







# TERRA TRAC LEXION 5500

## **2021 LEXION 5500, Jim Watt, Lanarkshire**

Getting cereals cut in the often damp, difficult conditions in the west of Scotland presents its challenges and it's a task that requires machines that are up to the job.

Lanarkshire contractor Jim Watt knows this only too well. Restricted by narrow lanes and small field sizes, he's tended to stick with smaller combines equipped with four-wheel drive to ensure they keep moving without making a mess.

But this season has seen that change with a move to a LEXION 5500 running on TERRA TRACS.

"Until last year there hadn't been the option of having tracks on five-walker combines so we'd stuck with decent tyres and four-wheel drive on our two machines," explains Mr Watt.

"But when CLAAS announced TERRA TRACS would be on the options list for the revamped LEXION range my ears pricked up. Once we'd had a demo of a 5500 last autumn I could see

it had the potential to offer a serious step up in our harvesting operation."

It wasn't just the addition of tracks and the LEXION uprated threshing system that appealed to Mr Watt. The demo machine was running a belt-fed 7.7m CONVIO header too.

"You can have all the horsepower and harvesting capacity you'll ever need but if you can't get crops in the front end of the machine, it's pointless.

"We're often cutting in less than ideal conditions and it's always the struggle to get material to feed that'll make us give up rather than simply grain moisture. In our demo last autumn I could immediately see the CONVIO had the potential to change all that. The way the crop is actively drawn to the throat and everything falls head-first onto the table means it's drawn in evenly and the combine is able to handle it much more smoothly.

"Along with the bigger threshing drums and the extra APS cylinder, it all adds up to a



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smoother flow of crop, extra output and the ability to cut for longer each day. Although we weren't looking to change our existing 620 last year it was difficult to ignore these huge improvements.”

Duly a LEXION 5500 TERRA TRAC was ordered complete with 7.7m CONVIO header to replace the business' two-year old LEXION 620.

### Why a 5500?

“We've always opted for the entry level model in CLAAS' premium combine range because we like the extra versatility and capacity that the extra technology on LEXION brings,” says Mr Watt.

“In truth silage work is our core business and it's important that cereal harvesting doesn't get

in the way of that. Having the capacity to get crops cut when needed means the grassland work can go on uninterrupted. The 5500 provides me with extra peace of mind in that respect – it's a five-walker machine with the capacity of a six-walker.

“Critically that narrow body means we can get into all the tight spots with ease.”

### Why TERRA TRACS?

“2020 was a stinking wet year for us so when the demo machine turned up at the end of harvest I was keen to see what difference tracks would make compared with our wheeled four-wheel drive machines.

“I was shocked – the extra footprint of the TERRA TRACS meant the 5500 was literally

walking on water. I was convinced then that the extra investment was worth it and we were able to save a bit by not spec'ing our new machine with a driven rear axle, opting instead for big rolling-radius tyres.”

### Why a CONVIO header?

“Our demo immediately proved the CONVIO could stretch our working day and was clearly a huge contributor to the 5500's extra output thanks to the way it presents the crop to the threshing gear.

“CLAAS headers have always had the edge over the competition when it comes to crop feed. We saw it improve with the move from the C-series cutterbars to the CERIO and the CONVIO is another huge step forward – it's proved it's worth every penny.”



### How has it performed?

"The 5500 has exceeded our expectations beyond belief. We're covering 20-25% more ground in a day, doing less damage to the soil and critically doing a better job."

"The sample that this machine produces is like nothing else I've seen. The combination of the TM6 sieves and JET STREAM cleaning means what ends up in the tank is completely free of rubbish."

"Our customers love it and that's particularly important where we've got trailers running straight into distilleries. They've no need to clean it up any further – it can go straight onto the malting floors without being touched."

### Straw Quality

It's not all about grain quality either, the new LEXION is reckoned to be a baler's dream.

"The swath that drops out the back of the 5500 is a thing of beauty. Flat-topped like a board, it's completely lump-free and even."

"Because it leaves the straw completely intact, when it falls it stays fluffed up so that the air can flow through it which means we can get in with the baler that much quicker."

"It's the changes to the front end of the combine that have made the difference to what drops out of the back. The bigger drums and concaves are gentler on the straw while the feed from the CONVIO header means the flow of crop right through the machine is more even with less bunching and lumps dropping in the row – it leaves the straw in perfect condition."

### Travel speed

"We cover a relatively big geographical area with our customer base stretching to a 30-40 mile radius."

"In the past moving from site to site was a real chore. Having a machine that can travel at 40kph has massively reduced the hours clocked not harvesting. And the way that the engine throttles back once you've reached top speed means you're not burning fuel unnecessarily."

### Would you have another?

"This new LEXION has completely taken the pressure off harvest for us. We needed extra output and we've certainly got that."

"We needed to reduce our transport time and we needed to be able to travel in the wet without making a mess. The pairing of 40kph and TERRA TRACS has given us just that."

"The combination of the CONVIO header, the bigger threshing gear and the JET STREAM sieves have added up to create a machine with a seriously impressive appetite."

It meets all of our requirements despite being packed into a relatively small-framed five-walker body. It's the right machine for us."

### Why CLAAS?

"We've a long history with CLAAS dating back to the original Senator combines that my father had."

"My working relationship with GORDONS is just brilliant and I feel like a true part of the CLAAS family. I know what I have in them and they know what they have in me."

"Whether you're dealing with CLAAS UK or the guys at GORDONS, it feels like we're all working towards the same goal. There is no better back-up."

"The kit's good but the service is just phenomenal."









“With the 5500, we’re covering 20-25% more ground in a day, doing less damage to the soil and critically doing a better job.”

Jim Watt, Lanarkshire, August 2021



## FARM FACTS

<b>Business</b>	Alexander Watt Contracting, East Kilbride near Glasgow
<b>Work undertaken</b>	Grass and wholecrop silage, round and square baling, umbilical slurry plus all arable operations
<b>Staff</b>	Jim Watt plus three others full-time; up to six casuals at peak times
<b>LEXION history</b>	• 2021, <b>5500 TT</b> • 2019, <b>620</b> • 2014, <b>620</b> • 2011, <b>620</b> • 2010, <b>510</b> • 2010, <b>530</b> • 1998, <b>410</b>