

Self sufficiency farm achieves excellent results



Farm self sufficiency is the aim at Colin and Gareth Pugh's Cwmwhitton Farm, Knighton, Powys. The family have established a crop rotation and production system specifically designed to satisfy the requirements of the farms 1,200 breeding ewes, fattening lambs, and 130 head Saler suckler herd and fat stock.

For the 2011 harvest, 25 acres of beans were grown to serve as a protein source for the farm mix of homegrown forage and cereals. The beans were harvested at 19% MC then treated with Propcorn NC while rolling them to finish the job at harvest. While making the beans ready to incorporate into the diet and with seed potato harvest also to contend with during the exceptionally busy summer period, the Pugh's have been using a range of Kelvin

Cave products for several years, both to improve farm efficiency and improve home-grown feed values. Kelvin Cave's Technical Director, Andy Strzelecki has worked with Gareth and Colin to produce high nutrient-value homegrown feeds to replace high cost bought in concentrates.

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Growing and crimping of cereal crops is not new in the UK, with pioneering research dating back to 1918 demonstrating that optimum nutrient levels and digestibility are achieved when grain moisture is between 35 and 45%. The Pugh's have successfully adopted the technique to gain valuable harvest weeks by cutting cereal crops three weeks earlier than conventional harvesting, taking pressure off the farming system and producing a more nutritious and

digestible concentrate feed. It is particularly useful on later maturing crops and headlands allowing a more timely cereal harvest. This allows the seed potato harvest to begin and stubble turnips or grass seed to be planted on the crimped cereal ground.

The grain is treated with Crimpstore preservative, a unique blend of buffered organic acids specifically designed for the effective preservation of moist grain and pulses. Crimpstore is applied to 160 tonnes of crimped barley and wheat and ensiled in a purpose built clamp.

The non-corrosive preservative maximises nutrient retention in the clamp by lowering the pH of the grain instantly and restricting the fermentation of valuable sugar and starch. The crimped crop is fed ad-lib to stock with finishing fat lambs taking a particular liking to it. No instances of laminitis or acidosis have been reported.

Crimping of farm grown cereals has been ongoing at Cwmwhitton Farm for several years, with a Murska 700 roller mill giving consistent performance. Fitted with two 700mm x 300mm diameter 2mm fluted rollers, this 10t/hr moist grain processing unit satisfies the high output requirements of the farm. In fact, the 3-point linkage mounted Murska is often hired out to neighbouring farmers, so it is extensively used throughout the year, demonstrating its high quality, long life reputation.

