



**CLIMATE CHANGE
CHAMPIONS**

2022

Climate Change Champions

CPM readers have the chance to decide who will be the UK's arable Climate Change Champion of the year.

By Tom Allen-Stevens

Robin Aird

Charlton Park Farms,
Wiltshire



Innovative ideas

If there's a confidence about the way Robin presents Charlton Park and its farming prospects, it's because this is based on a solid grasp of the underlying figures. Applying the same approach to its natural assets sets the estate up for a bright future.

Productivity push

The move to digestate, away from synthetic fertiliser, makes a massive difference for the farm's sustainable productivity. Robin has pushed this further by exploring every opportunity to maximise returns through both crop management and stewardship.

Cultivation care

A gradual, sustained reduction in cultivation is already bringing benefits in terms of reduced costs

and improved soil organic matter. Maize presents a challenge, but the business now has the measurement tools to bring optimum results.

Bio-based boldness

The wider, societal benefit of the AD unit arguably sits outside the business. But Robin has carefully ensured maximum opportunities for the estate and the WOMAD festival presents an ideal and direct route to market to capitalise on its natural assets.

Guy Eckley

Eckley Farms, Kent



Innovative ideas

Guy and Claire Eckley have not only followed a farming system that is sequestering carbon, they've developed an award-winning brand for the food produced from it, proving that the production of healthy food goes hand-in-hand with the drive to net zero.

Productivity push

A focus on getting the soil and plant biology to do the work has led to a substantial reduction in inputs, particularly fertiliser, for little or no drop in yield — a 10t/ha full-spec milling wheat is achieved with 180kgN/ha, for example.

Cultivation care

The Controlled Traffic Farming system, combined with direct drilling, keeps soil disturbance to a minimum. Worms are the main cultivation providers.

Bio-based boldness

Pure Kent customers have the opportunity to offset their own emissions through investing in the farm and its produce.

Toby Hogsbjerg

The Wicken Farms Co,
Norfolk



Innovative ideas

With a clear focus on the long-term future of The Wicken, Toby has set about securing this through progressive small steps. These are underpinned with on-farm trials and monitored objectively.

Productivity push

While root crops remain the dominant productive element for the business, reliance on synthetic nitrogen has been reduced through judicious use of cover crops and bought-in turkey litter. Crop management is geared towards maximising green area cover.

Cultivation care

There's limited potential to reduce reliance on the plough where root crops dominate on soils that don't self structure. However, both the number of passes and cultivation depth have been gradually reduced and benefits are beginning to show.

Bio-based boldness

The approach at The Wicken revolves around securing the long-term future of a North Norfolk estate, and Toby achieves this through balancing

its social side with the aims for productivity and biodiversity.

Tom Jewers

G.D. Jewers & Son, Suffolk

Innovative ideas

Tom's approach to improvements on the farm has been to experiment and learn from the results. Open to new ideas and never happy with what he's found, he's constantly searching for the next step and the technologies that will deliver further benefits.

Productivity push

A combination of soil improvement, judicious use of cover crops and a more scientific approach to crop nutrition have led to significant fertiliser savings. Cropping changes bring in further opportunities to boost productivity.

Cultivation care

The farm has successfully managed the transition to minimum-disturbance direct drilling, incorporating straw to cycle soil carbon and using cover crops to retain and improve structure.

Bio-based boldness

Tom's inquisitive nature and quest for improvements have made the farm the perfect site for the Helix East Anglia Demonstration Farm. His role on the SRC farmer advisory board brings further benefits to the wider arable farming community.

Michael Kavanagh

DGF & MAM Thompson Farms, Shropshire

Innovative ideas

Michael has embraced regenerative agriculture practices, resulting in a



climate-positive carbon balance and improving soil health. Through the Green Farm Collective, he plans to capitalise on his natural capital gains.

Productivity push

A concerted effort to rely less on synthetic inputs and build soil organic matter (SOM) has reduced fertiliser use by over 30%, while yield potential of the sandy loam soils has improved.

Cultivation care

A move to strip tillage and more lately direct drilling has seen average SOM levels increase from below 2.5% to 3.25% in six years.

Bio-based boldness

Quinoa and heritage milling wheat provide added value, low input crops, while the biodiversity and water stewardship gains are measured and can be traded, too.

Robert Moore

Agricycle, Lincolnshire

Innovative ideas

Robert has built a nationwide business around helping farmers recycle the plastic used on farms, taking this further with other operators in an industry-wide initiative to encourage more recycling and less waste. This has gone hand-in-hand with a plan to restore biodiversity to the family farm.

Productivity push

With blackgrass among the biggest challenges, the poorest land has been taken out of production with spring cropping, a sound rotation, manures and the introduction of livestock bringing sustainable yields using far less synthetic inputs.

Cultivation care

The rotation and livestock are helping the farm's move to minimum tillage on the heavy soils.



Bio-based boldness

With the aim of net zero carbon for both the recycling side and the farm, solar provides the power while a water treatment plant minimises freshwater usage. Agri-cycle also helps other farmers cut their emissions.

John Pawsey

Shimpling Park Farms, Suffolk

Innovative ideas

On-farm trials are a key source of new ideas through which John progresses his organic system. He also hosts farm visits and talks and avidly exchanges knowledge with others, which enriches the farm's diversity further.

Productivity push

Premium markets, bi-cropping and careful use of the farm's herbal leys have all helped increase productivity, which for John includes biodiversity and soil health, as well the farm financials. All of this is currently done with very low emissions.

Cultivation care

Controlled traffic farming and a rigorous attention to tyre pressure have kept compaction in check. Use of the plough has been nearly eliminated at the home farm and cultivations are appropriately diverse to ensure weeds are under control. Soil organic matter has risen from 2.9% to 5.5% over 20 years.

Bio-based boldness

Biomass boilers are fuelled from home-grown woodchip and provide the heating for farmhouse, outbuildings and cottages. A 50kW solar array on the grain barn supplies commercial lets.



Who will be Climate Change Champion 2022?

Throughout 2022, we've profiled seven growers — thought leaders who have already started their journey to meet the challenging target, set by the NFU, of net zero emissions by 2040. They have the ideas, the progressive outlook and the determination to shape positive change.

Now it's your turn to decide which of them should be awarded the accolade of Climate



Change Champion 2022. We've summarised their achievements here, while the full articles can be found on the *CPM* website. Use your smartphone to scan the QR code (left) or click the link on the website to score each contender on their innovative ideas, productivity push, cultivation care and bio-based boldness. Voting ends on 1 November 2022 and the winner will be announced shortly after.

CPM would like to thank our sponsors, leading agricultural suppliers who have a credible net zero aspiration and are working with farmers in a partnership approach to meet this ambitious goal.

They helped identify these individuals and bring them into the top-level discussion about how farming can position itself as the solution to climate change.

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