



the perfect partner

AERATOR

USER TESTIMONIAL



Modern Approach to Traditional Farming Requirements

John and Michelle Bewley are modern day stock farmers maintaining a small, 160 acre, four-generation farm by adopting a modern approach to traditional farming requirements. Lying at 700ft on the edge of the Lake District, John and Michelle have to fully utilise grass to sustain their 25 suckler cow herd and 430 breeding ewes. The Bewley family have been fighting severe winter weathers for generations, and their young son, Mike and daughter, Charlotte are familiar with farming hardships but are still keen to maintain a family interest. Lambing is undertaken inside the farm's traditional stone barns between early February and the end of April to try and catch the early market prices whilst spreading seasonal demand for grass growth.

Soils are shallow and the farm has been utilising a Ritchie Aerator for 4 years to help improve grass growth. Limestone rock is not too far under the soil surface which rules out subsoiling, and John has found that the Ritchie Aerator is able to ride over shallow areas without any damage occurring.

Farmland a mile away at sea level has an early 2-3 week growth advantage over Mid Farm and John believes that by regularly aerating his soil he is at least improving soil structure to enhance his crops. With only a narrow window of ideal weather and dry ground for aerating, Spring and Autumn periods are put to good use to reduce soil compaction. "This farmland needs a gentle touch" comments John, "too big and heavy equipment just clogs up our soil. The sheep and cattle compact the top 2 inches

of soil so we try to improve drainage whilst improving oxygen and nutrient movement to the grass roots."

The extent of damage on shallow soil can be substantial. The lack of soil depth affects the grass root structure, making growth susceptible to weather patterns, be it hot and dry or cold and wet conditions.

The Ritchie aerator incorporates boron steel blades for strength and long life, with an

adjustable central rotor shaft, which alters the angle of penetration of the blades into the surface depending on soil conditions.

Shallow loosening, when the soil is dry enough, has proved beneficial to the grass farmland and combined with good husbandry continual soil improvement will ensure a future Bewley generation of farmers maintain the family tradition.

