THIRD HARVEST LEXION 7700

2019 LEXION 7700, Robert Baker and Steven Offord, Suffolk

Having completed its third harvest, Robert Baker's LEXION 7700 has more than proved itself as a reliable performer.

Tasked with clearing some 604ha (1490 acres), it was an un-badged pre-production machine when it arrived at the Suffolk arable farm in 2019. As such it was under evaluation by both CLAAS and the team on the farm. Needless to say it underwent close scrutiny in its first season.

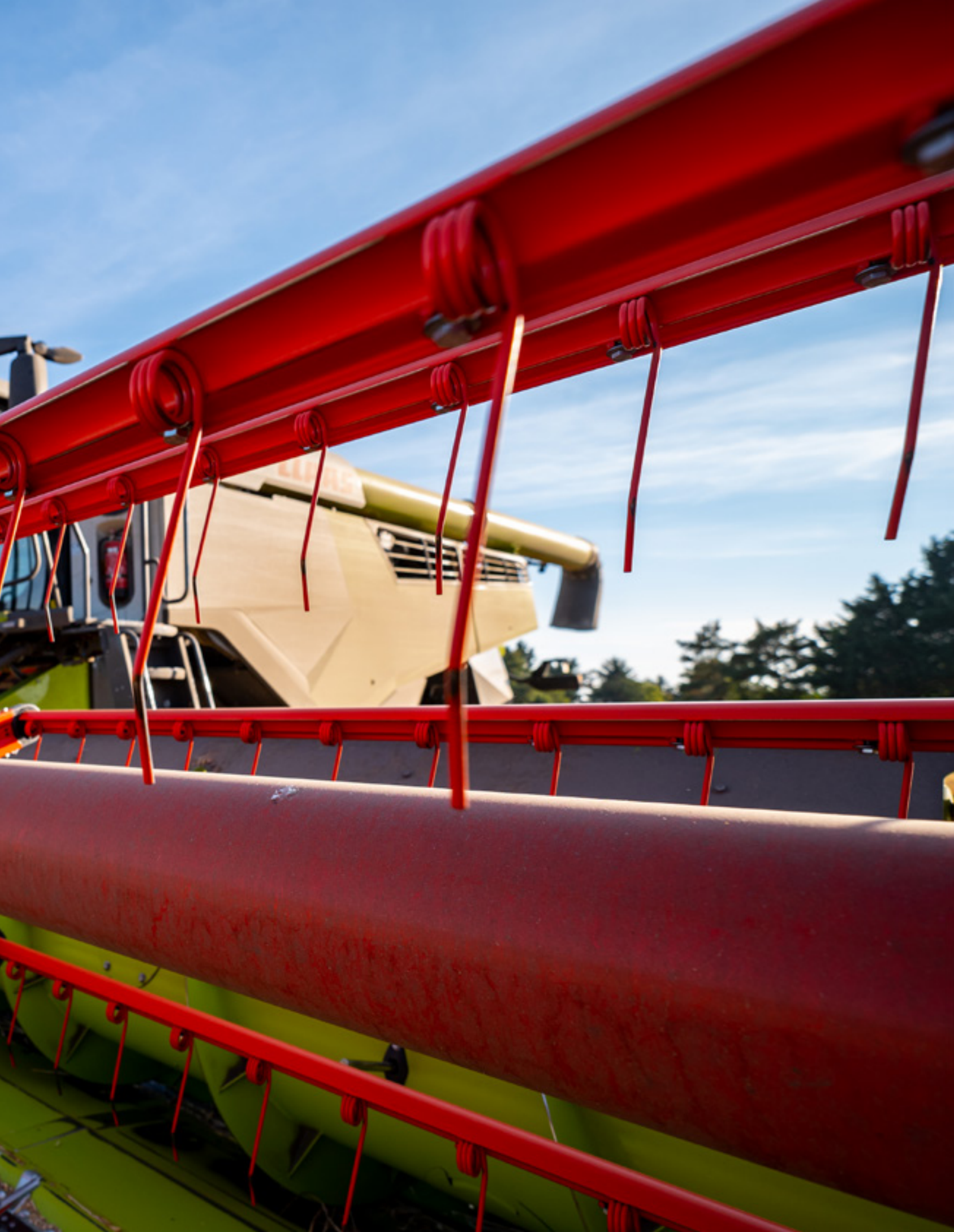
"Knowing we were getting a pre-series combine we naturally expected a few issues," explains Mr Baker.

