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Visitors look at how to combat rising costs

The 'Double Whammy' of a rise in livestock feed costs combined with the hike in the price of compound fertiliser proved a major talking point on one stand at last week's LAMMA Show.

"It's fair to say that many of the farmers we spoke to were 'positively disgruntled' by the rising costs and looking at how to maximise their own on-farm resources," says Paul McUrich of Hi-Spec Engineering Ltd.

Hi-Spec used the show to highlight the new straw blower option for its Vertical tub-type feeder, so that having used it for feeding, the feeder can then be quickly transposed for bedding down yards, allowing one man and tractor to do both jobs.

The increase in compound feed prices on the back of rising grain values, combined with lower silage yields caused by the dry conditions last spring and summer, means that livestock farmers are looking closely at the quality of the ration mix they feed. However, also faced with higher prices for compound fertiliser, farmers and contractors were also looking at how to maximise the use of slurry and manure.

The quality and evenness of the distribution of ration components throughout a complete diet mix is essential if growth rates or milk output are to be maximised, and was one of the main topics for visitors to the Hi-Spec stand at last week's LAMMA Show.

"We had visitors from throughout the UK and further afield, but a consistent topic from livestock farmers was how they could make better use of their forage. We consequently had a lot of interest in both our vertical auger tub-type feeder and the MixMax paddle type diet feeder and the fact that through us they can call upon the services of an independent nutritionalist for advice on how to maximise their forage," comments southern area manager George Read.

Dual purpose

Of particular interest was the Hi-Spec Vertical single or twin type feeder with capacities from 10 – 24m³ which is capable of handling both clamp and baled silage and other types of forage. Having used the Vertical feeder to mix and feed-out, the new blower option which incorporates an adjustable spout then allows it to be used as a straw blower, and has a maximum blow of up to 22 metres. George and Paul will be happy to discuss all options with farmers looking to change their feeding profile.

Unlike multiple auger type feeders, the MixMax uses a single rotor fitted with angled arms that lifts the feed material clear of the mix in order to quickly achieve an even distribution of material throughout the ration. As a result feed conversion is maximised and all components in the ration are fully utilised, plus by only having a single rotor this makes the MixMax extremely reliable.

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The greater awareness of the value and potential saving from the optimal use of slurry and manure also resulted in considerable interest and discussion about Hi-Spec's range of vacuum tankers and Xcel range of rear-discharge manure spreaders.

"All-in-all LAMMA was an extremely good show with lots of positive enquiries and demonstrations booked," concludes George.

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