

## **Supplier Interview**

Chris Barnes, director at the George and Dragon, recently had a chat with one of our valued suppliers, Brian Lowe of Lowe's Farm.

Chris: How long has Lowe's Farm been around?

Brian: It was established in 1959 when my parents bought Shanty Farm. We have a mixed farm specialising in cereals, beef cattle, vegetables and potatoes.

Chris: How long have you worked here?

Brian: I was born a year after my family bought the farm so me and my brother Graham have been working here forever!

Chris: Obviously you supply to the trade like us, but you also have a farm shop.

Brian: Yes, all the vegetables we sell in the shop are grown here except our salad veg. Our tomatoes are sourced from Frank Rudd in Knutsford and our salads from nearby Shakerly Mere. We sell everything from everyday groceries like cornflakes and teabags as well as more unusual ranges of goods such as specialist flour.

Chris: I hear expansion plans are afoot.

Brian: That's right, plans to expand the shop are in full swing with a planned opening date of the end of October. We'll also be stocking a great range of Christmas goods.

Chris: The recent summer hasn't been very consistent, is that problematic for you?

Brian: Our biggest challenge is weather affecting our crops. But supply and demand also poses difficulties because the big supermarkets strike deals to undercut the smaller operators.

Chris: Certainly, the milk issue is very topical at the moment.

Brian: Don't forget the horsemeat scandal and Tesco's book-keeping fiasco. I've noticed customers returning to the small operators who they feel they can trust for quality and service.