

# Tracked Horsch chaser bin is first on a UK farm

A chaser bin on tracks is the latest stage in one farm's conversion to controlled traffic farming. It is also said to be the first one in the country, reports **Emily Padfield**

**HORSCH TITAN UW SPECS**

- Hopper capacity** 34cu m (27/28t wheat)
- Discharge time** 18t/min (1,080t/hour)
- Auger diameter** 60cm
- Length** 8.26m
- Height** 4m
- Hopper filling height** 3.48m
- Truck loading height** 4.6m
- Track size** 2.56x0.91m
- Transport width (with tracks)** 3.49m
- Rear axle load (empty)** 5,280kg
- Front support load (empty)** 1,420kg

Controlled traffic farming isn't something you can adopt in one year, or indeed several. It takes time, patience and, to a certain degree, money to implement even in its simplest form.

For one Northamptonshire farm manager, it has driven machinery investment and rotation plans for the past three years, ever since he took over managing Courteenhall Farms.

One of the first steps was to introduce an RTK network to enable the farm to put down permanent tramlines, explains manager Tom Banks. "Before, the estate used a basic Egnos-derived GPS signal, and only on the Caterpillar Challenger 855 crawler."

The whole farm has also been Soyl mapped over the past couple of years, allowing for variable seed rates and fertiliser application, under guidance from Jon Yeoman from Frontier. Last year, the farm



Courteenhall Farms' giant Horsch chaser bin can hold 28t of wheat. The 60cm-diameter auger (shown here folded) discharges its load in a barn-busting 90 seconds.

invested in a 12m Horsch Sprinter seed-and-fertiliser tine drill, as well as a 12m Joker disc harrow.

"We looked at the different widths to go with for CTF and 12m seemed the natural choice. For the 1,200ha we have it gives us extra capacity, but we're hungry for more land, and we reckon we can comfortably farm 2,000ha with the kit we have, with just the addition of another combine and a larger sprayer," explains Mr Banks.

**EXTRA CAPACITY**

After combining, all land is covered with a 12m Joker and rolled to establish an initial stale seed-bed. If time allows there will be another pass with the cultivator and an application of glyphosate with a 24m Bateman RB26.

"If weather conditions dictate, there's a pass with a 12m Vaderstad NZ before drilling, otherwise in dry conditions we just drill into the stale seed-bed created with the Joker," he says.

"Having the extra capacity also means we have the confidence to delay planting winter wheat, achieving better flushes of blackgrass and still be timely with planting. Blackgrass is becoming a real problem in this area, but with the new cultivation method and capacity to delay planting we have seen great results, together with a new rotation and improved drainage."

The farm's Claas Lexion 770 TT is equipped with an auger extension

to work with the 12m widths designed by Horsch and an option offered by Claas. It's one of only two in the country.

"It was a case of if it didn't have the extension I wouldn't be having it so, sure enough, Claas agreed."

The next step, after the combine, was to consider grain handling off the field and a chaser bin was the obvious choice, allowing traffic to be kept to a minimum and to the farm's dedicated track width. It also gave them the option to load lorries straight from the field and cut down on double handling.

The Titan UW has been specifically designed for the UK market, according to Horsch. There were two key requirements for British farmers. One was for it to have the capacity to hold a full lorry-load of grain, and the other to be capable of loading a lorry in 90 seconds.

**28T OF HEAVY WHEAT**

With a hopper capacity of 34cu m, the Titan can hold about 28t of good, heavy wheat, he adds. A telescopic axle extends from 3m to 3.56m, if the chaser is on wheels.

The track units, which are made by Canadian company Elmer, feature Camoplast rubber with a novel lug pattern that is designed to deliver both durability and flotation evenly to the ground. The low-profile lug pattern also provides a quieter ride with less vibration, says the company.

There are a few Titan chasers

# a UK farm



Tom Banks' goal is to stop hauling grain with tractors and trailers altogether.

working round the UK, but shod with flotation tyres, not tracks. "Using the same trackways for all passes means we have to do what we can to conserve them, so tracks were a no-brainer for us," Mr Banks explains.

According to Elmer, its Transfer Track system offers three times more flotation than 900/60/R32 high flotation wheels, not only reducing compaction, but also

cutting the chances of getting stuck with such a heavy load.

A 340hp Claas Challenger 75E is hired in for the season to pull the chaser bin. It has a full unloading height of 4.6m, while there are two viewing windows, working lights and cameras.

Mr Banks aims to put a stop to hauling grain with tractors and trailers altogether in the near future, hence the investment in the Titan.

# Perard's monster Interbenne 46 makes short work of unloading

By Nick Wigdahl

Horsch isn't the only company with a tracked grain chaser. Claimed to be the largest grain chaser in Europe, Perard's Interbenne 46 (imported by Suffolk firm Quivogne UK) has moved rapidly from its stand at Cereals 2015 to the high-yielding fields on the Cambridgeshire/Suffolk border.

With a capacity of 46cu m, it can hold about 35t of wheat, yet takes less than 90 seconds to unload in

dry conditions, thanks to a chunky 700mm-diameter auger. The Barlow Estate is using the tracked version but will shortly swap this for a triple-axled machine that will be the more likely seller in the UK.

Standard spec is 710/50R26.5 Michelin tyres, full air and hydraulically suspended drawbar and a roll-over tarpaulin. Larger 800/45 R30.5 tyres are an option but the overall width will still be less than 3m.

Wheeled versions of the chaser cost £94,000.



The Interbenne 46 is settling in nicely on the Barlow Estate in East Anglia.

**\* We reckon we can comfortably farm 2,000ha with the kit we have**

Tom Banks



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