



# A clear solution for farmers

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

## Where there's muck there's a slurry/dirty water problem... or is there?

### Waveney Catchment (4b)

CSFO: Robert Camps

### Business Description

A & M Contracting are a recently established business based in the Waveney Catchment. They are the first contractors in the area to offer a slurry spreading service utilising a full width Boom Drop Hose System.

Set up and run by Richard Aymes & Richard Mortimer after recognising the potential for such a service, partly as a result of CSF activity in the area promoting more efficient, lower risk slurry management and application methods.

The first personal engagement with the local CSFO was a meeting concerning a consequently successful CSF grant application for the Mortimer family pig business – roofing a manure store to help reduce the problem of large volumes of dilute slurry. Having begun to address the problem themselves meant they understood what the other side of the job needed –fast, efficient application, making best use of the slurry and recognising other similarly placed farmers in the area needed the same too.

Being in a predominantly arable area with heavy soils they went for an umbilical system which reduced tracking and weight carried in the field and gave a high work rate for improved timelines through a 12m boom that matched with the 12/24M predominant tramline systems. Features also include incorporated flow meter, GPS technology and macerators to ensure accurate and appropriate applications.



### Pollution Issues

Dilute slurry and dirty water was often “disposed of” by means of conventional single outlet splash plate slurry tankers, or low capacity irrigation repeatedly on land only in the immediate vicinity of lagoons. A job done either on a “fire engine” basis to alleviate storage problems, or consigned to times of the year and limited situations that did not conflict with other arable priorities or constraints.

Applications were often neither timely in terms of risk of run off, by pass flow or leaching, nor made best use of the nutrients available for crops. Application rates and spreading evenness were a hit and miss affair.



## Farmer Engagement and Motivation

Farmers benefit from:

- A fast efficient service.
- Spreading liquid manures more accurately and knowing "what's gone on" enabling confident allowance in fertiliser planning.
- Ability to spread when own labour & machinery busy elsewhere.
- Ability to spread in situations previously unavailable- especially into established/ growing crop when available Nitrogen is more fully utilised.
- A professional service reducing the stress of the job.
- Added safeguards & confidence to comply with NVZ regulations.
- Fertiliser savings.

More and more farmers have been pleasantly surprised by the ability of this system to apply liquid manures in the spring, in crops at the later timings without lasting crop damage and much reduced soil compaction and rutting. This enables greatly increased utilisation of the available nitrogen by the crop, increased area available for spreading and eliminates many of the spreading risks and nitrogen leaching associated with autumn applications. It is a practice that also minimises the volume needing to be spread in the autumn in order to free up storage capacity for the "closed period".

## Pollution Solutions

The advantages of Precision Slurry Spreading:

- Drop/Trailing hoses – even application cross the bout width and placement on the ground/under crop canopy reduces loss of ammonia to the atmosphere even in windy conditions. Reduced odour/neighbour nuisance and crop contamination.
- Umbilical system – even over roads, reduces tracking, rutting/compaction, increases work rates. Job done in more timely manner – less exposure to pollution risks.
- Macerators – eliminate blockages- more even spread.
- Flow meter – known and matched application rates.
- GPS – bout matching & reduced over/under lapping.
- Ammonia testing – know the available N going on.
- Applications in crop when capacity of N take up is greater – less leaching and better utilisation reducing fertiliser costs.
- Suitable spreading situations / windows of opportunity increased.
- Availability of technically superior equipment and experienced operators freeing up farm capital and labour.

Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO)

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