

Spreader update speeds the job

By Jane Carley

The arrival of two new 15t Bredal K105 bulk lime and fertiliser spreaders from Keith Rennie Machinery has allowed Berkshire contractors Shorts Agricultural to tackle its expanding lime and fertiliser application workload in an increasingly tight window.

With annual contracts totalling 10,000ha a year, Shorts offers lime spreading services which include variable rate application. It has also recently taken on the franchise to supply and apply Cropkare, a high P&K fertiliser made from poultry manure burnt for energy generation.

"With such a large acreage, much of it on undulating land, a self-propelled spreader was an option," says agricultural manager James Winfield. "But we took the decision to purchase two high-capacity

trailed spreaders – we can always use the tractors for other jobs and can still cover large areas quickly."

He concedes that this was not a cheap option. "There is a high initial outlay for the Bredal, but we feel that the reliability and accuracy they give us in the application of both lime and Cropkare fertiliser justifies the decision."

The latest Bredal K series spreaders have also been upgraded, with a stronger chassis and stainless steel spreading gear, sealed for minimal maintenance and long life. "There's less greasing and the stainless steel resists corrosion from the fertiliser," says Mr Winfield.

"Bredal's spinner system gives a true 12m spread, which is essential for an ash-based product." Application rates are governed by the speed of the hydraulically-driven floor belt and adjusted via Bredal's own in-cab control box.

"We need a high belt speed for



Two 15t Bredal spreaders allow Shorts Agricultural complete lime and fertiliser spreading in a tight window.



lime and a low speed for fertiliser, and few bulk spreaders can adapt to both. The Bredal system is easy to adjust, particularly important for variable rate lime, for which it is linked to a Patchwork Black Box Cruiser GPS system."

Workrates of 60t of fertiliser or 250t of lime per day can be achieved with one spreader. "We can be working behind the combine with a set of discs waiting on the headland," comments Mr Winfield. "Spreading is increasingly a contractor operation – our customers like the fact that we are in and out in one day with no hassle."

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