"But we were pleasantly surprised. There were initially a few minor niggles but in the last three seasons we haven't had any major downtime. That's pretty impressive given we were taking delivery of what was a relatively unproven machine."

"As ever the back-up from MANNS was phenomenal and our machine has had all the updates and mods to bring it up to speed with current production models. In truth it's as good as a new one."

How has it performed?

"In that first season we were impressed with the extra output from the 7700 compared with our old 760 – we were clearing about 20% more in a day.



LEXION 7700

“One of the most cost effective combines we’ve owned.”

“But it wasn’t just about tonnes in the shed. It was doing all that extra while burning less fuel. We’ve seen a huge saving in diesel used per tonne of crop harvested – I’m convinced that’s all down to smoother crop flow and more efficient drivelines, particularly to the chopper.”

Current generation LEXION combines underwent a complete revamp for the 2020 season and Mr Baker’s 7700 was one of the first evaluation machines to hit UK shores. Amongst a whole host of upgrades, the new machines gained much bigger drums and concaves for the APS threshing unit. Working with Dynamic Power engine management to supply only what’s required, when it’s required, these changes significantly impacted fuel use – a performance improvement shared across the UK by other LEXION operators.

“The extra inertia from the bigger drums and the extended concave wrap mean there’s greater threshing area but also a much smoother flow of crop through the combine – you can feel it through the seat,” says driver Steven Offord.

“The secondary effect of that is that you’re not having to thrash the straw as hard so you’re not overloading the sieves. Consequently they’re doing a better job and we’re getting a cleaner sample.”

