

- Baler twine – savings on offer
- 2018 Crop Packaging prices
- Tama at Lamma
- People News
- Living the dream-Tama LSB Twine
- Tama assist
- Noavatex celebrates 40 years
- What you see is what you get
- Consistency is the key
- And more!

## Baler twine savings on offer

Farmers and contractors are missing tricks when it comes to matching bale twines to their large square baling operations.

Charles Abel reports

IT'S time to cut the confusion and reap the benefits of today's advanced bale twines, designed to deliver premium performance across a range of very different conditions, from the latest ultra-high density baler working in hot, dry, chopped straw to a conventional machine packing low density horse hay.

Today's top twines represent the latest revolution in crop baling since the arrival of large square balers, and the replacement of sisal with polypropylene before that, says Graham Robson, an expert with 40 years of baling experience around the world.

"Innovations can seem few and far between in a sector where the knotting mechanism used today is virtually unchanged since knotters were first used over 150 years ago."

But twine quality took a dramatic step forward two years ago and a new way of categorising twine aims to help users choose the right products, so they reap the rewards of longer spools of stronger twine, able to produce better knots at lower cost.

"In November 1977 when I joined Bridon Fibres and Plastics, as it was, polypropylene was just gaining acceptance over 'hairy' sisal twines. Since then we've had the huge impact of large square balers being developed, producing ever denser bales, right up to the Massey/Fendt Ultra HD debuting at Agritechnica this year."

### Revolutionary system

But bale twine has developed too, with advanced raw materials and improved processes creating twines that can be more accurately matched to the wide range of baling situations encountered. A revolutionary new colour-coding system being implemented by the leading twine manufacturer for the world's baler makers aims to empower users to make much better choices.

Significantly, twines complying with the new colour-coded system have received 100% endorsement for the uses indicated from baler makers around the world, notes Mr Robson. Many have done their own evaluation work, in the field, using their own engineers – specifically Case IH, CLAAS, John Deere, AGCO, New Holland and Kuhn.



"Nobody else can claim the level of approval from baler makers, as well as the endorsement that comes from the in-field testing by the twine manufacturer, Tama, using all baler makes in all types of crops and baling conditions around the world," Mr Robson stresses.

German firm Rasspe, which makes most of the knotters used in today's balers, has also given its 100% approval for the new twines that make up Tama's colour coded twine ranges.

### Problem solved

The new four colour scale being approved by all baler makers shows that whatever the type of baling (depending on baler, crop and baling conditions) users can easily see where a twine sits in a range running from lowest to highest strength and performance.

The four-colour system matches twine type to baling conditions, crop and the make of the baler, with a 'rainbow' icon on packs showing which option is being chosen, just like the eco-ratings used on kitchen appliances.

### Clear information

"Some might say that is over-complicating the issue, but in reality it is simplifying it, compared with the lack of clear information currently in the market," says Mr Robson. "Different uses demand different twines, and this system makes that really clear."

He is particularly critical of disingenuous twine designations which effectively cheat users. "There are twines marketed as 7-2, and 7200, which are far from being 7,200 feet long. Makers say they are 'characteristic' of 7,200ft twine, but in reality they are often thicker, so carry less length per spool, without necessarily making the twine any stronger and can be more prone to knots slipping."

Increasing the weight of plastic in a length of twine may seem to make it stronger, but thicker twine can be far more prone to knot slippage, and inevitably there will be less twine length on the spool, sometimes as much as 25% less.

"Some twine suppliers point to a 'knot strength' rating, but it is meaningless. A hand-tied knot with long tails, tested in a laboratory, bears no resemblance to a knot tied and cut-off by the knotting mechanism on a baler in the field. Plus, the type of knot has a huge bearing on any test result – if a 'Cormick' (loop) knot is used, compared to a 'Deering' (standard) knot, the difference in strength can be over 30%. Without stating which knot type the 'knot strength' relates to, any such rating is useless"

### Twines by colour

Common place in the UK range is the green segment, known as Big Spool Type 72, which provides a guaranteed 9600ft of twine per pack. This twine has the strength and suppleness of knotting ideally suited to all crops in normal baling conditions.

