



Monday 31st December 2012

Dear Customer,

Good riddance 2012, hello 2013. My 2012 was neither good nor bad – nothing of note – nothing great, nothing terrible. Not having a holiday was probably my biggest disappointment – we need them for a recharge and a rethink. My greatest success..... well I don't know if there was one. We won the RSPCA Good Business Award for Izzy Lane and the Compassion in World Farming Good Egg and the Good Dairy Awards for Good Food Nation. That was good, but for some reason it didn't feel it. I seem to have spent a lot of the year bumbling along with Myfa belting about in a rose-tinted wash enjoying the magnificence of the Dales landscapes . Where it has been terrible is in the fields of England. The farmers have had a lousy year. I have potato anxiety, they are running out, too many rotted in the sodden fields. Lets make the most of them while we've still got them:

Mediterranean Potato Bake

800g potatoes, thickly sliced

500g mixed Mediterranean vegetables eg peppers, aubergines, tomatoes, courgettes, roughly chopped

50g pine nuts

1 tbsp oil

2 tbsp pesto

Preheat the oven to 200C / Gas 6. Place the potatoes, vegetables and pine nuts in a large roasting tin, add the oil and season. Bake for 20 minutes until tender. Stir in the pesto and cook for a further 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

Easy Bombay Potato Curry

500g potatoes, in large cubes

1 large onion, sliced

400g tin chopped tomatoes

1 tbsp oil

1 tbsp medium curry powder

2 tbsp mango chutney

Place the potatoes in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15-20 minutes until tender. Drain. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion for 3 minutes. Add the curry powder and fry for a further 2 minutes. Stir in the chopped tomatoes, mango chutney and potatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Coming back to last week and that migraine, the 5-dayer which spread the breadth of the Christmas break. I now know exactly what it was. Something had been stirring, I was going into labour. The other day, and still aching, at about midnight I went out and walked down my road. Dark clouds were tearing past the full moon, it was windy and dramatic. "Hello mum, Hello dad" - that's where they live now – on the full moon. I came back indoors and went to bed. Then for 5 hours I was in labour, I tossed and turned and slowly started giving birth to a new business idea. It was a big, fat baby, perfectly formed. I put the light on at 4am and with pen and paper, mapped the whole thing out, drew the website.

For several years I have wanted to come up with an idea for an unethical business. Something quick, something easy that didn't involve lorries or thousands of animals and heartache. I'd started to worry that my brain just wasn't up to it anymore – coming up with ideas that is. I always use to be so impressed with my brain as a piece of kit. I'd give it a problem then sit back in front of Eastenders with a cup of tea and a packet of ginger-nuts and eventually the solution would pop out - be it that evening, a day later, a week later, and with no effort whatsoever on my part. I always remember my dad telling me to read exam papers thoroughly before putting pen to paper so that while I was answering question number one, brain would be sifting, sorting, analysing - basically answering the rest.

However, I have been making the following request of it for several years and until last week it had not really delivered even a tentative suggestion. Criteria – I need a business idea which is: a) unethical b) extremely profitable c) online onlyand requires : a) no real investment b) few staff c) very little effort. Well I have waited and waited. Then eureka ! Something obviously stirred it out of reclusion.

It might be a miserable idea but I don't think so – it's of the moment and of the future. I can't tell you what it is now but you will be the first to know when it launches in mmm 3 months time. And for you of course, my dear farmarounds, it will be free.

Well my New Year's resolution is to stop being a moron and reduce the number of hours spent in front of the TV. When one starts feeling at a loss when X Factor and Strictly end – one knows one has gone too far. Time flies !

As of a couple of weeks ago my brother has taken well-earned, early retirement. I have called him a few times. This is how the last one went:

“ Hi Greg, how are you ? “

“ok”

“What have you been up to ?”

“Nothing”

“Have you been out anywhere ?”

“Just to get the papers”

“Did you walk ?”

“No”

“Have you got any plans ?”

“Not at the moment”

All of us at Farmaround wish you a very Happy New Year,

Isobel