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John Bennett

Future proofed

The arrival of two new CLAAS tractors on John Bennett’s farm has set him in good stead for his own work, and given him options for future planning.

Even though John Bennett’s family have bought machinery from MORRIS CORFIELD for many years, CLAAS tractors have not featured on the Bennetts farm at Stoke-on-Tern in Shropshire until the arrival of a 184hp ARION 650 in 2015. Next to arrive was a SCORPION 7035 and then in March last year the ARION was joined by a smaller 145hp ARION 530 CIS+, before itself being replaced last August by a 205hp AXION 800 CIS.

“The main reason for the new tractors is that I took on two good lads last year, which has reduced the workload on the cattle, but during the summer when the cows are out this gives the opportunity to also do some local contract work. The tractors definitely have to earn their keep,” explains John.

Farming a total of 200ha, the main enterprise is a 230-cow Friesian/Holstein dairy herd. All the followers are kept on farm with calves taken through to finishing, meaning that in all there are about 550 cattle to feed and look after. To meet some of this requirement, 52ha of cereals and 34ha of maize are also grown.

THE HANDY ARION 530

“The ARION 530 is a great, handy ‘all round’ tractor which is not too large, so handy around the buildings, but is light and has plenty of power for field work. It’s already done over 1,300 hours and helped take the pressure off an older tractor. During the winter it’s on the feed wagon, but it’s equally at home with our 5-furrow plough or for jobs like raking and trailer work.

“The ARION 640 was a great tractor and never let me down. Given the option I would have kept it, as it had plenty of life left in it. However, one of its main jobs was to drive a QUADRANT 3200, but it was at its limit and did struggle at times. I did consider going up to the ARION 660, but the difference in the deal that Norman (Duppa) put forward between that and the AXION 800, it made sense to go for the AXION.

THE SIZE OF THE AXION 800 MAKES SENSE

“Physically the AXION is bigger and its extra height means you now can see over the top of the QUADRANT which you couldn’t with the ARION. It also gives me plenty of options for the future and I have already bought a 3.0m LEMKEN combination drill to go on it, and not having had front linkage before this has enabled me to pair this with a front press. Another option I am now considering for the future is to also do our own mowing.

“The AXION is a good, proper slugging tractor. It holds on well and in difficult going will dig its heels in and just keep pulling. The CIS specification on the AXION is ideal for our needs, while the CIS+ on

the ARION 530 gives it electric spools, etc for the wider range of work it does. I have kept the COPILOT TS steering system that I had on the ARION which is basic, but for our needs is fine.

“Why do I have CLAAS tractors? Because I buy tractors from MORRIS CORFIELD. They are a great company to deal with and the service and support they provide is second to none. If there’s a problem, it’s sorted. If we need a part, it’s very unusual that they don’t either have it in stock or can’t get it overnight.”



John Bennett