

smith's soapbox

by Guy Smith



Over-tweeted harvest yields

As the dust starts to fly and combines get into the thick of harvest 2023, it's time for a re-fresher on the rules of pub yields — now, more modernly, known as the rules of Twitter/Facebook/TikTok yields.

Rule One: Never be the first to publicly declare a harvest yield. Bide your time until plenty of opening gambits have been

made, then you have a base-line to easily exceed. In the pub this also allows time for more beer to be drunk which is a good way to re-assess complicated things like wheat yields.

Rule Two: When stating a yield always concentrate on the best performing parts of a field on the scientific grounds that the poorer parts of the field are not at all representative.

Rule Three: A good way to authenticate yields on social media is to take a photo of the in-cab combine yield meter at carefully selected moments. So it's good to be aware of ways these on-screen yields can be suddenly improved by slowing the combine down, or calibrating the kiloweight of the crop to the density of lead shot, or significantly reducing the

programmed header width.
 Rule Four: When using an iPhone key-pad to publicise your harvest yields, given the small size of the keyboard and the large size of farmers' thumbs, it's very easy to mis-type hectares for acres or to misplace a decimal point here and there. Some may say this is tantamount to deliberate deception when actually they are honest and genuine mistakes.
 Rule Five: Sometimes the 'counting trailer loads' method of establishing field yields can be more reliable than these new-fangled combine computer gizmos. When doing so, it's important to remember that you once got nearly 20 tonne in your grain trailer, even if at the time it was a crop of peas and you filled the trailer so brim-full it was to the point of spilling a good proportion over the sides. None-the-less, from then on, that trailer capacity was

Guy Smith grows 500ha of combinable crops on the north east Essex coast, namely St. Osyth Marsh — officially the driest spot in the British Isles. Despite spurious claims from others that their farms are actually drier, he points out that his farm is in the Guinness Book of Records, whereas others aren't. End of.

@essexpeasant

established as 20 tonne.
 Rule Six: And finally, if it comes to pass that your harvest yield is not top of the class then it's time to warn the self-assessing high achievers that their crazy fisherman's tales of 15t/ha risk undermining prices as merchants will falsely assume there is a colossal harvest for them to indulge in.

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Could it be the mesmerising effect of watching the reel gather the winter barley crop that makes accurately reading the yield meter practically impossible?



For those desperate to top the pub yield tables, combining wheat while the moisture meter is still off the scale could just make the difference.