Green segment twines have been on sale in the UK for two years, with their pack length of 9,600ft delivering at least 2,400ft more twine than what some manufacturers market as 'normal' 7200 twines – and that is assuming their packs actually contain 7200ft of twine, which many do not, Mr Robson notes.

The orange segment twine, branded LSB Power, with the guaranteed 2-spool pack length of 8,500ft (which will be sold as 2,600m in 2018) clearly marked on the packaging, is the most popular and best performing twine for all crops and balers where high density is required. This twine most closely equates to what many suppliers continue to call 7200 twine, even though most 7200 twines are now also shorter. "This highlights the stupidity of the entire situation of using a twine 'length' as any indicator of its strength or performance," Mr Robson comments.

Stepping up a bracket to the most demanding situations red-coded HD Extra and HD Power are specially designed for use in balers in the 'extra' high density sector, such as AGCO XD and Krone HDP 1 balers, for making extremely dense bales, or when baling in extreme conditions, such as high temperatures and low humidity.

Tama also makes an HD Prime twine for the highest density balers working with straw in conditions of extreme density or high temperatures, short straw and maize stalks. It is offered in Europe, and whilst not generally required in UK conditions it could be made available by special request in very limited quantities.

Special twines, more resistant to abrasion, have also been developed for the higher density CLAAS balers and their single-knot system.

### Choose with confidence

"It all means users can decide what situation they are in depending on the baler, the crop and the climate conditions. They can then choose their twine segment colour with confidence, especially at the top end of bale densities, which is where the men are really separated from the boys as far as twine quality is concerned" says Mr Robson.

Unlike other twine suppliers the length is also fully guaranteed. "That could mean 25% more twine per spool, with a twin-pack of green-coded 9,600ft twine, for standard baling conditions, delivering over 25% more than a so-called 7-2 or 7200 twine, assuming that does actually provide 7200ft of twine. That could add up to a pallet-load of twine saved over a typical 20,000 bale season," Mr Robson notes.

"The performance benefits are also obvious, in terms of fewer stops to re-load spools, and less manual tying of twine to link spools, which is often the weakest link in the system."



The new colour-coded system has only been made possible by changes and huge investment by Tama in its twine manufacturing process in 2016. To enhance performance better quality raw material is used, whilst more sophisticated equipment delivers improved fibrillation

and twisting, creating a consistently longer, suppler and better-knotting twine.

"Changes in baler twine technology aren't an everyday thing, so it makes sense to really highlight how customers can

make the most of what is on offer, which really has moved the goal posts. It is why we have developed the colour-coding system, to improve twine choice, whatever the baler, crop or baling conditions facing farmers and contractors," Mr Robson concludes.

### Twine tips

- Match twine to baler, crop and conditions
- New 4 colour-coded categories aid selection
- Fully approved by baler manufacturers
- Approved by knotter maker Rasspe
- Crucial for HD/XHD/UHD balers + heavy crops
- Stronger, better quality twine for better knots and fewer breaks
- Quality twines allow longer spools
- More bales per spool cut costs
- Less downtime swapping spools

### SPOOL LENGTH

Spool length makes a huge difference to output. Take an NH 1290 baler making 8ft long straw bales, for example, with a full spool load of 32 spools. A full baler spool load of so-called 7-2 or 7200 twine will make 930 bales, assuming the packs are actually 7,200ft, which most are not. By comparison green-coded Big Spool Type 72, with a guaranteed 9,600ft per pack, will produce 1,240 bales. That's an extra 310 bales produced before re-loading, equivalent to approximately five hours more baling, assuming one bale/minute. Over the course of a 20,000 bale season it could also reduce the amount of twine required by an entire pallet load.

## Pricing News

Pricing for most crop packaging products in 2018 is still a little way off, but the best indication we can give currently is one of a moderate increase across all products. The two main factors when looking at possible prices are the raw material costs (which remain mainly firm whilst trending slightly upwards) and our good friend the UK Pound (which is clearly lower in value than 12 month's ago against the Euro and Dollar).

