



Chris Key

ARION 660 CMATIC

Near Norwich, Norfolk, May 2022

CLAAS CMATIC – Geared for Growth

“You dial in your target speeds and the tractor just sorts itself out.”

Specialist slurry contractor Chris Key has long been an advocate of stepless CVT gearboxes having had his first in a 2011 CLAAS AXION 810. The tractor’s CMATIC transmission quickly proved itself for slow speed umbilical application work as well as heavy tanker haulage, bringing extra efficiency and finesse to the business’ operations.

Having proved the concept, while the white and green stalwart remained on the fleet, a series of different coloured CVT tractors have come and gone since then. Last year the 8,000-hour prime mover was replaced by a similarly-liveried CLAAS ARION 660, again with a CMATIC transmission.





CLAAS
650
ARION

TRANSPREAD

Speed in forward gear



- Engine speed
- Engine droop
- Transmission settings
- Speed in gear
- Speed in forward gear
- Speed in reverse gear
- Driving strategy
- Cruise control
- Transmission
- Hitch
- Autos
- Steering
- Task
- Counters

0.0 km/h
1550 Rpm
2000 Rpm

AUTO

Why a CMATIC gearbox?

“The AXION 810 was our first tractor with a CVT gearbox and it proved how beneficial that sort of transmission can be for our type of work.

“Since then we’ve had all colours of the rainbow – all with stepless transmissions – and it’s proved that the CLAAS CMATIC box is as good as anything out there on the market.

“From a driver’s point of view it’s a beautifully straightforward system to operate. You dial in your target speeds and the tractor just sorts itself out.”

“With the CMATIC CVT it can deliver power smoothly.”

Chris Key, May 2022



Dealership
MANNS

Why an ARION 660?

“When we were looking at replacements I wanted something a bit lighter for umbilical work and to act as a general run-around. It needed to be capable of doing any of our jobs, but without hauling unnecessary bulk about.

“The 660 seemed to tick all those boxes. Weighing in at under 8-tonnes with over 185 hp under the hood, it’s got more than enough power, but critically with the CMATIC CVT it can deliver it smoothly.

“A neighbour of ours has run one for a good while and it’s been a reliable workhorse. The build quality on these latest CLAAS tractors is solid.”

Why CLAAS tractors?

“Our 810 was a good all-rounder and it pulled like a train. Its big roomy cab was a favourite with operators and mechanically it was sound even after 8,000 hours hard labour.

“When it came to looking at a replacement, I was pleasantly surprised by just how far CLAAS tractors have moved on in the last ten years. The in-cab technology is up there with anything else and it’s clearly been designed as a driver’s tractor – there’s loads of storage space and it’s a comfortable place to spend long hours.

“More important than that was just how well the AXION had held its money. The trade-in price we were offered for it made buying the 660 an incredibly good deal.

“Off the back of that, CLAAS will be a serious contender when we come to replacing another of our bigger tractors in the next few months.”

Dealer back-up

“What really drew us back to having another CLAAS tractor was the service we get from our dealer – MANNS. With their new depot at Fransham they’re superbly equipped and their team of fitters and storemen really know what they’re talking about.

“Despite only having the one CLAAS tractor I feel like a valued customer. The relationship is a really strong one to the point where I consider our salesman – Simon Bloomfield – a close personal friend.”



Farm Facts

Aylsham Slurry Services Ltd, near Norwich, Norfolk

Machinery

ARION 660

Work undertaken

All slurry tasks – tankering and umbilical

Staff

Chris Key plus three others full-time.

CLAAS