

In my last article I mentioned that I would be judging at the Melplash Show at Bridport in Dorset. The day before the show I drove down to the venue through torrential rain.

Fortunately, during that afternoon the rain ceased and with a drying wind and warm sunshine the showground was in perfect condition by the following day when the show opened to the public.

My principle job on this occasion was to do the egg judging, which I did with my colleague Roger Farmer.

Judging eggs is quite a departure from fruit, flowers and veg, but it is something that I enjoy doing.



This cracking matched set of hen's eggs we gave best in show. And the exhibitor was a young man from Bridport of just 10 years old and he only has two chickens. This dish was laid by the same hen. It's actually the best way to do it to ensure uniformity.



And this egg won best internal condition. When judging eggs I leave notes on the table to inform the public what the judge is looking for. 'Not many people know you know'.

Ten days later saw me judging the novice classes and stewarding at Dorset County Show.



This has been a favourite event of mine for many years. It's always a quality event with a strong agricultural feel and well worth putting in your diary for next year. The show is held on the first weekend of September.

Two of the vegetable judges Paul Yeoman and Roy Tudor apply their extensive knowledge to ascertain the prize winners.

The expert flower judge ably assisted by the stewards tackle a prickly class.

Every care is taken to ensure that each competitor is judged fairly. They obviously know quality, that's my beans 'Stenner' variety in the foreground.



I was also very pleased to win with my exhibition onions. This well matched trio came from seed originally reselected by Ivor Mace. They may not have been the largest onions on the table but the condition and uniformity proved hard to beat.



I always knew they could do it. My dish of 'Jermore' beat 23 other exhibits in this class.

I am afraid that judging and showing takes up a lot of my time at this stage of the year. Sometimes the garden jobs lag a little behind.

One of those jobs was making a last sowing of overwintering carrots. They will probably do ok as this year they will be grown in the kinder

environment of the poly tunnel.

The Autumn harvest is in full swing.

Cox's Orange Pippin. By late September I shall be picking all the best apples for storage. Each one is wrapped in newspaper and laid out on trays in my apple rack in the garage.



At last the leeks are virtually free of thrips. This lot will keep us and several others well supplied until next May.

'Cornell' cauliflower. These took an unprecedented 19 plus weeks to head up. That is quite strange for a summer cauli, they normally take around 14 weeks. I think they may have been slowed down by the disease 'club root'. I am pretty sure I forgot to give the planting holes a good dusting of Dolomite lime.



'Butternut'. In my opinion the only squash worth growing. These will store for months if kept somewhere dry.



This is a disaster that no fruit grower likes to see. This is 'Fire Blight' which has infected my 'Conference' pear tree. Unfortunately this disease is endemic in Hampshire where I live.

There is nothing one can do. It meant cutting the tree down and burning it. The stump will be grubbed out and also destroyed.

On a more productive



note, I am now sowing 'Greensleeves' cabbage to provide some spring greens next year.

At the end of the month the runner beans for seed should be ready for harvest. I leave them on the vine until they are dry and crisp. This year I notice quite a few of them have nine and ten beans per pod. 'The more beans, the longer the pod'.

There are still shows to judge and enter, so it's all go at the moment.

I will be back later in the month. John Trim