**LI: We are learning to take notes from a longer text to create our own summary.**

**The Farming Year**

There is no telling when the farming year starts because it never really stops. There is always the temptation to think that soon there will be a break or that there’s a quiet time ahead. But it never arrives – instead the next job appears over the horizon.

**Autumn**

Most farmers reckon the year begins just as late summer turns to autumn. Cereals have been harvested and stubbles are ready for ploughing. Some farmers will sow winter cereals for harvesting in the spring – the weather and the condition of the soil will dictate how late in the year they can do this.

Animals, too, sense the approach of winter as the grass becomes less lush and daylight hours shorten. With the exception of root crops, which are still growing, farmers will have an idea of how much home-grown fodder they have for their animals over the winter.

**Winter**

As winter draws on and grass dies out the livestock have to be fed. Often large livestock such as cattle are brought in to strawed yards or sheds over winter to stop the fields being trampled in the worst weather.

**Spring**

The welcome change from winter to spring brings warmth, new born lambs, calves and chicks. Fertilizer is applied to the fields, fields are ploughed and spring vegetables and late cereals are sown. As the days lengthen, grass starts to grow once again which means that livestock can be turned out of the yards and return to pasture. All this, and the lambing season still isn’t finished – this can last up to 5-6 weeks.

**Summer**

Make hay while the sun shines! Ideally there’ll be enough sun and dry weather to cut grass, let it dry and bale it into hay. In poor summers when it rains a lot, much time is spent waiting for grass to be dry enough to bale. Animals need watching in hot weather, when parasites can be a problem. A good example of this is sheep which are sheared and dipped during summer to kill any pests in their wool. Farmers will begin checking and servicing their machinery ready for cereal harvesting – the finest fields of wheat are useless if you cannot cut them because your combine harvester is broken. In the late summer crops are harvested and the harvest either sold or stored for feeding livestock through the winter. The fields are ploughed and the year begins again.