

# CLAAS CMATIC – Geared for Growth

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aving set up contracting just four years ago, Josh and Helen Collins knew from the start that their choice of tractors would be critical in guaranteeing the success of their business both from a performance point of view and taking cost of ownership into account.

Almost of equal importance was keeping operators happy – the firm’s prime-movers needed to be comfortable, reliable machines for the men in the seat to get the most from them.

“On both of our home farms we’d had all shapes, sizes and colours of tractors,” explains Josh.

“So when we started to expand the contracting business, taking on a retiring operator’s round in 2018, we had a pretty good idea of what we wanted. I’d had a lot of experience with CLAAS equipment previously and consequently knew how good the back-up was from our local dealer HAMBLYS. That immediately put CLAAS in pole position when it came to choosing our tractors.”



## Farm Facts

JJ & HE Collins near Truro, Cornwall

### Machinery

AXION 830 x 3

AXION 810

ARION 650

ARION 640 and

ARION 630 x 2

CLAAS JAGUAR 950

CLAAS TORION 1511

CLAAS LEXION 450

### Work undertaken

Grass, wholecrop and maize silage

Slurry – umbilical and tankers

Baling – round

and big square Combining, ploughing, cultivations and drilling

### Staff

Josh and Helen Collins plus six others full-time and another three part-time.

## Josh Collins

AXION & ARION CMATIC Tractors,

Near Truro, Cornwall, May 2022

“Effectively we’re burning 5% less diesel for every acre.”





“It’s this sort of technology that means we’re running a more efficient business.”

Josh Collins, May 2022



## Why CLAAS tractors?

“It was primarily down to back-up but we also had an AXION 920 on our home farm and initially that moved across to the new business, acting as our main cultivations tug and buck-raking tractor, roles which it comfortably handled.

“The next move was to buy a second-hand ARION 650 which also proved to be a brilliant performer – that cemented our view that we were going down the right route with CLAAS. And when I sat down and did the sums, the cost of ownership was a good deal cheaper than anything else.

“We run with full service contracts and buy 8,000-hour warranties so that we precisely know our running costs for the full life of the machine. CLAAS was head and shoulders above the rest on this.”

## Back-up

“There are huge numbers of CLAAS tractors out working across Cornwall so consequently all HAMBLYS depots have a decent range of parts and the fitters really know what they’re doing.

“If we have a breakdown, I know we’ll have someone out to look at the machine within an hour, and if it can’t be sorted in the field HAMBLYS will organise a replacement straight away. No other manufacturer can offer that.

“A CVT box is constantly adjusting transmission ratios to find that sweet spot.”

“But it’s not just about the hardware – we get sound business advice from both the dealer and CLAAS UK. It feels like they want to see us prosper, so have helped us structure our finance packages in such a way that we’re able to slowly build equity in the kit over time.”

Of the eight tractors in the Collins fleet the three largest – AXION 830 – are equipped with stepless CMATIC transmissions.

## Why CMATIC?

“We really like the HEXASHIFT powershift box that’s in the ARION. It really suits the running around work like pulling tankers and trailers.

“However the CMATIC in the bigger tractors is a game changer when it comes to fieldwork. We do a lot of contract cultivations work for a big veg grower and we’ve seen huge output and efficiency gains by going to the CVT box.

“On any given day our CMATIC tractors will cover around 5% more ground than those with a mechanical gearbox, but will still use the same amount of fuel. Effectively we’re burning 5% less diesel for every acre.

“I’m convinced that it’s all down to the transmission controller constantly working to find the right balance between work rates and efficiency. A CVT box is constantly adjusting transmission ratios to find that sweet spot. No matter how good the operator, a machine with a mechanical driveline just can’t achieve that.

“When it comes to reliability we’ve had very few issues. Having run the AXION 920 with a CMATIC box for 6,500 hours without any serious bother, we had confidence in the transmission.

“The other big factor in going down the stepless route is operator comfort and convenience. Because we’ve grown the business fairly rapidly, we’ve had drivers come to us used to CVT boxes who wouldn’t want

to go back. A big part of our job is keeping the guys in the seat happy. CLAAS’ CMATIC transmission will comfortably match the competition when it comes to fieldwork performance.”

## CEBIS Touchscreen

“Having the new CEBIS touchscreen controller in the tractors makes set-up so much easier. Being able to simply press the relevant part of the tractor outline on the screen to bring up the right menu, means you’re able to instantly access the right page without stopping.

“I like the shared layout with the forager’s computer and the way the ISOBUS controls are so well integrated into the screen.

“But more importantly than that is the ability to record specific tractor performance for each task. With fuel prices as volatile as they are, I can go into each tractor’s performance monitor and see exactly what they’ve been using for each job. That way I can bill the customer accordingly.

“It’s this sort of technology that means we’re running a more efficient business and allows us to calculate our true running costs.”



Dealership  
HAMBLYS

**CLAAS**