Sample quality

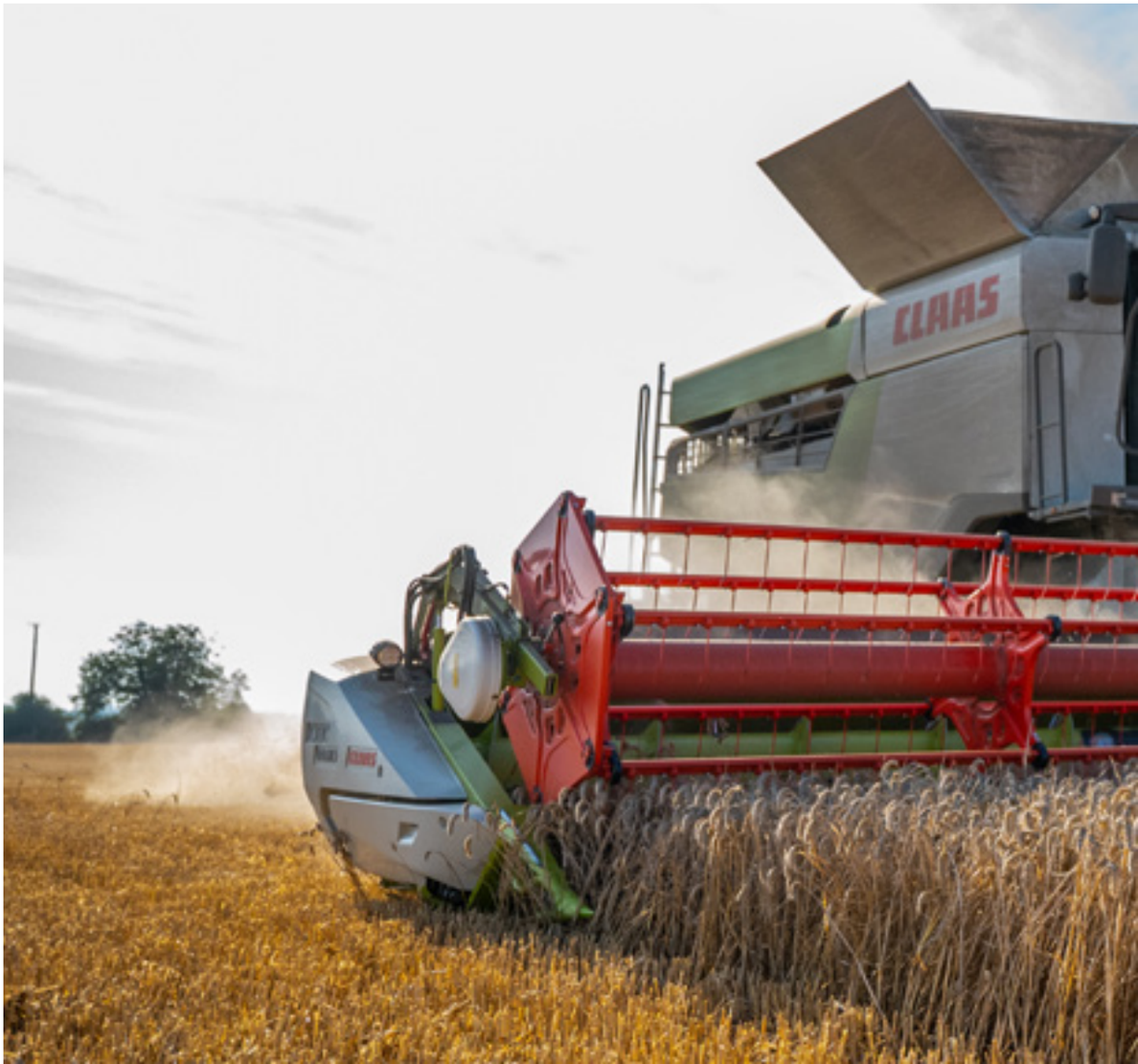
“The cleanliness of what ends up in the tank is the real standout feature of the 7700 for me,” says Robert Baker.

“Previously we’d run all of our rape over a dresser to clean it up. Now there’s no need – what comes out of the spout is as clean as what we’d get out of the dresser. The sample it produces is fantastic, no matter how hard you push the combine.”

Chop Quality

While driveline improvements to the straw chopper are felt to have leant a hand to the 7700’s thriftiness, the quality of the job being done hasn’t been compromised – far from it.

“The chop quality is so much better than before. It’s more consistent and the evenness of



spread is phenomenal," says Steven.

"Having hydraulic counter-knives makes life easy – I can adjust them according to engine loading and the job they're doing."

Back-up

"I was prepared to be a bit of a guinea-pig in taking a pre-production machine only because I have total confidence in the service we get from MANNS," says Mr Baker.

"Any minor niggles we've had have been sorted immediately and I know that if we were to have a big issue mid harvest we'd have a loan machine here within hours."

Cost of ownership

"From an owner's point of view I'm convinced the 7700 is one of the most cost effective combines we've owned. We look at everything from a cost per hour perspective whether it's fuel use, servicing or the impact of residual values on depreciation," explains Robert.

"It's certainly got the edge when it comes to output but it's the impact on the overall efficiency of our whole operation that makes the difference. As an example, the faster unloading auger means much quicker turnaround times and less time with trailers running off the tramlines potentially causing compaction in the field."

Would you have another?

