



**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

Dear Customer,

It is so refreshing to not have to complain about the weather. Here in the Dales we have had quite the perfect summer. T shirts weather for months on end but not too hot and humid to excite the fly population which drive the sheep mad.

We have sweetcorn in the bags this week – a real favourite with badgers. I hope that they enjoy their summer of sweetcorn and that it isn't their last.

I hate Countryfile and the way they create a false picture of farming. They don't show the reality of factory farms crammed with animals, knee-deep in muck, which is how most spend their short lives. They don't show any of the brutality – the calves ripped from their mothers at birth, the hens being crammed into plastic crates and stacked onto pallets to be transported to be gassed. They don't show the misery, the terror, the fear. It's presented as a showcase for British farming. It's also presented as a showcase for British tourism selecting the most pristine and beautiful scenery. It is a bucolic bliss where all is well. But it really isn't well and this 'green wash' and 'animal welfare wash' ensure that nothing changes, that it just gets worse. I don't usually watch it as it upsets me too much. At least this week they did tackle the State of Nature report published this week depicting the continuing degradation of our wilderness and our wildlife. Since the 1990's we have lost another 10%, globally, of our wild spaces. Modern man has been on the planet for over 100,000 years and has destroyed a tenth of its wilderness in just 20 years. Only 20 per cent of the world's land area now remains as wilderness – landscapes free from human disturbance. These are ecosystems that have evolved since life began on our planet – once gone, they are gone forever.

Our own wildlife continues to decline - hedgehogs, voles and turtle doves, just a few familiar species close to extinction. One farmer blamed predators – sparrow hawks, badgers. He didn't blame farmers and pesticides, the destruction of their habitats, them being mashed up by giant combine harvesters, or urbanisation, being squashed on the roads as they try to eek out an existence on grass verges, or being hunted, or being culled. They are cornered – they have nowhere to hide – no way to exist. Britain is one of those at the top of the list for depletion of species. Online I flicked through the old Flower Fairies books. Do you remember them ? I recognised the fairy images from childhood, I also remembered the flowers, ones we never see now. If our rich and orderly country can't even act to protect what's left of our own species, then what hope for the rest of the world.

So in conclusion, where the 'wash' makes us feel like things are getting better they are just getting worse.

I wonder what the grand plan is here. Is it that we just have a good time now and when it's all over then so be it ? How bad does it have to get ? Across the globe we are divided. There are those who care and act responsibly, knowing that their decisions have a wider impact. There are those who feel they can't afford to act responsibly. There are those who feel that whatever they do it irrelevant, and there are those who simply don't care. In each country there should be a Ministry of Responsibility for Saving Nature and the Planet and they should be putting their heads together and taking the tough decisions and imposing them. How can this be left to the individual, or to DEFRA, and global corporations who run rampant across the world. We need global governance. Of course by buying and eating organic, we are doing something. The sweetcorn in this week's bags has been grown Soble family on their farm near Carey in Herefordshire. Their 45 acres of land, on which they grow salad crops, aubergine, peppers and tomatoes, slopes gently down to the river Wye.

Here's a tasty courgette loaf you could try this week:

#### **Courgette Loaf**

250g courgettes  
125ml sunflower oil, plus extra for greasing  
¼ tsp vanilla extract, optional  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1kg loaf tin

2 Hen Nation eggs  
250g caster sugar  
375g self-raising flour  
60g walnut pieces, coarsely chopped

*Coarsely grate the courgettes, put them in a sieve and leave for about 30 minutes to drain. Beat the eggs until light and foamy. Add the sunflower oil, sugar, vanilla extract (if using) and courgettes and mix lightly until combined. Sift the flour and cinnamon into a large bowl. Make a well in the middle, pour in the courgette mixture and stir to mix thoroughly. Stir in the chopped walnuts. Pour the mixture into the greased loaf tin and bake in a preheated oven at 180C/160C fan/gas 4 for about 50 minutes until firm. Turn out and cool.*

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE A NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER 01748 850700**