So what does "moderate increase" actually mean in plain terms? Best guess at this stage is a three to four percent increase over 2017 prices. We will be in a position to be more accurate and assured in the 2018 pricing in the next edition of the CPA News. So look out for that in April!

**Warren Tatton, Tama UAT Sales Manager**



# People News

**Warren Tatton**, the popular Tama UAT Sales Territory Manager and UK Technical Manager, gets a deserved promotion!

Warren has taken over as Tama UAT UK Sales Manager from Tim Carr who has decided after 15 years to move onto a new challenge closer to his home in Derbyshire. Warren's 10 Years with Tama UAT, combined with his commercial knowledge and deep understanding of market mean that his suitability for the role could not be more obvious.

As a result of Warren's promotion, a new man arrives to pick up the reigns as Sales Territory and UK Technical Manager! Jonathan Coleclough has joined Tama and brings a wealth of agricultural and commercial experience, most notably 7 years with Lely UK. His knowledge of balers and all technical aspects of baling will be a great advantage to the Tama UAT team.

Tama are not done there though! A further appointment will be made soon, to help the existing team accommodate Tama's growing sales across the UK, not just in the Netwrap market but primarily to aid with their increasing presence in the Twine mark. More of those details to come in the next edition of the CPA in April!



Warren Tatton



Jonathan Coleclough

## Living the dream – Tama LSB twine.

### Contractor profile

Daniel Tuckwell is a driven man. Driven to see growth and to drive quality into every aspect of his, and his Dad's contracting business. He knows that the driver, tractor and the baler is the most important aspect of baling, but he also knows that a good twine makes baling trouble free and his twine is very much included in the mix of making sure the baler does not stop when the time is right to go baling.

Daniel has been involved with the family firm of Robert Tuckwell Partnership since 1993 after leaving Moulton Agricultural College in Northamptonshire. Fresh out of college, he was keen to use his knowledge around the farm and contribute to its growth. After a few years of dabbling in various bits of agricultural contracting, a key change happened in the year 2000 when Daniel and his Dad embarked on a fully comprehensive contracting business and focused in those early days on Muckspreading, foraging and baling.

The early years saw significant growth with the addition of more machines and kit that culminates today to running

plant, trucks, a whole range of ground work machines, two Claas Jaguar forage harvesters, eight Massey Ferguson big square balers and seventeen tractors split between Claas and Fendt.

Baling is a key part to the business, Daniel aims to produce over 100,000 bales per year of high quality haylage, hay, silage, and straw bales. The balers, based near Milton Keynes, will travel a radius of twenty-two miles providing a high level of quality baling to customers. Daniel is keen to stress that the quality of every bale is the foremost thing he strives to achieve. He wants every bale perfect.

Keeping four 80 x 90 and four 120 x 90 balers running is a challenging task and Daniel is fortunate to retain good drivers that spans from seventeen year round staff and grows to over 30 in the season. His drivers have a wealth of experience and have worked with the firm for quite some time. They know Daniel's expectations and when it comes to baling, they know their customer's needs too. All of Daniels balers are fitted with moisture probes and

weigh cells providing accurate data to the driver who can keep the customer fully informed of bale weights and crop conditions as they go from crop to crop. Having moisture probes removes the guesswork, and ensure that the baling of dry crops is done at their optimum, as well as being accurate for the discerning haylage customer too.

The type of bale that Daniel looks for is one that is well formed and compacted as much as the crop will allow. 'My customer base has grown because they are particular, and always require their bales to be solid'. Daniel says.

Daniel has been using Tama twine for many years now. He says 'the Tama twine is perfect for us. It causes us no trouble. It makes us very happy'. Having experienced twines over the years he recalls times when twine is the sole factor causing a delay or downtime. What he has experienced is Tama's support and advice and this is a reassuring point when investing so much money into a product that is the lifeblood of the baler.

