

PRESS RELEASE

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Crowds seek out advice at Grassland & Muck 2011

Almost 15,000 visitors keen to keep abreast of the latest forage and manure developments packed the aisles and demonstration plots at Grassland & Muck 2011, organised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England and partnered by Yara.

The vast array of machinery, including many new launches, was a real crowd-puller, while a topical forum programme sponsored by Keenan as well as key advice to promote top quality grass and forage production also proved popular. Visitor numbers rose by more than 2900 compared with three years ago when Grassland & Muck was last held.

The event took place on 18th and 19th May at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, and Kate Rider, RASE technical events manager, was delighted with the attendance and success of the event.

“There was a real buzz at Grassland & Muck 2011, no doubt helped by better livestock prices and continued signs of improvement for dairy farmers.

“We welcomed 14,994 visitors from across the UK, Ireland and Europe, keen to see the latest machinery and hear the latest ideas to keep their businesses moving forward. All our exhibitors did a fantastic job despite a shortage of grass following months of dry weather, which unfortunately made it difficult for manufacturers running grassland machinery demonstrations to show their machines to their full potential.

“We would like to thank all of our exhibitors and sponsors, especially event partner Yara for their ongoing support, for delivering the best event we can recall.”

Rosie Carne, marketing manager for Yara UK, said: “Grassland is a key sector for us, so we welcome the chance to be aligned with such an important technical event.”

Dry weather was a key talking point, she said. “Many farmers had held off and still had silage to cut but were determined to visit this essential event. A good number wanted to know how quickly they should get fertiliser on after cutting. With up to 6% yield lost for each week’s delay, our advice was to go as soon as they could, to get the best regrowth once moisture returned, and to apply a compound containing potash with the nitrogen as about 6kg of K is removed with every tonne of fresh grass cut.”

New for this year’s Grassland & Muck event was an hour-long headline debate. *Future-proofing UK livestock production* featured an expert panel and drew plenty of questions from the standing-room-only audience.

“Although the next decade would provide its share of challenges, the overall feeling arising from the debate was one of optimism for those prepared to focus on their customers’ requirements,” said debate chairman Cedric Porter of Supply Intelligence.

“Markets were set to improve, driven by rising demand for food and expansion of exports, on-farm efficiencies would progress and some direct support was likely to remain for the next decade at least. We also heard that while farming’s carbon footprint would become increasingly important, it was not the wish of government or its advisers for it to cut into UK food production.”

Hundreds of grassland machines were put through their paces across the 160-acre dedicated demonstration site, while a record number of muck spreaders and slurry tankers were shown in the muck area, with the demonstration sponsored by ADAS. Working silage clamp machinery also proved popular.

There were machines to suit all needs, from Krone's giant 500hp Big M 500 self-propelled mower capable of 20ha/hour, to Kverneland's 3.2m 2832F front-mounted disc unit which needed just 55hp to drive it.

Claas launched its upgraded Variant Pro baler range, John Deere released its 900 Series variable chamber round balers with Fast Release System and Vicon showed its new fixed and variable chamber machines.

Plenty of self-loader wagons were in evidence, including Schuitemaker's revamped Rapide 145, and Strautmann's Super Vitesse wagon demonstrated by importer Reco, both boasting improved crop flow.

New muck spreaders included Pichon's Muck Master range taking up to 24m³ and three new Twose models holding up to 9.1t.

Re-emphasising the range of machinery on show, New Holland's brought its W170B wheeled loader weighing almost 15t and delivering up to 194hp, while JCB launched its pivot-steer 62hp TM180, the smallest in the range.

There was plenty of advice to help boost sward production in the grass variety and management plots, with NIAB, IBERS and leading seed companies showing the latest varieties. The drought theme was in evidence on the British Seed Houses stand. Newly recommended AberNiche, the first of a pipeline of Festulolium (Italian-type ryegrass x meadow fescue) grasses to increase sward stress resistance, was on display, together with a drought-tolerant white clover.

Nickerson Direct advised farmers suffering from drought to let feeding requirements, rather than weather, dictate cutting date. Those planning to feed wholecrop to complement grass silage could cut grass early for maximum quality, while those planning to cut maize could hold off to boost yield and additional fibre.

Grassland & Muck returns in May 2014.

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Notes for editors

Grassland & Muck 2011

Grassland & Muck 2011 is the triennial event for the industry. Proudly presented by the Royal Agricultural Society of England and partnered by Yara UK limited.

The RASE

Since 1838, The RASE has played a leading role in the development of British agriculture and a vibrant rural economy through the uptake of good science, the promotion of best practice and a co-ordinated, impartial approach to wide-ranging rural issues.

Yara UK Limited

- Yara UK is the only company to market and distribute the complete range of plant nutrition products for agricultural, horticultural and amenity and protected crops for farmers and growers.
- Yara International, based in Oslo, Norway, has 8000 employees, operates in 120 countries and has a turnover in excess of £3.5bn.
- The name Yara is taken from a Nordic word meaning 'good harvest'.

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