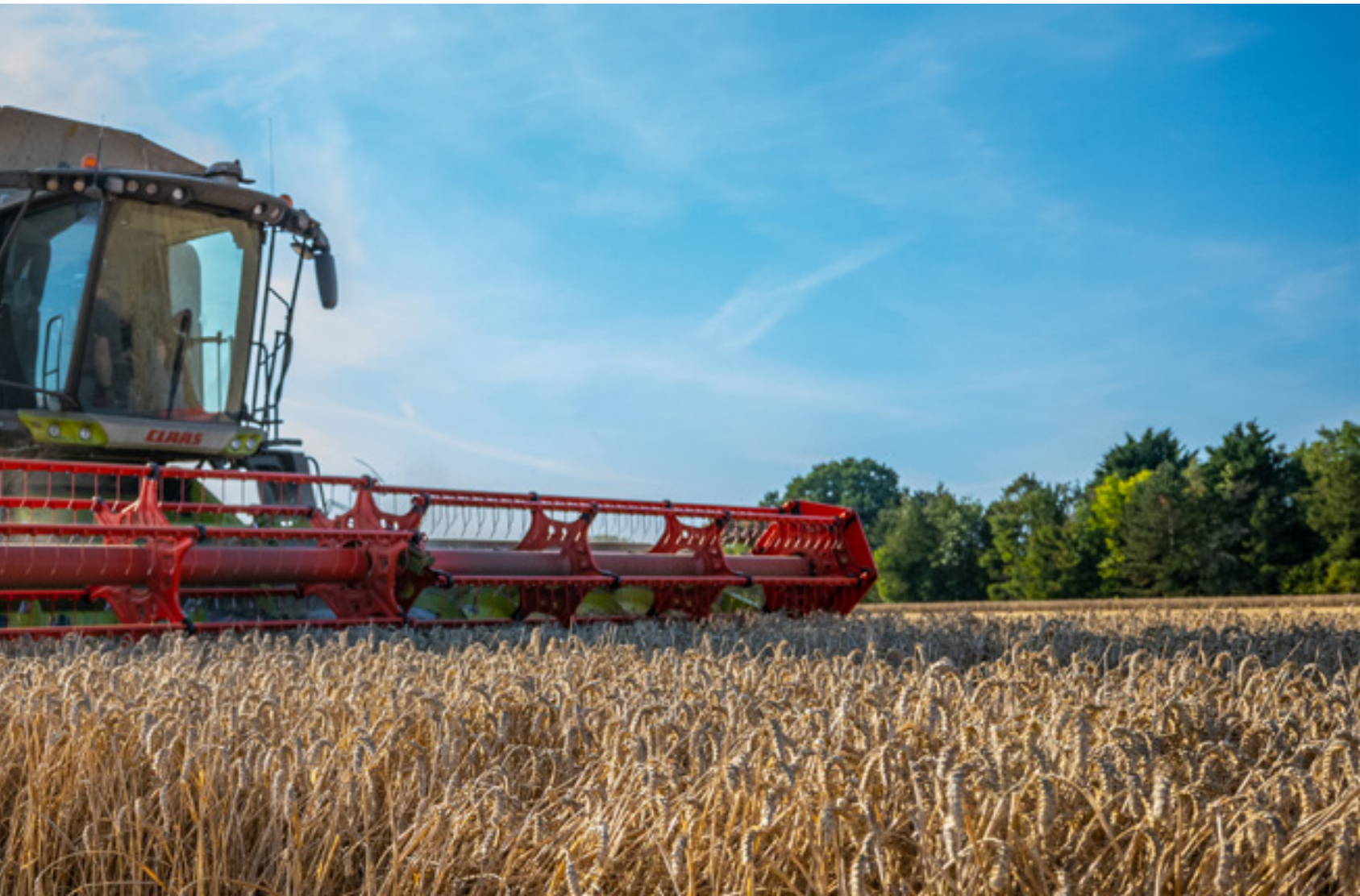
"We'd normally keep our combine five to six years but we've just seen our acreage for next season expand by 1500 acres. I believe that the 7700 is more than capable of handling 2000 acres but whether we'd be taking too big a risk beyond that is questionable.

