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LAMMA Spring Spreading Competition 2004



Alan Banks and his son Ben Banks

Despite the cold weather, spirits were high at **LAMMA 2004**, nowhere more than the nutri-bio stand.

The Farm Sales advisors were kept busy giving guidance, information and generally catching up with their customer's news at home and on the farm. LAMMA always provides farmers with the first chance of the new year to go out and plan their strategies, from machinery purchases to fertiliser requirements. Consequently it was once again the time of year for farmers to go "tyre kicking". The nutri-bio stand saw a constant stream of visitors calling for a chat with the sales team, leading to a very successful event.

Emma Young, sales and marketing assistant said, "Farmers appear to be more and more interested in our product. Increasing pressure on inputs, combined with the growing awareness that the soil must be treated as an important asset to the farm business has led many farmers in the region to rethink their fertiliser strategies. Also it was good to see many satisfied customers from last year return with new orders, suggesting the consistent effort to improve our product and service appears to have paid off as there seemed to be lots of happy customers."

Farmers visiting the nutri-bio stand were encouraged to take part in a free prize draw with a first prize of 1000 tonnes of nutri-bio, worth £1500. This went to an extremely grateful Ben Banks of Harlton Farms, Harlton, Cambridge who said, "This is probably the best and the most valuable

raffle prize I have ever won, and I am looking forward to using the product this spring." Other prizes of whisky and a nutri-bio jacket went to Peter French from Braintree in Essex and Jeremy Haywood from Hougham in Lincolnshire respectively.

All in all LAMMA proved to be an unqualified success, especially for the nutri-bio team. The unprecedented interest in the product has shown them that farmers are seriously looking at efficient and cost-effective ways to improve the condition and quality of one of their most important assets, the soil.



nutri-bio support the Relaunch of the Pioneer



The Pioneer is a first class deep sea Essex Smack
and was once part of a fleet of 150 similar vessels registered in Colchester.

She was built on the Colne in 1864. Having spent years rotting in the West Mersea mud she was finally rescued in 1998. On 17th May 2003 at 11.45am, the Pioneer was relaunched on Brightlingsea Town Hard.

Pioneer worked out of the Colne and the Blackwater, sailing all around the British Isles and northern Europe. She dredged for deep sea oysters and scallops, a trade described as the hardest and cruellest Essex men ever worked.

The 70 ft hull was totally restored over the last three years at Scripps Farm, Great Totham and had to travel by road to Brightlingsea. Hauliers, Abbey Ltd, arrived at Scripps Farm with a crew of four strong looking truckers and some awesome equipment. There was an 80 ton Iveco tractor unit towing a new Commetto extendable 5 axle low loading trailer. This had a full power rear steering unit and extended to 26 metres with the ability to carry 60 tons. The Pioneer at this stage weighed 23 tons. In addition they brought a 150 ton F16 tractor unit and a support vehicle to head the convoy.

The Pioneer had already been jacked onto RSJs that were blocked up at each side clear of the hull. The trailer was then reversed under the ship and hydraulically raised to take her weight. The RSJs were then removed and the Pioneer was secured onto the trailer, which was then lowered to give minimal ground clearance.

During this three-hour operation a thunderstorm broke. The sky darkened, rain and hail lashed the Pioneer's shed. Water ran in torrents down the farm drive and soaked the field of wheat over which the Pioneer had to travel before reaching a metalled road. So nutri-bio and Eve Trakway came to the rescue by supplying aluminium decking. 40 panels, each three metres long, were laid in relay to allow the lorry to cross the field. At last headed by a Police escort the Pioneer was across the field and on her way to Colchester.

The Pioneer spent two days on view in Colchester town centre so that all could admire her. Then on Friday evening the Pioneer started the final leg of her

journey to Brightlingsea. Early on Saturday 17th May 2003 the Pioneer was nursed down the Hard. Two cranes lifted her off the trailer, and supported on her own legs the Pioneer rested on the Brightlingsea Hard for the first time in 70 years.

Finally with great panache Councillor Jo Ruffel poured a libation of champagne over the Pioneer. She said that her Great Grandfather Joe Ruffel had been her Skipper exactly 100 years ago and she was proud to maintain her family's links with the ship.

The Band struck up. Rupert Marks, Trustee, called for Three Cheers. The smacks and barges in the harbour rang their bells and blew their foghorns. And at exactly that moment the Pioneer lifted and floated on the tide.

