 10 years ago especially in low cost countries. Planting of trees that take 4 years to give the first crop (i.e. Cherry) are frowned upon – why not grow Strawberries which grow in 1 year?

All seasons are different and 2018 will hopefully be a year of fair prices with the realisation that too-cheap fruit only leads to farmers grubbing up trees/bushes with sadly obvious long term consequences.



The Apprentice – You're Hired!

Last year Ellie was promoted to NPD Assistant following completion of her apprenticeship here at Fourayes. And what a great apprentice Ellie turned out to be. In fact, it's because Ellie's training worked out so well that we're currently

about to take on another apprentice. Ellie's set the bar high but we're certain that we'll be taking on another winner!



We're Counting on Sabina!

Sabina was born in Kathmandu, Nepal and came to the UK when she was just twelve years of age. Sabina joined us here at Fourayes earlier this year as an Accounts Assistant and has proven to be a valuable asset to the business – turning her hand to everything she's been asked

to do and more with huge enthusiasm and a winning smile! When not working at Fourayes, Sabina spends her time as a dancer, learning to cook new dishes and travelling. Sabina also loves photography and, of course, the great products we make at Fourayes.



Help is Just a CLIC Away

CLIC Sargent is the cancer charity for youngsters. We're supporting this amazing charity in memory of Ben who, sadly, lost his battle with cancer at the age of just 9 years. CLIC Sargent was there for Ben and his family from the moment of his diagnosis; providing the care and support that helped to reduce the fear and uncertainty. We're raising funds for this incredible charity but if you would also like to help then please make your donation or offer your support direct at

www.clicsargent.org.uk
or please contact Elizabeth at
E.Maclaren@fourayes.com





Orchard Report

Spring 2018 from Ian



Hello & Welcome

At the time of writing we are emerging from a very wet and cold spring: we had 42mm of rain over the Easter weekend alone. The orchards are a sea of mud making spraying and fertilising operations very difficult. Four-wheel-drive has been very useful!

The winter was also very cold and wet but, to add to that, we had two helping's of snow. Our snow plough was very busy keeping the roads open for our factory, and the local residents, with snow drifts between 5 to 7 feet deep in places. Twice we lost control of the road and had two lorries stuck; which had to be pulled out, together with 20 or so cars, before we could clear the drift with a tele-handler brought in by the local farmer Eddie Kingsford. We had our newest tractor spreading salt, with the help of Phil Acock and factory staff spreading grit by hand. At times it was so cold (between -6 and -11 degrees) that the road salt would not work.

During the winter we grubbed the second half of our Gala orchard and the trees have been ordered for the winter of 2019/2020 - more Bramley apple trees.

We are expanding our pheromone spoiler experiment this coming season into two more orchards, as last season it seemed quite successful in combatting the Codling moths. Although the winter was very wet we appear to be only very slightly behind with our pruning.

Our second oldest tractor, which is 52 years old, has had to have an engine rebuild, the only major repair it has ever had. Barry, the mechanic, has said it may last for another 52 years! Our 3 modern tractors are going to last half of that time.

Our rabbit population is making a small comeback with numbers increasing for the first time in three years. The Chinese Viral Hemorrhagic Disease (VHD) was taking its toll: it was common to find dead rabbits with no visible cause of death - a trade mark of VHD. The field fares were here in larger numbers during the winter and our buzzards are much in evidence as are the pheasants.

All the best from Ian Witherden and all at Fourayes Farm.



The Rainfall at Fourayes

