



DEMONSTRATION FARM



Midloe
Grange Farm
R C FELCE & SON

Midloe Grange Farm



Farmer: David Felce

Address: R. C. Felce & Son, Midloe Grange Farm, Rectory Lane, Southoe, Cambridgeshire, PE19 5YD

Website: www.midloegrangefarm.co.uk

Midloe Grange Farm is a 240 acre arable farm where the aim is to maintain the farm's viability by using modern technology to produce the maximum economic yields of premium crops, alongside caring and enhancing the environment. Here, David sees Integrated Farm Management as putting a name to the responsible and careful husbandry already practised on many farms and demonstrating this to the wider public.



The Farm

My father bought Midloe Grange Farm back in 1954 and today we work closely with our neighbours to pool resources and expertise. It is a 240 acre arable farm in the heart of some beautiful Cambridgeshire countryside.

Crops for food

We grow winter wheat in rotation with oilseed rape and beans as a break crop. Break crops are important as they assist in the control of troublesome weeds and naturally restrict the build-up of pests and diseases. I have always tried to combine appropriate use of technology and careful monitoring of crops, with responsible and sympathetic attention to the many wildlife and conservation features on the farm. I carry out my own agronomy on the farm, and provide the service to a group of neighbouring farms. This has also included creating a Countryside Stewardship Scheme across several of the farms.

The farm is involved in projects to enable productive farming to take place whilst reducing the impact upon the environment. One example is being carried out with LEAF and the Environment Agency to look at ways of preventing and capturing soil and sediment that may transport nutrients and pesticides into water.

The farm has a meeting room that allows groups to explore ideas and theory before looking at the practical aspects out on the farm. The aim is to work with other groups and organisations to bring together different areas of expertise in order to develop sound, practical solutions.



Conservation

Conservation is an integral part of the way we farm here at Midloe Grange Farm. For me, LEAF and Integrated Farm Management puts a name to the responsible and careful husbandry already practised by many farmers.

I have planted a number of hedges and trees over the years and time my hedge cutting carefully being mindful that they are home and an important food source for wild animals and birds. We have seven ponds on the farm, two of which have been cleaned and one is stocked with fish. Six metre margins have been established around several fields, some of which have been sown with a mixture of grass and wild flowers to encourage wildlife. Midloe Grange is also home to summer visitors such as swifts and turtle doves, and migrant warblers, as well as all the resident species of birds that are part of a healthy farmed environment, such as skylarks, grey partridge, tree sparrows, linnets and bullfinches. I have also set up a number of bird and bat boxes around the farm to encourage nesting.

Ongoing monitoring of moths has identified several species of local and national importance, such as the white spotted pinion, which is dependent upon elm trees to lay its eggs. Midloe is fortunate to have a row of elm trees that have, to date, survived the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease.

Historic Interest/visits

We have a 15 acre paddock on the farm of national importance. The paddock has ridge and furrow cultivation and moated boundaries. It has been dated back to the Middle Ages and is a County Wildlife Site. Green Winged Orchid, sulphur clover and stemless thistle are just some of the wild flower species that have been recorded on the site. We look forward to welcoming you to Midloe Grange Farm.



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.

