

4cast Rises to Agronomic Challenge

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Highly manganese prone land ranging from heavy clay to black organic soil and a total arable acreage of nearly 600ha split into five blocks means Manor Farm at

Car Colston, Nottingham, is a far from easy unit to manage.

Farm manager Paul Thurman and agronomist Barry Eames, from ProCam Group company Fieldcare South, have their work cut out ensuring rotations fit seamlessly, disease and pest problems are economically managed and each hectare yields the highest margin possible.

ProCam 4-cast lies at the heart of the answer to this agronomic challenge with its resources guiding virtually every crop production decision made on the farm.

Mainstay of the system is a Wheat/OSR rotation with break crops of Spring Beans and Spring Barley being used strategically where appropriate.

“Our 4-cast data from at least the last five years shows Winter Wheat and OSR to be

the most consistently profitable crops so we try and gear the system up to produce as much of these as possible,” Barry Eames explains. “We’re also trying to grow as much first Wheat as possible to maximise

cultivation seedbed.

“4-cast’s profitability data shows the importance of reducing fixed costs on all sized farms and we’ve been moving over to more min-till to achieve this although the nature of the land means this is not advisable for second wheats although we are now looking at it” Barry Eames explains.

“We try and get the Second Wheats off to a good start but the extra nitrogen means Mildew and Eyespot can be an issue so we tend to use prochloraz/proline mix and then Lattitude to control Take-all. On the herbicide front, Blackgrass tends to be the main problem and prone land is treated pre-emergence with Crystal followed up with Atlantis.”

Paul Thurman says the priority for the farm in the future is to concentrate on more first Wheats and reduce costs further by using minimal tillage for more of the second Wheat land. Growing more Spring Barley is also something he would like to look at.

“We are also going to look at growing some Proteus and trying Amistar on the second Wheats as well as a third growth regulator at growth stage 37 to stop lodging.

“Arable production is an incredibly complex operation these days not just in terms of the implication of Cap Reform but also from a technical point of view. It’s no longer enough for suppliers to think simply about providing product, they have to rise to the challenge of providing the right technical information to help us get the most out of our land.

“I think this is where ProCam excel and I would say they pretty well led the field in this area. 4-cast is a great example of this.

From advice about what is the most profitable crop to grow to crop planning to sound advice on the most cost-effective use agrochemicals, Paul says ProCam and Fieldcare South have always delivered.

“Being able to learn from other farmers through 4-cast and benchmark where we are in relation to other producers in a similar situation is essential in being able to see where we can make improvements.”



Paul Thurman (left) with Agronomist Barry Eames.

returns and keep inputs low.”

This year’s wheat crop is made up of 197ha of first Wheat – Mallaca and Solstis - and 125ha of second Wheat – predominantly Einstein. Target yield for all Wheats is 3.75 tonne/acre with all first Wheats now sown into a minimal