

Hereford Monitor Farm

Meeting 1: Launch meeting, Vision 2020

Date: 27 June 2017

Location: The Green Man, Fownhope, Herefordshire
(*Russell Price & Martin Williams*)

For more information, visit: cereals.ahdb.org.uk/Hereford



The Hereford Monitor Farm- Introduction and steering group

This launch event provided an introduction to both the **Monitor Farm programme** and the farms themselves. Hosted by Russell and Martin, it gave those who attended the opportunity to analyse his business and discuss the key issues that will be addressed during the three-year programme. The principle is that these topics will also be relevant to most arable businesses in the area, so the meetings provided will be of value to all those who participate

Meet the new Hereford monitor farmers in this film:

<https://youtu.be/mWJIWzN7CaI>

Hereford Monitor Farm Steering Group members:



Andrew
Goodinson



Jack
Hopkins



Ian
Oliver



Mark
Wood

Martin Williams, Tump Farm



“My ambition for the business during the Monitor Farm period is to reduce fixed and variable costs, increase profitability and make the business resilient past 2020. “

Martin Williams – Hereford monitor farmer

My grandfather came to Tump Farm in 1929 as a tenant. Over time tithe type adjoining land was purchased from local owners and even today fields are named after the prior owners. The home farm now stands at 480 acres owned. A mixed farm on the River Wye, it has changed from a dairy with horse and cart milk round, to beef suckler and sheep, to now a predominantly arable farm.

From the base at Tump Farm we run a contracting business and now operate in a joint venture with a neighbouring farmer as well as rented land for arable cropping.

Farm facts

779ha farmed
675ha Cereals and oilseeds
200ha owned / 317ha rented / 255ha joint venture
Potatoes / pasture
Soils: Light silts—Red and Woolhope Clay

| Yields (t/ha) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|-------------------------|------|-------|------|
| First Feed Wheat | 8.91 | 10.51 | 9.05 |
| Winter Barley | - | 8.8 | 6.76 |
| Oilseed Rape | 2.95 | 4.83 | 4.62 |

Labour: 3 full time / 3 part time / 2 seasonal

Rotation:

(OSR/Beans/Pots) - W.Wheat / W.Wheat / Barley

Tillage and technology: Min till/plough, RTK auto steer, variable rate & yield mapping

Grain storage: On farm and with joint venture



Russell Price, Town Farm



“The next three years are going to be hugely challenging for British Agriculture and what better way to analyse my business, to be fit for the future, than becoming a monitor farmer. Both Martin and I are keen not only to concentrate on reducing our costs, but also look at how our farming industry can work closer together both locally and nationally to become solid for the future.”

Russell Price, Hereford monitor farmer

My father came to Lower Witherstone Farm in 1961, a 100 acre mixed farm in South Herefordshire. After college it was obvious 100 acres was never going to support two families, hence the decision to start an agricultural contracting business. Today that business has grown today into a more diverse agri-business with arable farming very much at its roots. While I still live and own lower Witherstone Farm, the business base is now Town Farm in Castle Frome near the Herefordshire/Worcestershire Border where I have been a tenant since 2004.

Farm facts

780ha farmed
 360ha Cereals and oilseeds
 40ha owned / 400ha rented / 340ha contract farmed
 Potatoes (in-house) / grass seed / pasture
 Medium sandy loams—Bromyard series clay

| Yields (t/ha) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|------------------|------|-------|------|
| First Feed Wheat | 9.45 | 10.13 | 8.97 |
| Winter Barley | - | 9.01 | 7.14 |
| Oilseed Rape | 4.95 | 5.61 | 3.98 |

Labour:

6 full time / 2 part time / 3 seasonal / 4 sub-contractors

Rotation:

(OSR/beans/pots/grass) - W.Wheat / W.Wheat / Barley

Tillage and technology:

Min till/slot seeding/direct drilling. Plough only for potatoes. RTK auto steer



Next meeting

Date: 8 November 2017

Time: 1:00pm

Location: Bishops Frome Village Hall, Bishops Frome, WR6 5AZ

For more information contact: Richard Meredith richard.meredith@ahdb.org.uk

To find out more about Farmbench, AHDB's benchmarking tool, contact:

Megan Loynes megan.loynes@ahdb.org.uk

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