



Clever technology that makes all the difference...

2020 JAGUAR 990

There's a good reason why forager manufacturers view the north west of England as a proving ground for their machines. The region's climate is about as good as it gets for growing grass, producing waist-high rows of chewy, damp crop that will test any chopper's mettle.

The combination of these heavy crops and some pretty tricky weather patterns means big kit is required to cover the acres. No surprise then that the area's contractors run some of the highest output grass equipment available.

Cumbrian contractor Graham Prudham is no exception. Up until last year he was running a 2018 JAGUAR 980 which was replaced by a new generation 990 for the start of this year's grass harvest.

"No matter the season, we always seem to be pushed by the weather. With 10,000-12,000 acres of grass to clear each year we can't afford to get backed into a corner by the elements," says Mr Prudham.

"We know the only way to get through it is to have high capacity kit that'll handle what gets thrown at us. When we learnt about the changes that had been made to these latest Jaguars we were keen to get our name down for one of the biggest to ease things up when the pressure builds."

How has the JAGUAR 990 performed?

"Although it's only about 40hp more powerful than the old 980, the new chopper feels much more pokey. The new engine has got a whole heap more torque making it much better able to hang on in there in the heavy patches.



“Despite having more capacity, I’m filling the 990 up less often. It’s down to a combination of factors – the new engine, improved crop feed and the Dynamic Power function.”

Ben Taylor

“Although we need all the power we can get, it’s also about getting the crop in the front of the machine. The new grass pick-up has made a huge difference on that front – you can push it that much harder and it doesn’t give up. That’s meant we’re now able to use the forager to its full potential, running at 95% engine loading compared to an average of 80% with the 980.”

While this all adds up to extra field clearance capacity, what’s almost more impressive is the fact that the JAGUAR 990 is processing more tonnes of crop but using less fuel.

“We can see from telematics that as an average through the season we’ve been using about 0.1-litres less diesel per tonne of crop harvested,” says Mr Prudham.

“Although that might not sound like a lot, when you add up the tonnages we clear in a season it tots up to thousands of pounds saved.”

OPERATOR BEN TAYLOR SEES IT FIRST HAND FROM THE SEAT.

“Despite having more capacity, I’m filling the 990 up less often. It’s down to a combination of factors – the new engine, improved crop feed and the Dynamic Power function.

“By being able to de-rate the engine’s power output when it’s not needed, it has a huge impact on how much diesel I get through. In heavy 12t/acre crops of grass I’ll generally be using 2-litres/acre. If I turn Dynamic Power off my fuel consumption doubles – it’s that sort of clever technology that makes the difference.”

There are a number of key developments that have lead to an improvement in crop flow through the machine, particularly at the front end.

“Hydraulic feed roller tensioning has made a huge difference in keeping the drum fed. It means there’s a much more consistent, denser mat of crop hitting the blades. With more pressure, the rollers have much more control and with more options to adjust both speed and pressure I am much better able to get a reliable chop whether it’s 6-7mm for the AD plants or 18mm for beef cattle.

“The other big factor in getting chop consistency is the variable speed header drive. By being able to match the flow of crop coming up off the ground to forward speed, it irons out the lumps big uneven rows, doing away with that surging effect that you get used to as a forager driver – it’s so much smoother and quieter as a result.”

ASIDE FROM BEING A LESS NOISY PLACE TO SPEND A LONG WORKING DAY, THE NEW JAGUAR’S COCKPIT IS PACKED WITH OTHER FATIGUE-EASING FUNCTIONS TO MAKE THE OPERATOR’S LIFE SIMPLER.

“The combination of the new joystick and the CEBIS touchscreen makes it so much easier to set the machine up – I find I’m now making far more changes to the machine settings to keep it running at full output right through the day.

“That’s helped by the Auto Fill trailer loading system and the Cam Pilot auto steering. With the 990 capable of loading trailers in under 45 seconds there’s a lot of potential for error – that’s avoided by letting the spout do the work itself, just topping off each load manually.

“With camera-guided row following it takes the torment out of the job for me. I can concentrate more on tweaking settings and on what the trailers are doing. At the end of a 14-hour day I come off the chopper feeling that much less tired.”

Ben Taylor and Graham Prudham



Why CLAAS?

"The back-up we get from RICKERBY is unbeatable – if we have something nasty go through the forager I know we'll be back up and running within the day," says Graham Prudham.

"They've got a team of guys who all know choppers inside-out and enough parts on the shelf to sort pretty much any issue. If it comes to the worst, I know they'll have a replacement machine out to us in a matter of hours. It's that sort of peace of mind you need when you've got serious acres to cover.

"Ultimately our difficult weather conditions and heavy crops mean we've got to have the highest output machine available. Right now I'm not convinced there's anything else out there that will match the Jaguar 990.

"If the weather looks set to turn against us, I know we can go out after 7pm, pick-up over 100 acres of grass and still be back in the yard at a sensible time. That way we're never chasing our tails and can get caught up the moment the weather allows."

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