

LEXION 8700

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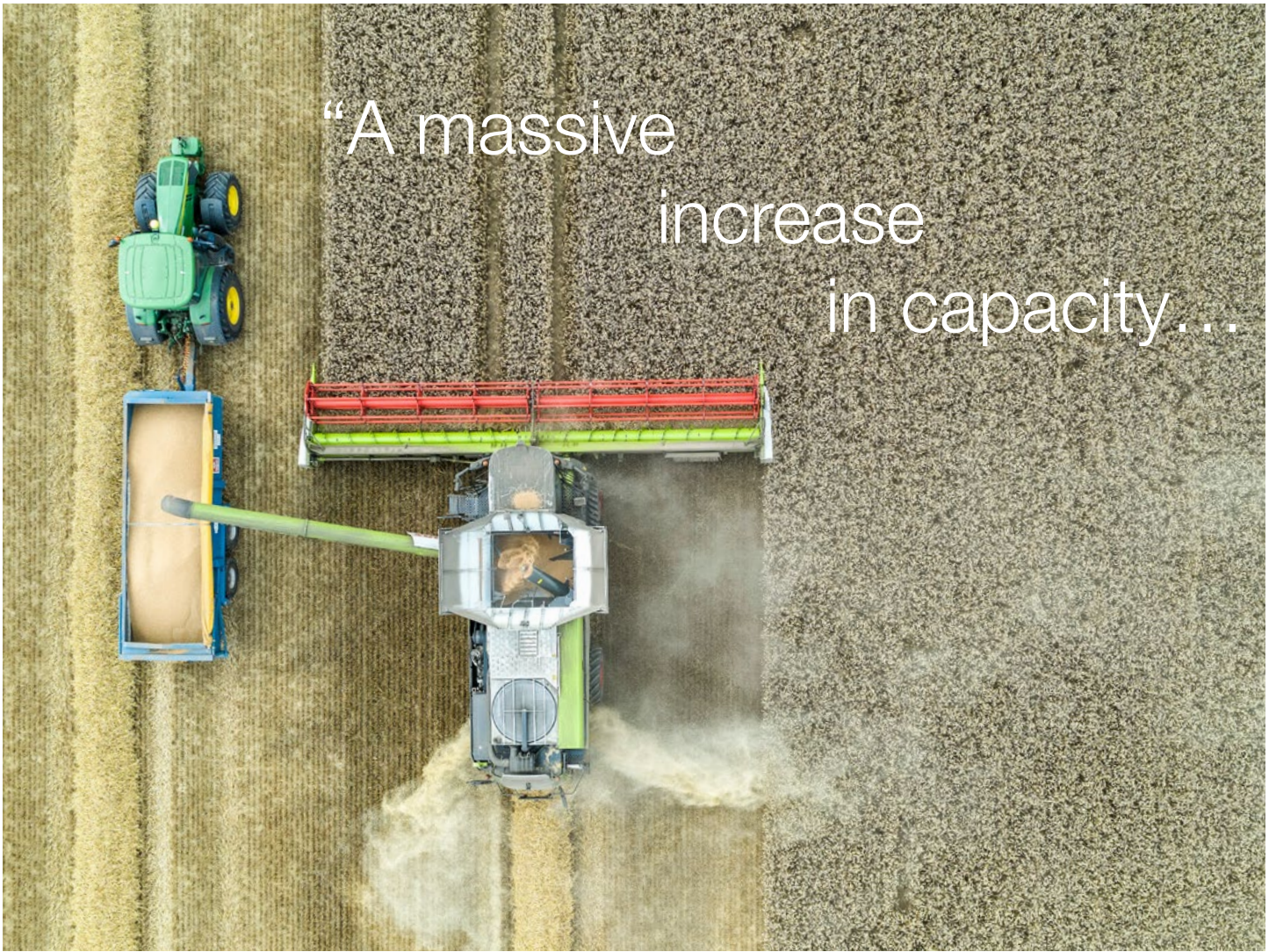
Kit Papworth



FARM LF Papworth Ltd, near Norfolk
FARMED AREA 1700ha (4200 acres)
CROPPING winter wheat 500ha (1235 acres)
oilseed rape (OSR) 400ha (988 acres)
spring barley 200ha (494 acres)
winter barley 200ha (494 acres)
vining peas 70ha (173 acres)
potatoes 200ha (494 acres)
sugar beet 130ha (321 acres)
STAFF Tim and Kit Papworth plus nine others
full-time

LEXION HISTORY
1996 460
1999 480
2006 570 TT
2011 570 TT
2012 760 TT
2016 750 TT
2019 8700 TT





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Patty Gwilliam



...with a single harvester to do all the work.”