Twine has changed over the years and Daniel started out on standard 7200ft big bale twine. He continued with this for many years until about 5 years ago when Tama introduced their big spool type 130 which really helped by increasing the amount of twine in each spool, resulting in higher bale output per day. The type 130 twine had higher performance than the standard 7,200ft which suited well with balers becoming more able to pack in more crop and increasing the demand on the twine. What many twine producers had done is in fact was reduce the length for the same size pack and still called it 7200. Which continues today with some twines in the market with no actual length stated on the packaging. But, the reality is, if it is not stated on the pack, it will probably be shorter than we think.

The type 130 big spool gave 4,100ft length, offering nearly 14% more than other standard length, of course, if some standard twine was much shorter than 7,200ft so the real increase was much higher.

Two years ago Daniel upgraded to the newly launched Tama LSB power on the recommendation of the guy from Tama. Delivered as a two spool pack and offered 8,500ft length. Therefore, each spool was equal to 4,250ft and offered the same knotting performance as the older type 130 version. This continues to be the mainstay of Daniel's business.

In 2018, Tama will bring a larger, single spool version of the LSB Power to the UK market, called Tama LSB Power XL. It means a whopping 20% increase in length and designed for balers with the larger capacity twine boxes capable of carrying bigger spools. This will be a perfect fit for farmers and contractors looking to reduce downtime re-stringing a baler and significantly increase baler output.

Warren Tatton, Sales Manager for Tama UAT Ltd says 'for contractors like Daniel and especially for those who produce bales for businesses such as power station or carrot growers will see great benefit to longer, bigger spools that will complement the larger 4 x 4 baler market which currently is dominated by Krone, Massey and New Holland. For added bale security, contractors operating in this sector could also use the New Tama HD Extra that will replace Tama's previous HD twine which will bring a further length increase in the spool'.

Daniel says his twine decision is based on knowledge. He says that 'the twine should cause him no problems in the season. Having trouble free baling makes me happy' 'It's easy when you have a good twine and it is one less thing to think about'.

Looking to the future, Daniel wants to continue the growth of the Robert Tuckwell Partnership and maintain his determined attitude to focus on customer service, quality and delivering an unrivalled ability to go beyond what his customer needs. Daniel is a driven man.





# Tama Assist

For many years now Tama has been adding value to all of its baling products, using its expertise to consistently offer the complete package to farmers. This has enabled Tama to really understand how to make and use crop packaging from the end user perspective.

To help customers benefit from this, a brand new website 'Tama Assist' has been launched. The comprehensive, interactive website can offer assistance in three different and important ways:

1. SERVICE - Contains information to help customers in the field, with diagnostic checklists and detailed sections to assist in troubleshooting product operating problems.

2. KNOWLEDGE- With numerous product comparison calculators and detailed product knowledge guides, this area also has a wide selection of 'how-to' movies explaining many important things about Tama products and how best to use them.

3. TRAINING - where Tama can work directly with major customer sales teams to train them in product knowledge and operation use, to better help support their end user clients. Tama can offer assistance to their dealership business customers through this unique, bespoke, dealer option.

All of this is provided free-of-charge to ensure both dealers and farmers can have complete confidence when they buy any Tama branded product. Tama Assist will continue to grow, increasing the vault of knowledge available for you to maximise your baling business.

For more information please visit [www.tama-uat.co.uk](http://www.tama-uat.co.uk)



# Novatex celebrates 40 years of growth and success

The landscape is beautiful. It is like an impressionist painting with rolling countryside. We are driving through enchanting landscapes and our sight is delighted with the scenes of green hills, stone farms and sunny fields with grass harvest in perfectly packaged round bales. We marvel at the perfection of this painting but beyond this colourful frame there is hard job. The farmers know how difficult their job is, season after season. They are conscious about the severe weather conditions they have to face and the struggle to protect their harvest. They know the value of getting it right. It is crucial for them to choose the perfect resources and products, able to guarantee the best results to their hard work.

That's why since its foundation in 1977 more and more farmers trust in Novatex. This Italian company was founded with the objective of supporting the farmers with their increasing need of assuring better performances and productivity in agriculture. Today, after 40 years, the company continues to be very competitive in producing round baler netwraps which are not just the same as 40 years ago. Many but not all farmers know that Novatex is the only company in the world to develop internally its own productive technology: looms able to deliver thousands of netwraps rolls every year. This top-level in-house technological competence in the production process allows Novatex to be unique. A team of experts and engineers work together to

enhance the innovation thanks to the exclusive weaving technology which provides more robust netwraps, due to less knots per mesh, and protects against laddering while wrapping the bale.

