

John Lycett's blog – September 2026

The number one topic of conversation today, whether in the farm office, the bar at the pub, out socially with friends or meeting at the Butty Box, is the price of fuel.

It is something we cannot control so let's look outside the box to see what's available.

Ford New Holland have had gas driven tractors in the UK for at least the last three years, to my knowledge, and the farm produce that in the digester.

Next up, could we be running them on rape seed oil? We're growing that as well.

If you have a JCB, your engine may be fuelled by hydrogen.

There are a lot of vegetable growers using solar power for seeding and weeding.

It seems we have to look to cut costs wherever we can.

We are a resilient breed so I'm sure ways will be found to challenge the increasing costs.

Even a driverless tractor would reduce overheads – one man with today's technology could easily drive two tractors in the same field.

Changing the subject, we're well into drilling autumn crops. We started with the cover crops, then the rape acreage and then the fodder crops for the digester. Now it's the wheat.



For working down we mainly use a tracked tractor with a six metre Horsch Terrano working down after the maize stubble, followed by the Horsch Pronto six metre seed drill.



Let the seed see the soil!

Steven tells me that he is averaging about 80 acres a day, at the moment.

Steve and Sam have ploughed up some grass and drilled it with the Lemken combination drill. They also seem to have done quite a lot of drilling for other people.

Other jobs on the farm are:

James and George have emptied the lagoon of liquid digestate ready for the winter.

A few loads of wheat have been leaving the farm.

Lucerne harvesting and drying has now come to an end.

I am not going into the subject the SFI Scheme debacle but I hope some of you will find, or will have found, time to support the Cruckton Ploughing Match this Saturday, 3rd October at Charlie Brown's Shotatton Farm.