

Claydon unveils 'optimum' tillage crop establishment system

Suffolk-based drill specialists Claydon launched an Optimum Tillage Crop Establishment System during two recent open days.

The system is based on three passes with a 7.5m Claydon straw harrow to achieve effective stubble management, a 4m Claydon drill and rolling. Agricultural engineer Jeff Claydon claims it will save a typical 300ha farm some £17,805 annually.

"The Claydon Optimum Tillage System which we have developed over the last 15 years provides the optimum level of tillage required to establish the crop, both in the seeding zone and the rooting zone," he says.

"It incorporates a leading tine which lifts, aerates and drains

the soil, followed by a seeding tine which clears trash and places seed in 75-180mm-wide bands which are 300mm apart, providing the ideal environment for the crop to grow and thrive."

Mr Claydon says the system also significantly improves timeliness, enabling crops to be drilled under optimum conditions, which in turn greatly reduces weather risk, results in more even, more reliable establishment and produces higher yields.

"It also generates a range of other significant environmental and wildlife related benefits, including greatly improved soil structure, increased organic matter, higher earthworm populations and increased carbon sequestration.



Claydon says its tillage system produces the ideal rooting environment

Flexible and reliable

"With the economics of producing combinable crops as they are currently, farmers simply cannot afford to have underperforming land and crops, which is why it is vital to focus on establishing them correctly, using a flexible, reliable, low cost system."

In the last four years using the optimum tillage system has resulted in a massive reduction in

grass weeds, together with an average yield improvement of 10%, and up to 27% in dry conditions, Mr Claydon claims.

Uncertainties surrounding British agriculture post-Brexit mean farmers will have to become much more efficient and substantially reduce their "cost per tonne" of production to remain competitive in a rapidly changing marketplace, he adds.