The Pioneer was home at last.

For more information log onto:
www.rupert.marks.btinternet.co.uk

Anglian Water spreading contractors, Agrivert, have invested in 10 spreaders for this years spreading campaign.

Agrivert working with nutri-bio



The latest spreaders will be Terragator 2104s and 3104s, fitted with the latest weigh load equipment, low ground pressure tyres and specialist spreader bodies.

Last year due to the excellent weather the whole spreading campaign lasted 2 months instead of the normal 3. So this year the 10 spreaders will be in 6 teams, working double shifts in order to maximise the output of each team in the first two months.

This means that most of the spreading will be able to take place in the first 6 weeks. Our aim this year is to increase our effectiveness as a team, so that we will be able to meet the farmers' timing requirement more effectively in July and August.

Normally, taking on a contract farming agreement to increase farm size from 454 to 650 ha in the last twelve months would be enough for most ordinary farmers; **Andrew Ward** however is no ordinary farmer. This summer, he will also be hosting this year's Cereals Event in June.

Andrew, who farms with his father Roy at Glebe farm, Leadenham in Lincolnshire, with the help of one full time member of staff and one part time, is an ideal candidate to host the event. His enthusiasm for his work and his willingness to experiment with new ideas has led to a sound philosophy for his business.

"Over the last few years I have come to the conclusion that while great advances have been made in establishment techniques, plant breeding, disease and weed control we have tended to overlook our most important asset, the soil. We have to find ways of achieving more output from the soil. The old method of replacing nutrient offtake with simple compound fertilisers and nothing else should be confined to the history books. I think we should be looking more at organic matter content, calcium levels, the unlocking of tied up nutrients and applying many different trace elements. As a result of this we have been using biosolids as an integral part of the new soil treatment philosophy in order to help the soil respond differently."

The farm can be easily categorised into three distinct soil types: Clays, sandy clay loams and sand over limestone on the heath. "We have a major problem with blackgrass on the heavy land. To counteract this we leave the set-a-side as natural regeneration and give it two hits of glyphosphate in order to keep the blackgrass under control. The nutri-bio is then spread on the land at a rate of approximately 19 tonnes per hectare before the oilseed rape is sown."

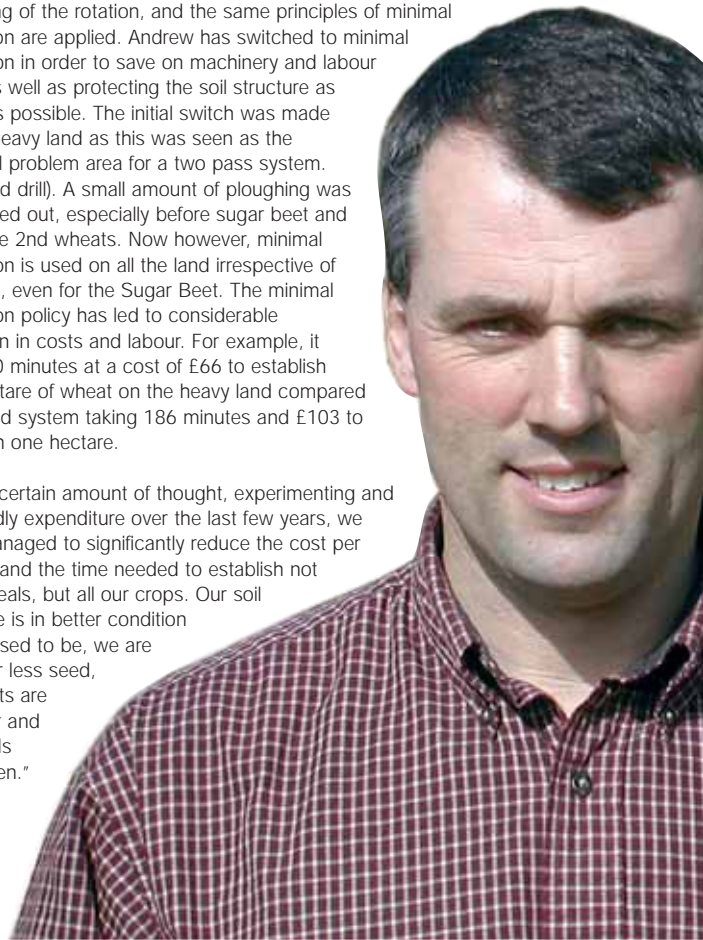
Incorporation and cultivation is carried out with a Simba "Solo" pulled by a John Deere 8520T. A high content of phosphate in the nutri-bio has allowed us to eliminate the use of other phosphates. Also the nutri-bio contains enough nitrogen to establish the rape, eliminating the need for an autumn application. We also reduce the nitrogen applied the following spring by about 15 kg / ha due to the carry over.

