

## ■ THE RIGHT SOLUTION

*Fastracs are preferred for the field comfort offered by all-round suspension, but the tractors' tyres have to perform as well off the road as on.*

**S**uspension systems and faster top travel speeds mean modern tractors are capable of far higher outputs in the field and on the road than just a few years ago. The right tyre equipment, though, is critical to fully exploiting that potential both safely and effectively.

At Eye, Suffolk-based Rattlerow Farms, where arable manager Jerry Scotchman and tractor operator Martin Sargent oversee the day-to-day activities of the cropping operation that is run alongside an internationally-renowned pig-breeding business, JCB Fastracs have for some time been favoured for their swiftness on the road and comfort in the field. Recent additions to the fleet, though, have been specified with tyres that allow road speed and field traction to be maximised while soil compaction is kept to a minimum.

The business grows wheat, oilseed rape, peas and sugar beet on 800ha (2,000ac), and uses a fleet of four JCB Fastrac 3200 models, two with the newer Xtra specification that includes JCB's P-tronic powershift transmission. The older two tractors were specified when new with 540/65 R34 Trelleborg TM800 High Speed tyres, which give excellent on-road performance,

having the speed rating necessary to meet the top travel speed of the Fastrac, while at the same providing good traction for heavier field operations and fitting comfortably within tramlines for fertiliser spreading.

“But we'd also been using another wide option for top work, and these are not ideal for use with Fastracs, as they further reduce the turning circle on a tractor which isn't the tightest-turning anyway, added to which they also obviously make road travel difficult,” says Jerry Scotchman. **“So when the two newer tractors were ordered we looked at other options to get the flotation we want for top work, without compromising on road speeds or ease of transport.”**

After consulting with Neil Sharman from Trelleborg, the solution was found in the TM900 High Power tyre, in 710/60 R30 format, and these were specified on both of the newer Fastrac 3200 Xtras. One of the key drivers behind the choice was the fact that, with this model and size of tyre, a broad, long footprint spreads the weight of the machine but doesn't bring with it the transport and turning circle problems of other wide

# Performance requires the right rubber

options. Just as importantly, full use can still be made of the Fastracs' high road speed capabilities.

"We found that this is the only available tyre of its size and type on the market which has a speed rating that matches what the Fastrac is capable of," says Jerry Scotchman. "The TM900s give us the flotation we need for top work, plus the traction that's required for heavier jobs, and a 65km/hr speed rating to match the tractor's capabilities on the road.

"While there are now other tractors available that have top travel speeds almost as high as the Fastrac, none of them have the same all-round suspension system. We really like the Fastracs for the comfort that this brings in the field, which allows us to work at a decent rate without getting thrown about in the operator's seat, and we wouldn't want to go back to conventional tractors.

"But to get the most from them they need to be on the right tyres for the job in hand, which is why we swap from the TM900s for rolling with our 12.2m rolls and lime application with our Bredal trailed spreader to the TM800s for transport



and fertiliser spreading with our 24m Kuhn twin-disc machine.

**“ We also use the bigger tyres when applying muck with our 16t Richard Western spreaders, and can use them for grain haulage with our 16t Western trailers. As they can work up at 30psi for haulage, and then be deflated to 14psi for rolling, the beauty of the TM900s is in their versatility.”**