

A significant impact on fuel use

Until last season the team at RH Dove Farms were using a 2014 LEXION 620 to clear their 260 ha of arable crops. Although it was more than capable of handling the area, it was felt that increasingly unpredictable weather patterns at harvest justified extra capacity.

“The 620 was more than on top of the job and despite having done seven harvests was still rock-solid reliable. But given how we can get pushed into a corner by the weather come late August, I felt we could do with a bit of extra capacity,” says Richard Dove.

“We don’t want to be unnecessarily drying grain if we can help it and so when it came to upgrading the combine it made sense to go a bit bigger to allow us to cut crops at their driest.”

WHY A 6600?

“With 1,700 pigs on the place at any one time and cattle to bed down through the winter, straw is important to us so we’ve always stuck with a walker combine.

“But to get that extra output we needed to go wider. The bigger drum and extra straw-walker have made all the difference.”

HOW HAS IT PERFORMED?

“With the 620 we were previously clearing 1.5-2 ha an hour in strong standing wheat. With the 6600 we’re doing at least 25-30% more.

“What that means is that we can be relaxed about waiting until the grain comes down under 15% moisture – sometimes we’re not getting going until after 4pm but we’ll still be able to cover the same area we would have previously, starting two hours earlier.

“But it’s not all about output – the sample quality is really quite astounding. Tipping oilseed rape at our local co-operative store alongside crop that had come off other combines, the difference was really clear – it’s just so much cleaner. In fact, if we were home saving seed I would be happy to put it straight through the drill.”



Phil Bedford, Oliver Dove and Richard Dove

FUEL EFFICIENCY

The combination of the new 354hp engine and larger diameter APS threshing system has had a significant impact on fuel use.

“Because the 6600 never struggles for power it is burning a lot less diesel than our old combine,” explains operator Phil Bedford.

“Where previously I could just about stretch the tank over two days, I’m now able to go for almost double the time between fill-ups.

“And the engine has also got so much more go in it – there’s never any whoompfing and banging even with green straw. You could nearly stall the old combine going uphill, chopping straw and unloading at the same time – the 6600 barely murmurs, pushing on at the same pace regardless.”

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Phil Bedford

WHAT IT LIKE FOR MAINTENANCE?

“There’s so much less servicing to do on the new machine mainly because of the new cooling package. Everything stays so much cleaner – there’s so much less opportunity for dust to get hung up.

“I’m fastidious about cleanliness and will blow the whole combine down every couple of days to ensure we’re not carrying any weed seeds with us from field to field. That job is now a whole lot easier.”

HOW EASY IS IT TO SET UP?

“With the new CEBIS touchscreen it’s now so straightforward to get directly to the relevant menu page. I just press the part of the combine I want to tweak and it’ll bring it right up.

“Moving to LASER PILOT steering has really helped with that. I’m now able to make adjustments on the move because I’m not having to concentrate on where we’re going. Consequently I’m able to keep the combine working at its best as conditions change.

“For that I’ve found the CLAAS CEMOS Advisor app on my phone really useful. I’ll constantly refer to it for suggestions on how to do a better job. Nine times out of ten we’ll either see output increase or sample quality improve having made the suggested changes – it’s a really brilliant, user-friendly tool.”

WHY CLAAS?

“Our first CLAAS combine was a DOMINATOR 78 which a really solid, reliable thing. We’ve stuck with CLAAS ever since because we know we can depend on the machines to get the job done,” says Mr Dove.

“But more important than that is the back-up we get from our dealer – CLAAS EASTERN at Wilberfoss. If we have even the slightest issue they’re out to us within an hour – just about time to grab a sandwich before we’re back up and running again.

“It’s their whole team – the fitters are faultless and really know their business, the parts guys can always put their hand on what you need and the salesmen make sure it all comes together.”



Farm Facts

RH Dove Farms near Pocklington, East Yorkshire

Farmed area

332 ha

Cropping

Winter wheat 121 ha

Spring barley 40 ha

Winter barley 40 ha

Winter beans 40 ha

Oilseed rape 20 ha

(50acres) let out for potatoes, remainder down to grass

Livestock

1,700 x bacon pigs on bed and breakfast agreement

120 x Continental store cattle plus;

20 x Hereford suckler cows with calves at foot

LEXION history

2021 CLAAS LEXION 6600 with 7.7m VARIO header



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