"Although this will only be the third year of using nutri-bio we are already beginning to see some financial benefit. The conventional fertiliser policy over the first two years would have costed out at £54 per hectare whereas using nutri-bio the cost is £21 per hectare over the first two years. Despite this reduction in costs there has been no reduction in crop performance. We also have the added bonus of increased organic matter in the soil."

Fresh thinking

The nutri-bio is also introduced to the other two soil types at the beginning of the rotation, and the same principles of minimal cultivation are applied. Andrew has switched to minimal cultivation in order to save on machinery and labour costs as well as protecting the soil structure as much as possible. The initial switch was made on the heavy land as this was seen as the potential problem area for a two pass system. (Solo and drill). A small amount of ploughing was still carried out, especially before sugar beet and for all the 2nd wheats. Now however, minimal cultivation is used on all the land irrespective of soil type, even for the Sugar Beet. The minimal cultivation policy has led to considerable reduction in costs and labour. For example, it takes 80 minutes at a cost of £66 to establish one hectare of wheat on the heavy land compared to the old system taking 186 minutes and £103 to establish one hectare.

"With a certain amount of thought, experimenting and admittedly expenditure over the last few years, we have managed to significantly reduce the cost per hectare and the time needed to establish not only cereals, but all our crops. Our soil structure is in better condition than it used to be, we are using far less seed, the plants are healthier and our yields have risen."



latest news



This Year nutri-bio is conducting trials in conjunction with the College of West Anglia, as a joint venture, to see the impacts of applying biosolids to soil, ahead of a sugar beet crop. An eight hectare field was split in two to give a trial area and a control.

The trial will compare yield between the two plots as well as comparing soil nutrients both before and after the trial. The results of the trial will be issued in the New Year once the final analysis is made.

coming up

Essex Young Farmers County Show
Sunday 16th May

Cereals 2004
Wednesday 16th & Thursday 17th June

Royal Norfolk Show
Wednesday 30th June & Thursday 1st July

fact file



David Peak Fact File

Address

Braintree in Essex

Occupation

nutri-bio Farm Sales Advisor for Essex, South Suffolk, and South Cambridge

Age

About 23 (he says)

Hobbies

- He owns 6 Classic Tractors; 3 Massey Ferguson's and 3 Case Internationals
- He has more Land Rovers than socks
- David stars in two rock bands; The Disraeli Band and Mid Life Crisis, he plays the bass guitar and sings backing vocals

Responsibilities

David is very keen on Boating, therefore has been given the responsibility for the corporate beach hut in Frinton

For bookings please contact him on **07889 110170**

Saxon Agriculture specialise in trading and contract growing of commercial cereals, pulses and oilseeds. By focusing on quality and reliability, they are able to add value to their produce prior to sale.

Quality & Reliability



Andrew Clements



Covering the whole of the UK. They sell all grades of UK certified seed: Breeders, pre-basic, C1, C2.

They also trade in combinable crops including barley, wheat, oilseed rape and linseed. They purchase from farm and trade sources, and then sell to predominantly food and feed manufacturers.

Thanks to a unique deal Anglian Water is now able to offer a new service. Not only can it supply nutri-bio, but is also able to supply seed and buy all cereals including malting barley on behalf of Saxon Agriculture.

This allows farmers the ability to deal with one farm sales advisor, when buying fertiliser, seed and trading grain.

This arrangement has allowed nutri-bio and Saxon to add value to their services. As competition increases, ease of mind and flexibility becomes more and more important for their customers. Andrew Clements, a Director of Saxon said, "The real advantage is the relationship with the grower. We have been able to reduce the number of field staff going up the farm drive whilst at the same time increasing our services to the farmer by procuring and selling product."

With the new MTR rules releasing the shackles on the industry, farmers can now be more receptive to growing contracts than in the past. With the subsidies now tied to the land rather than the crop, farmers will be able to grow what they want and will be looking to maximise their income from the crops so they will be looking for suppliers and buyers who offer the best services.

If you would like further information or advice on any of the services or products available please do not hesitate to contact us on the details below.

Thank you.

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