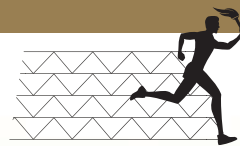




- Marathon 4200m
- Review of 2007
- Price indication 2008

Run further and longer with Marathon 4.2km



Are baler twine, stretchfilm and netwrap just commodities or is there really an appreciation of value in some products? It would appear there is very little difference in performance between one make and another where baler twine or stretchfilm are concerned, however, the same cannot be said about netwrap, where it is only too obvious there are differences. Some producers seem to forget that the job of the net is to actually cover the bale!

One net producer has truly defined the performance of netwrap and what to do to achieve this is Tama, who has launched the 'ultimate' netwrap - Marathon 4.2 km which definitely draws a line in the sand for performance and advantages that benefit its users. It has an astounding 40% more net in the roll than the 'standard' first generation 3000m net that some producers continue to think the market demands. In recent years we have seen the length of net on a roll increase significantly from the original 3000m, in a sector of the market where Tama is already the leader.

The all new Marathon 4.2 km net is the result of extensive long-term volume trials that have been conducted throughout Europe and in the New Zealand and Australian market since 2005. The familiar black and white Zebra Net design has been retained, though in a slightly revised form to help identify the net's asymmetrical pattern more easily on the bale.

The real step forward has been to take advantage of the latest advances in raw material and a revolutionary manufacturing method, which Tama call their Bale+ Technology. This new technology is a marriage of manufacturing and raw material which provides makes possible the astounding 40% greater length, still within the industry specified 30 cm roll diameter and with very little change to the roll weight ! This certainly makes Marathon 4.2km a very manageable product, compared with many competitor nets often of lesser length. Many producers rely upon a 'heavy' construction of their net to achieve the necessary strength required for successful baling, an outdated strategy given the advances in modern polymers. This impressive achievement is the first time a manufacturer has been able to combine all the important parameters of roll length, net strength, manageable roll weight and consistency all in one product. In effect these producers are restricted in their available roll length by the weight the net would become due to their 'first generation' technology. In the world of modern plastics, weight and strength have no direct correlation, as often seen in many everyday plastic products.

As well as the Tama Marathon brand, the new Bale+ Technology is also now available in the brands of netwrap Tama produce exclusively for some of the leading OEMs, meaning that this revolutionary technology will soon become an industry standard for the leading netwrap in the market.

The new Marathon 4.2 km net has enjoyed two full seasons working on all makes and models of round baler, in all crop and baling conditions, as well as extensive development with Tama themselves. Being owned by a farming kibbutz in Israel, the Tama organisation has considerable need for baled crops and with four round balers in operation, making bales to sustain over 1,000 head of cattle on its own farms. So, it can be said without contradiction, that new Marathon 4.2 km has had a good grounding!

An increase of 40% in net length on a roll has significant implications for the end user, all of them bringing benefits, the most obvious being the need to buy fewer rolls to wrap the same annual bale count. Fewer rolls means less fetching, carrying and storage, as well as the bonus of far less packaging waste, all of which are important considerations these days. Those customers who have participated in the 2 year volume trial, carried out by Tama in advance of the product launch, have all expressed their appreciation for the longer rolls. The reduced down time from fewer roll changes and also the ability to carry more actual net per 'load', rather than being restricted to the number of shorter length rolls needed in the past, is a real advantage on some balers where spare roll carriage space is at a premium.



"Tama 4200m has cut my net rolls down a lot. I used 32 rolls compared to a usual 56 rolls in one season, to make the same number of bales. A huge saving and less carrying of rolls".

Trevor Shaw, Linton, Yorks. JD 590
15,000 bales/year



"Foreign imported 2500m net did not really help, with only 223 bales per roll, compared to 368 with the 4200m net. The 2500m roll was not that much lighter than the 4200m roll and was over one third shorter, meaning more roll changes, especially when baling all day when it can become time consuming and tiresome. The TamaNet covered the bale edges better, making a neater job".

John Troop, Barnby, Notts. Welger 520
20,000 bales /year



"The 4200m net is the way ahead in 2008. It's far better the less roll changes you need to make. I would usually carry 3 spare rolls on the front of the tractor and one roll in the baler, but with the longer rolls I only need to carry 2 rolls now and it's more than enough. The net is also much stronger and gives perfect bale coverage".

James Thompson, Ranskill, Notts. Vicon RV1601
25,000 bales / year



It rained ...!

Well, after the earliest spring for a long time, when grass fields looked to be ahead of themselves by weeks and nature confused by the mild and encouraging weather, everything came crashing down, literally.

The persistent and heavy rain we all endured through the summer months, much more than previously, brought us mixed blessings. If the early sunshine threatened drought summer conditions, with low forage yields forecast, the rain caught things up with a vengeance and we have all probably 'enjoyed' the greatest volume of silage for many a year. Strange isn't it?

Many will have reaped the benefit of the extra moisture in helping to yield some good second and third cut silage, however, such a deluge did carry with it ominous concerns for some with outside storage of baled silage. It has never been an easy operation to fully cover a cylindrical or rectangular bale with thin film, by spinning and rotating it and trusting in the mechanics of the job to ensure an air-tight package. We all know that sometimes, even given the best of conditions, this may not always be the case. So we should not be too surprised if, upon opening bales through the winter time, evidence of water may be discovered inside the bale.



The weather experts and historians confirmed the summer months as being the wettest on record ever, with some local rainfall records being broken by more than a long way. This may be the year that some of us will begin to appreciate the 'relative' safety of applying 6 layers instead of the usual 4 for silage. Gone are the days when a 6 film layer application was only applicable to haylage for horse customers. The practice has been taken up more and more in recent years, with those that do appreciating the better results. So it will be this summer's bales, where the extra 2 film layers could be the saviour between a good bale and one that is all but useless.

It is only natural that persistent and heavy rain on wrapped bales will, eventually, lead to some water ingress. As well as the advice from all producers to wrap with at least 6 layers instead of the previously accepted 4 layers, this situation can be helped, to some extent, by the way bales are stored. It is never recommended to stack bales more than 3 high, certainly many producers recommend no more than 2 high, to avoid the problem of bales settling and becoming mis-shaped, which then puts stresses on the film around the bale pulling layers apart, leaving openings for air and water. Better still is to stack bales on their flat ends, thereby avoiding the ability for water to collect between the bales. A very common problem with bales stacked on their sides, where pools of water can easily collect at the point two bales touch. This collected water will eventually get through film layers, as, in effect, the bale is sitting in a 'pool' of water in this area.



Square bales present a prime opportunity for water penetration, by virtue of their shape and how the film is wrapped around their ends. The profile of the bale caused by the indentation of the strings creates channels where water can easily run in-between film layers.

Likewise, film stretched around corners or sides of bales often wrinkles as it is applied to the bale, creating perfect channels for water to track, the result of capillary action (if we recall our schoolboy physics), allowing a route between film layers.

This may be a warning over nothing, though should be heeded as advice to try and reduce wastage in future years. We are all in the business to make things easier and better for ourselves.

2008 Pricing indication

With a steady cost increase throughout 2007 of the raw materials used for manufacturing all crop packaging products, price increases for 2008 are inevitable. What is uncertain however, is the level of increase, especially if the raw material prices continue to climb through the early part of 2008.

More news on this in the Crop Packaging Newsletter – Spring 2008



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