

Sustainable efficiency



Reliability, service and support are key factors in helping Clive Prichard and his son Robert achieve their welfare and sustainability goals as part of their milk contract with Tesco.

The main enterprise on the Pritchard's farm near Chepstow in Monmouthshire is a 200 cow dairy herd, with a further 550 followers and replacements. They also have about 100ha of arable and maize, which is mainly retained for feed. They also run a well-established clay shoot and glamping business.

With the dairy herd yielding about 7500 litres, of which around 3000 litres is from forage, the Prichards make around 2000 tonnes of grass silage and 1500 tonnes of maize using a JAGUAR 850 Speedstar. The Speedstar is due to be replaced by a new JAGUAR 840 for this Spring.

RELIABLE MACHINERY IS KEY TO QUALITY

"We try to be completely self-sufficient," explains Clive, "I am a great believer in being master of my own destiny and have always made my own silage. We are very conscious of the need to keep improving feed efficiency and to make the best quality we can, so having our own foraging machinery and running reliable machinery is key to that.

"It is also an important part of our milk contract with Tesco, who through their Sustainable Dairy Group are keen to work with their suppliers to help them improve efficiency and animal welfare, while also reducing their carbon footprint. As part of that there is a push towards increasing the amount of home grown forage used in the diet and the efficiency with which it is produced."

In addition to the JAGUAR, the fleet of CLAAS machinery on the farm includes an ARION 630, two ARION 400s (a 440 and 410) with a further two ARION 530s due to arrive soon to replace two 450s. They

also have an ARES 697 on the mixer wagon, a SCORPION 7035 and a TUCANO 420 bought in 2015.

"It could be said that we are over mechanised," says Robert. "But it suits our business, the way we work and what we are trying to achieve. Even though I do also contract cut about 200ha of cereals, it could be questioned why we have our own combine. But most of our corn is crimped so we have a very narrow window of about 24 to 48 hours when it is just right for harvesting and have to go early. Also generally the windows of opportunity are less, so it is important that we have reliable machinery in order to make the most of those opportunities when they do occur."

Clive adds that it was one of his proudest moments when he was able to buy his first new combine in 2015. "I remember when I was 10 and how proud my father was when he bought his first new combine, a CLAAS EUROPA, which had a 7ft 6in cutterbar and cost £1,600, and I had always wanted to achieve doing what he did."

"The service and support we get from RIVERLEA is fantastic, and that is the reason we buy CLAAS machinery. I originally met Huw (Brown) by chance when he was working for Harold Johns in the early 2000s. I was looking for a hedgecutter and someone suggested I speak to him, and it has gone from there and we have stayed with him. The change to RIVERLEA in the area and the opening of their new branch at Raglan has been really good and we have been extremely pleased with how this has gone.

CLAAS DEALERS OFFER THE WHOLE PACKAGE

"It's the whole package that they offer, from the relationship we have with Huw, through to the service and parts team who are fantastic, along with the support they have from CLAAS and the ability if necessary to get parts delivered overnight.

"The reliability has been great, but all machines at some stage will have issues and CLAAS really do stand by their product. As a business they are top of the tree and it is obvious that their customers and their views are very important to them."



TUCANO, JAGUAR, ARION 600, ARION 500, ARION 400



Clive and Robert Pritchard



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