



Crowmarsh Battle Farms Ltd



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Crowmarsh Battle Farms Ltd manage 1,880 acres in hand, with a further 1,800 acres farmed under four separate whole-farm contracts. It is an all arable enterprise matching sound rotations with a developing habitat creation scheme. Satellite-guided soil and crop mapping have been pioneered on the farm to help fine tune management decisions.



The Farm

The Chamberlain family have been farming at Benson for over a hundred and twenty years and now the fourth generation are involved in the family business. Crowmarsh Battle Farm is an all arable enterprise and we have always seen conservation management as complementary to profitable arable farming, following Integrated Farm Management principles.

Crops for food

We follow a traditional mixed rotation of autumn and spring sown crops. This spreads the workload, reduces disease and pest problems, encourages wildlife and provides opportunity for more economical and environmentally sensitive weed control. Winter wheat is the main crop, grown primarily for milling and export, with some for livestock feed. Spring barley is grown for both stock feed and beer, oilseed rape for margarine and cooking oil; beans complete the rotation. We are landlords to a green waste compost site and a food waste anaerobic digestion plant on the farm, providing a good source of organic matter for our thinner soils with nutrient value.



Community

The application of new technology and an ability to change and adapt has always been a key part of the way we farm. The most notable example of this approach has been a major diversification project which has seen redundant farm buildings and a listed tithe barn converted into office space and business units. The development has brought 180 new jobs to the area.

Conservation

We have always worked hard to maintain and enhance the farm environment and landscape. The land owned by the farm was in Countryside Stewardship Schemes for 20 years to 2014. In December 2014, we entered a 10-year Entry Level Scheme/Higher Level Scheme majoring on farmland birds and includes the establishment of a new 'green lane' bounded on both sides by hedges and grassy margins. We are also involved in a range of positive environmental management projects including hedgerow coppicing, the pollarding of willows in fields bordering the River Thames and the thinning of mature woodland to provide a better balance of wildlife habitats.

Visits

Come to Crowmarsh Battle Farm to see our whole farm approach, where rotations, the selective use of inputs and efficient use of resources is balanced with planned environmental management to make Crowmarsh Battle Farm a truly sustainable business.



About LEAF Demonstration Farms

LEAF Demonstration Farms are commercial farms, which show the beneficial practices of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) to a broad range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM in order to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. For more information, visit www.leafuk.org.