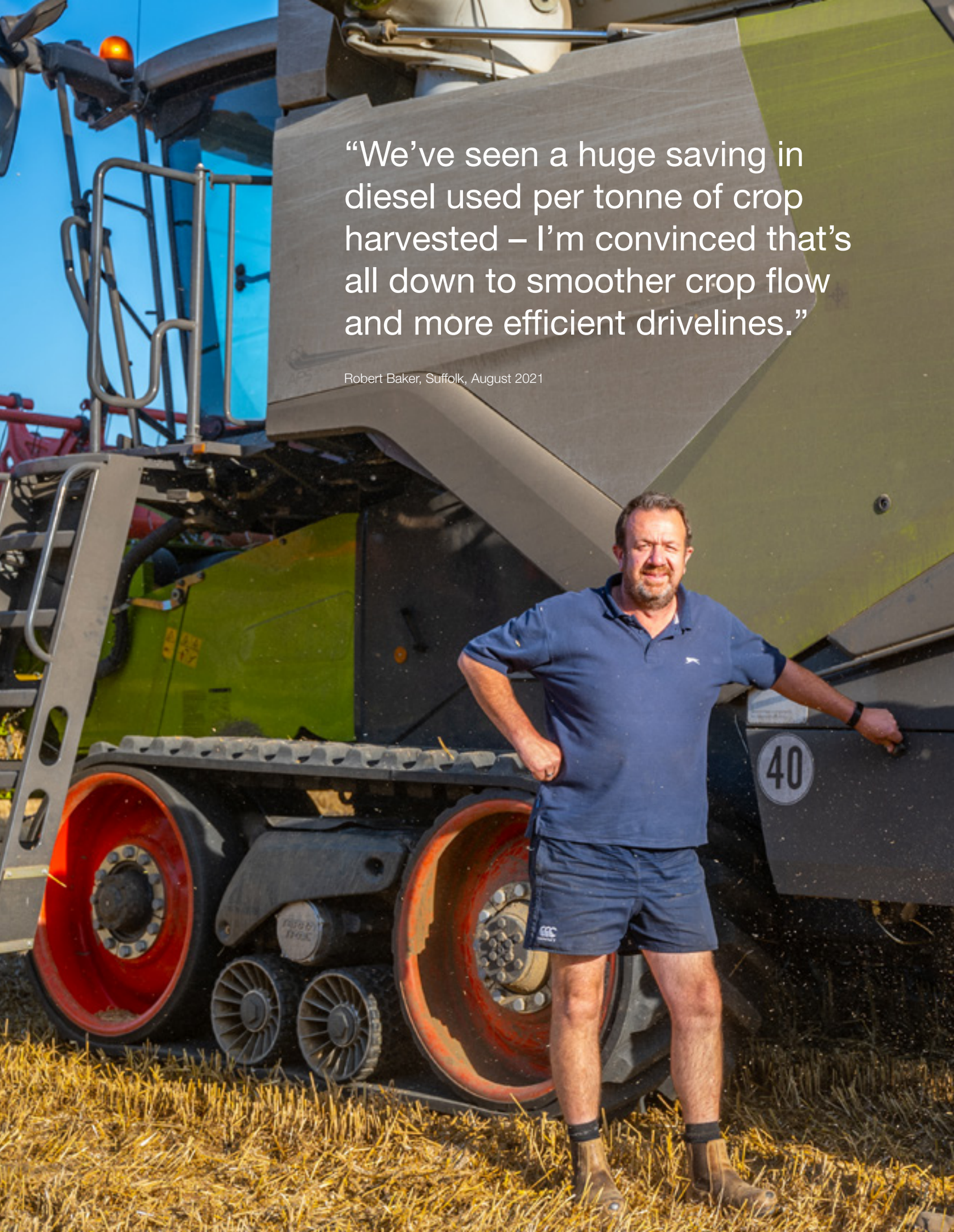
"The thing we love about having the biggest narrow-bodied LEXION on tracks is that it's really easy to get around the narrow lanes. It's going to be a trade-off between convenience and output."

