

# Superb stubble management – perfect tilth

25 October 2018 by Claydon

After harvest on the Claydon farm this year, Jeff went over the stubbles with a 15m Claydon Straw Harrow to evenly distribute trash and crop residues and destroy any slugs or eggs that might be present. On 29 July, after two months of baking sun and drought followed by rain after harvest, one pass with the 15m straw harrow created a superb tilth to germinate weeds. This is testament to the healthy soils created by the Opti-Till® system that are able to withstand extreme weather events.

Effective stubble management is an essential component of any sustainable, profitable crop production system. A timely, “little and often” approach is best with the Claydon Straw Harrow, the key being to achieve an optimum tilth in which weeds and volunteers germinate rapidly so they can be killed using mechanical or chemical methods.

The key is not to move too much soil which dries out the soil, significantly slowing germination or burying weed and volunteer seeds so deep that they do not emerge until after the crop. Deeper cultivations also present a significant weather risk, as heavy rain will reduce the soil to a sticky mess with no structure or ability to support following machinery. With the Straw Harrow, so little soil is moved that if the weather does turn wet this mini-tilth will dry quickly, allowing another pass with the Straw Harrow or drilling with a 6m Claydon Hybrid.

Even if no green shoots are visible on the surface, weeds and volunteers will still be growing under the chopped straw. Using the Straw Harrow when they are less than 20mm tall will kill 70% of them and repeating the operation several times will dramatically reduce populations.

Source: Claydon