



Michael McDonnell | **600 dairy herd** | Co Louth

“The CARGOS allows us to collect fresh grass for our herd all year round with the ease of a one man show”

Based near Termonfeckin in County Louth, the Cannontown dairy herd, owned by Michael McDonnell, is an impressive operation. From the minute you arrive on the farm you can see the precision and attention to detail that Michael insists on in his business.

This exactness is carried all the way through to the machinery on the farm, and by Irish dairy farm standards the size and quality of the machinery being used is second to none. The CLAAS brand is visible in all areas of the forage collection system. There is a CLAAS JAGUAR 850 which is used to collect the majority of the grass and maize that is pitted on the farm, to feed the 1500 head of cattle and the 600 milking cows that are milked 365 days of the year.

The JAGUAR picks up about 800ha of grass and chops 72ha of maize per year. The grass is mowed using a CLAAS 9200C DISCO butterfly unit on the back and a CLAAS 3200FC DISCO PROFIL on the front of a 2015 CLAAS AXION 850.

He said that this outfit gives him the “amazing output he requires when the weather plays ball”. All the grass is tedded using a CLAAS VOLTO and put back in the rows using a CLAAS LINER rake. The front mowing unit is also used in conjunction with the farm’s other piece of forage collection gear, a CLAAS CARGOS 8300. This pair of machines are used all year round to bring fresh grass to the herd and to collect some of the lighter crops where the ability for one man to get grass in is a major advantage.

QUALITY FODDER

Michael believes that the CARGOS has collected 3,000 loads of grass in its 3 years on the farm totalling around 400ha per year. Depending on the dry matter of the grass the CARGOS carries between 6 and 12 tonnes of grass per load. When the CARGOS is working full days, it can easily bring 24ha per day from the field to the yard. Speaking about the wagon Michael said “it allows us to collect fresh grass for our herd all year round with the ease of a one man show”. On the occasions when the CARGOS is used to help the JAGUAR with the pitting of grass, Michael said that the quality of the wagon fodder is comparable to the harvester chopped grass.

Michael has a long history of CLAAS tractors on the farm with the first one arriving in 2006 and only leaving at the beginning of 2019 to be replaced with a new ARION 610. The original tractor was a CLAAS 697 which gave the farm 20,460 hours of near trouble-free service.

Michael said, “all it got during its time on the farm was servicing, diesel and tyres, an amazing machine”. This tractor and its amazing reliability is a large part of the reason that Michael has stayed loyal to the brand since.

The service of his local dealer, LEINSTER FARM MACHINES is also a major factor as to why there is a lot of CLAAS green in the yard. He said that they have provided him and his business with “amazing service 24/7 365 days of the year” which is what this very busy all year-round business requires.

NEW FOR 2019

For silage 2019 there will be a new bigger CARGOS 8400 replacing the current CARGOS 8300. In the 3 years that the wagon has been on the farm, it has become an essential part of the system, keeping this large business using its main forage crop to its maximum potential. Michael’s most important factor when it comes to machinery is that they need to “work for the business literally every day of the year” and he finds that his CLAAS machines are fulfilling his requirements.