Tucked well up into the wilds of north Norfolk, as a business LF Papworth has long looked for added value markets for its produce. While root crops often achieve this, extended distances from mills and processing plants mean it's not quite as simple for combinable crops.

To counter this over the last few decades Kit and Tim Papworth have concentrated their arable enterprise's efforts on seed production. While this generates a premium over standard commodity prices, it requires a great deal of attention to detail and an assurance that crops are cut at the optimum time.

To achieve this the company has always run two LEXION combines, giving a guaranteed capacity that has seen every acre cut in good time.

“Running two combines has given us the output we require to ensure we clear crops at their best and importantly before we see any impact on germination rates,” explains Kit Papworth.

“But there's a cost to running a pair of machines and the associated trailers and infrastructure. Over the last few years I've done a lot of spreadsheet-bashing to see if we could streamline the job with a move to a single harvester.

“Hearing that CLAAS had a new generation of high-output LEXION on the way, I was keen to put our name down to have a pre-production machine and test the theory.”

How has the 8700 performed?

“With this new combine we have seen a massive increase in capacity.”

“Previously with our 750 and 760 running together we'd be averaging 50 tonnes an hour coming into store. With the 8700 running solo it's closer to 60 tonnes an hour. I'll admit I was initially nervous about switching from two machines to one, but the new combine has completely blown my expectations out of the water.

“Of course much of this extra output is down to having more horsepower and much bigger threshing gear, but it's the technology that really makes the difference.

“CEMOS Auto knows what's best for the machine and how to reach the targets you have set for it.”

Grain tank and unloading auger

“All this extra output wouldn't be possible if the new combine didn't have a bigger tank and spout.

“At 13,500-litres it sounds a lot, but it doesn't take long to fill up. Without the extra capacity you'd have to have a trailer alongside you all the time.

“It's a completely different mindset to running two combines. The tractor drivers need to be under the spout the minute the lights start flashing and there's no hanging about to top off the trailers – if they're close to the gateway they need to be gone to get back in time for another load. With just one harvester running it's all about keeping going without any stoppages – that proved to be the key in maintaining maximum efficiency.”

Header

“The AUTO CONTOUR cutterbar float is superb – it reacts so much faster than before so that even with a 12m header working on uneven ground the stubble height is level.

“Being able to hydraulically adjust the forward pitch of the whole table is really useful. In laid crops it angles the lifters right forward so that they just scoop up whatever is there whereas normally they'd tend to bung up.

“The auto blockage stop is another big plus-point. By cutting drive to the header the second it senses crop loading getting close to a stuff-up, it avoids hours of downtime unblocking rotors and gives me the confidence to push the machine to its limits.”

Why CLAAS?

“Having run CLAAS combines for the last 40-odd years we have ultimate faith in the brand,” says Kit.

“All equipment breaks down at some point, but it's all about the people who mend it – their attitude and ability makes all the difference and that's where we have the belief in our dealer MANN'S.

“If they're prepared to invest in a new depot on our doorstep then that gives us the confidence to invest with them.”

Clean sample

“With so many of our combinable crops going for seed, sample cleanliness is a key focus for us. It's all about conditioning the grain so it doesn't deteriorate in store.

“Usually we dress everything going into the bins to keep it cool. This year it hasn't been necessary because what's coming off the combine is so clean.

“When we got into the rape it immediately became apparent that things were different. What was coming out the back of the trailers was just pure black – there was barely a fleck of chopped pod or stem.

“With an admix of 0.4% - 0.8% it was too good really. When we got into the cereals we decided we could sacrifice sample quality a little to get extra output, but no matter how much harder we pushed the combine we could barely see any increase in rubbish in the heap.

“The 8700's ability to keep things clean while pumping out quite so many tonnes each hour is quite something really. It's down to a combination of factors including the grain quality camera and improved airflow over the sieves. But central to all of this is CEMOS Automatic's ability to constantly tweak the machine's settings to get the best out of it.”

CEMOS Automatic

“I've been driving combines for 40-odd years and so I'm a bit of an old-school dinosaur,” says operator Patty Gwilliam.

“Until this year I was pretty convinced that no automatic system could do a better job than an experienced driver, but this new machine has completely thrown that theory out of the window.

“This new version of CEMOS is absolutely brilliant – it can react so much quicker than any human to changes in the crop and will push the machine that much harder than you would naturally feel confident doing yourself – all that without seeing any increase in losses or harm to the sample.”





The LEXION featured in this image is a Pre-Series 8700 badged as a 770.

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Kit Papworth