

COST SAVING JAGUAR

R&G McKnight are a father and son Agricultural Contracting team based in Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland which was established back in the 1960s by Robert McKnight, and today harvests between 1,000-2,000 ha of grass each year.



After operating numerous different brands of machinery, today CLAAS machinery dominates the yard, the first of which was a JAGUAR 870 bought from local dealer ERWIN.

"We changed to CLAAS after hearing numerous good things about their performance and reduced operating costs, which having run the JAGUAR 870 I can agree with. The CLAAS is not only easier to maintain than our previous machine, but also between £5000-6000 cheaper to run per year – that's a significant saving for us."

The McKnights were so impressed with the performance and reliability of the JAGUAR that they purchased a set of DISCO 8550 butterfly mowers in 2007 which was followed soon after by a DISCO 3100 front mower to complete the combination.

After a few seasons the DISCO 8550 was replaced by a DISCO 9200 to achieve a wider cutting width of 9.1 metres. "We cannot fault the mowers to be honest. We have never had to spend any money on them other than common wear parts. On hilly ground where we operate they contour and clean the ground very well and are easy to set up and use. By switching to the larger 9200 we can achieve better output while reducing costs, only burning 2-3 litres of diesel per acre."

To match the DISCO 9200s increased output, a CLAAS LINER 3100 and VOLTO 800 Maxi Spread were added to the fleet in 2014. "Customer demand for quality grass silage made us look at ways to effectively and efficiently improve dry matter content. By using the VOLTO we can spread the grass out on the flat and allow it to wilt increasing DM. The LINER then utilises its complete width of 33ft and makes a uniform swath ahead of the JAGUAR 870 which was also

updated in 2014. It reduces forward speed but ultimately increases throughput."

In 2014 McKnights extended their services to include harvesting whole crop silage having purchased a DIRECT DISC 520 head to match the new JAGUAR 870.

Then in 2016 firstly a new CLAAS DISCO 3200C rear mower arrived into the yard to work alongside the baling and wrapping enterprise while the reliable JAGUAR 870 was replaced with the latest 516HP JAGUAR 860.

"ERWIN offered me a good deal to update the forager into the new shape, and the way I looked at it was by running a new forager you are eliminating any downtime, keeping servicing costs to a minimum and also adding the benefit of a manufacturer's warranty, it really was an easy decision for us to make."

"The JAGUAR 860 just fits our system perfectly. Everything fits together nicely, from the DISCO mowers to the VOLTO and LINER it all just clicks together. The JAGUAR 860 is even nicer to operate than the previous 870; the cab offers much better visibility and CEBIS is a very welcome improvement. Our running costs have been reduced even further and the 860 performs better in lumpy grass because of the improved pickup, which is fitted with a larger auger and extra tine bar.

"For us CLAAS is the machine to have. We cannot fault the machines or the dealer service we get from ERWIN. There is always someone at the end of the phone to sort out any issues which is vitally important in our business. The future's bright for us; the future's CLAAS green".