

VOLTO tedder helps make haylage in catchy conditions

After Cornish farmer, Barry Vickery, borrowed a neighbour's CLAAS VOLTO 55 to ted his grass to make haylage, he was so impressed with the results he bought his own machine.

Now semi-retired, Barry doesn't farm on the same scale as he has before. But he still has about 50ha of mainly grass and looks after five fishing lakes at Killock Farm, Kilkhampton, near Bude where he also rears 110-120 calves he takes to big stores, at about 20 months.

"I don't have any slurry handling facilities here so I make haylage – rather than silage – because it has a higher dry matter. Along with straw bedding, from large square bales, it makes it much easier to handle and manage the muck," he explains.

WEATHER DEPENDENCY

With Cornwall's temperamental weather and the farm being located just a few miles from the coast it's not easy to make silage, and presents a real challenge for those looking to make the higher dry matter haylage.

"I watch the forecast and look for a spell of settled dry weather before mowing," explains Barry. "My disc mower doesn't have a conditioner, so I ted the grass as soon as it's cut and then up to four times before baling.

"Last year my own tedder was on its last legs, so I borrowed my neighbour's CLAAS VOLTO 55. I could see straight away how well it worked and how the angled tines were doing a really good job of lifting and spreading the swath," he says.

What Barry noticed was the proven MAX SPREAD crop flow concept, which was first introduced on the larger tedders and is now used on the new VOLTO 55.

MAX SPREAD spreader arms are angled at 29°, which unlike the conventional straight ones, collect more crop with a longer sweep. This produces a wider, more even spread pattern with fewer lumps promoting faster, uniform drying.

Working for 33% longer than straight arms, the angled versions pick-up more grass and help improve the machines output.

The VOLTO 55 is equipped with four, 1.5m diameter rotors, providing a working width of 5.2m. Each rotor is fitted with heavy-duty 10.5mm tines, with the spreading angle adjustable between 12° to 16°, to suit crops and conditions.

Drive to the outer sections is transferred via the simple PERMALINK system, which provides positive drive and allows the outer rotors to fold up 180° for transport.

"When I was using the machine it was quite obvious how well it picks up the grass and, at the same time it throws and spreads it much more evenly than my old machine," says Barry.

To row up ahead of the baler Barry turns back to his neighbour and borrows his CLAAS LINER 470 S rake.

While farmers on the North Cornwall coast can't control the catchy weather, Barry Vickery says he can make the most of every opportunity by using his new VOLTO 55 to help quickly dry his grass for haylage.



Barry Vickery is impressed at how evenly the VOLTO 55 spreads grass, which he turns into haylage for stores on his farm on the North Cornwall coast.

Barry Vickery | 50ha | Cornwall

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