CLAAS

FARM FACTS

Business	JD and RJ Baker Farms Ltd, near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk
Farmed area	810ha (2000 acres)
Cropping	Winter wheat 350ha (864 acres) OSR 181ha (447 acres) Spring barley 73ha (180 acres) Sugar beet 140ha (345 acres)
Staff	Robert Baker, Steven Offord and Simon Farrow
LEXION history	• 2019, **7700 TT** • 2012, **760 TT** • 2009, **580+** • 2004, **480**





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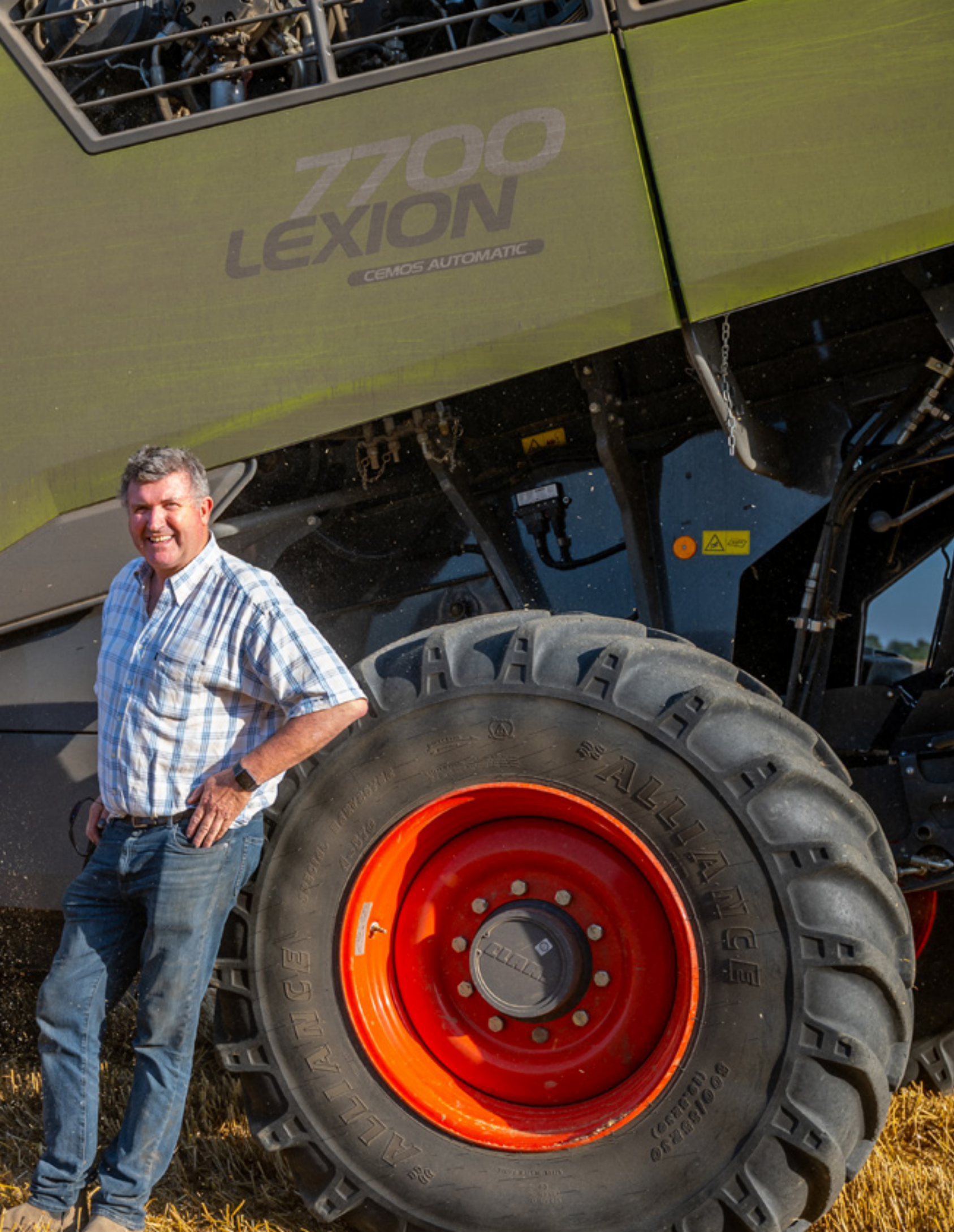
Robert Baker, Suffolk, August 2021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LEXION
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