



KOMATSU TOUTS POWER AND PERFORMANCE

Komatsu is already a well-proven brand in the construction industry here in Ireland. In recent years, however, the firm has also made a very strong impression in the agricultural contracting sector with its range of high-performance loaders.

McHale Plant Sales, the face of Komatsu in Ireland, is reporting increased sales of these loaders to silage contractors each year. According to the firm, the agricultural-spec machines are fast becoming the loader of choice for anyone cutting a large acreage of silage.

The most popular model thus far is the WA320-5. With an operating weight of some 14.5 tonnes and a rated power output of 166hp, this machine has sufficient capacity to keep up with the highest-output forage harvesters available.

It's HST-drive (hydrostatic) transmission is claimed to offer smoother and more progressive control than conventional torque converters. What's more, an in-built traction control system promotes a sure-footed grip on even the steepest silage pits.

Just as important as the machine is the after-sales support. McHale Plant Sales is one of Ireland's leading machinery distributors, so it stands to reason that few companies can rival the extent of its back-up service. The company operates over 40 service units countrywide.

Lasting Impression

Shanahan Bros, operating from a base close to Newcastle West in Co Limerick, are one of a growing number of Komatsu loader users around the country. They bought their current WA320-5 in 2005 – and have clocked up nearly 1,200 hours during the past two silage seasons.

Commenting on the loader's performance, Tim Shanahan said: "Last year, the WA320-5 was pushing up from a Claas Jaguar 890. Even with five trailers drawing into it, the loader was never really under pressure. Even when we were picking over 100 acres a day, the loader was always well able to cope".

"Early in the silage season, when the pressure was on, we ran two outfits. A Claas Jaguar 880 headed up the second team. So when we needed a second loader for that outfit, we were so impressed with the existing Komatsu's performance that we hired in a second one!"

Tim is particularly impressed with the WA320-5's ability to handle the heavy-duty O'Connor folding rake, which spans 14-foot across. He explained: "The loader is very stable with the fork. This is a major plus when crossing a pit. The 700mm-wide tyres offer plenty of floatation, so we don't have to fit duals up front. This means there's no delay when bringing the machine out onto the public road."

When the current WA320-5 comes up for replacement, Tim says that it will most likely be replaced with another Komatsu. He explained: "We also run several larger Komatsu shovels, as we have a quarry business alongside. We've had good experiences since we changed to Komatsu – and don't see any reason to go elsewhere."

McHale Plant Sales now also supply the WA150 & WA200 in a full agricultural specification. For further information see www.mchaleplantsales.com/newmachinery