



The Campaign for the Farmed Environment is encouraging farmers and land managers to voluntarily adopt land management practices that will retain and exceed the environmental benefits that used to be provided by set-aside. There is a range of voluntary management measures or ELS options that you can adopt on your farm to benefit the environment, whilst at the same time being agronomically practical.

Name: Philip Rowbottom

Region: South/West Yorkshire

Farm: Mount Farm

Size: 480 acres (195 ha)

Background

Mount Farm is an arable farm operating a simple rotation consisting Oil Seed rape followed by two crops of milling wheat covering 300 acres of the farm. The farm also has 30 acres of short rotation coppice. The remaining 150 acres of the farm is a golf course. A 18 hole golf course was established 15 years ago covering 120 acres with a new 9 hole golf course that has been developed in the last 3 years.



The farm has a 6000 tonne grain store the majority of which is used to store oil seed rape on contract. The farm has recently purchased a Vredo direct drill for drilling grass seed into the golf course and also for contract work which is pulled by a 100hp tractor on turf tyres. All heavy arable work is now undertaken by contractors hence the need to keep a simple rotation.

The business employs 15 full time staff to maintain the different elements of the business.

The farm has good population of skylarks, Grey Partridge, barn owl and numerous kestrels.

What environmental management do you already undertake on your farm?

I have never participated in any agri- environment scheme. I am happy to admit I am a sceptic of the schemes generally. I did think about joining ELS however decided that the amount of information we were asked to provide such as the number of trees and the additional paperwork involved did not enthuse me to join.

This is not to say I am not doing environmental work, hedgerows are cut on an extended rotation. We grow 3 acres of game cover using a range of different crops to offer a variety of seed. In addition to this I consider the 150 acres of golf course which up to 15 years ago was arable on an area of historic parkland to be delivering significant benefits for the environment.

How will you be/are you taking part in the Campaign?

I will be maintaining my areas of voluntary game cover that will contribute towards the campaign targets. I am delivering lots for rough field corner/reverted arable areas, it just happens to be on and around the golf course. I think the message here is that things farmers are delivering for the environment don't always fall into neat boxes.

I have no watercourses on the farm to buffer.

Will you be using an adviser?

Not really necessary with current management. If I was convinced to enter environmental stewardship I would seek this advisor support. I have noted a golf course recently getting into HLS and am keen to see if my course has any scope.

What are the benefits of taking part in the Campaign?

The voluntary approach to CFE benefits the industry as a whole to demonstrate to the government we as farmers are looking after the environment and care about the place in which we live and work.

How does undertaking voluntary management fit in with your farming business?

The voluntary management fits with the farm shoot. The areas of game cover benefit the environment and also bring in some income. It should be noted that on purely economic terms we would not have game cover however I do like to see grey partridge around the farm and do have keen interest in having healthy environment on the farm.

What is driving you to take part in the Campaign?

What the CFE is asking me to do reflects a lot of what I am doing already in order to have a healthy environment on my farm. I am interested in the environment I just don't want to be burdened by Schemes and the inevitable bureaucracy that involves.