"Novatex is celebrating this year the 40th Anniversary of the Company" says Natale Castagna, CEO of Novatex, Tama Group "and the passion for agriculture is still at the basis of all our actions. The leading role played by Novatex in the haymaking sector derives from strong values with our customers. We provide them with innovative, effective and reliable solutions for crop packaging that creates real value for them. This is our mission and our strength."

## Happy Birthday Novatex!



# What you see is what you get

**Knowing how many bales you can make before having to change string is a key part of efficient baling.**

Tama's Big Spool Type 72 is the only string on the market that offers a guaranteed length of twine – meaning what you see is exactly what you get.

"It means that when it comes to changing spools, you can change the majority of them in one go, instead of just one here and there," said David Robinson, who runs Burmoor Farm in Hexham, Northumberland, with his brother: "You can work out how many bales you are going to do and change most of them in one go."

But the guaranteed length isn't the only reason why David uses Tama: "I've used string from other providers where you get a lot of snapping and others where you've had to pull four bales-worth of string through before using it because it would jam. But we've never had any of those problems with Tama.

"It means you stay in the seat a lot more – you're not jumping off and on changing fixing problems."

David and his brother runs two big square balers and goes through two-to-three pallets of string a year, so quality and consistency are important – but so, too, is customer service.

"The service is very good," said David: "If I need new suppliers, I just ring up and it's all sorted. And if I do have a problem with anything, their rep will come out to see me – you're not just dealing with some faceless person, they really care about it."



# Consistency is the key

**RELIABILITY and consistency are key when it comes to netwrap choice, insists leading Leicestershire livestock farmer Gareth Owen.**

He runs an 1800 ewe enterprise on 300ha Launde Farm with his wife Hannah, just a stone's throw from Launde Abbey on the east Leicestershire/Rutland border, where quality silage is the goal to cut overall feed costs. Each year 2000 hay, straw and silage bales are produced using the farm's Welger Master 435. "We used to have a contractor do the baling, but we brought it in-house so we have more control of the timeliness of the operation," Mr Owen notes.

A grass-only diet is key to producing premium-earning lamb cost-effectively, with "virtually no concentrates", says Mr Owen. "Our whole ethos is to reduce costs by producing quality forage. So when it comes to buying netwrap, less isn't necessarily better."

That point was proven when an alternative netwrap caused major difficulties. "It may have been £20 or £30 a roll cheaper, but it was causing a lot of delay and producing inferior bales too. It's just a false economy."

"Tama is our preferred netwrap for producing quality bales but we were reluctantly pushed into using an alternative net by a merchant. The end result was extremely disappointing. Bales were splitting because the netwrap was laddering, leaving netwrap either side of a split down the middle. And when bales were covered, they weren't covered right to the

edge. I'm used to netwrap going to within a few millimetres of the edge, not leaving three or four inches uncovered."

The farm's baler uses a 17-knife chopper to cut forage to about 3inches. "If the outside of the bale isn't covered properly then grass is falling out in the field, during transport and whilst wrapping in the yard. It's not a lot per bale, but over a season it adds up. We found we were picking up rotting first cut in the field when we were taking the second cut too, which isn't what we want." All the downtime added to costs and further risked quality, he adds: "We spent several hours making just a dozen bales, compared with 30-40 bales an hour normally. It doesn't take long doing that to see off any £20-30 supposedly saved on the cost of the net."

They returned to using TamaNet (without any adjustment to the baler) and immediately saw the benefits, including using fewer wraps per bale. "It's all too easy to blame the baler. I think there's actually a lot more to the manufacture of good netwrap than people realise. And with Tama Assist, I know there are people like Andy Lanczak I can phone up if I have any questions about the netwrap. So I can get any queries I have sorted out straight away, with a simple phone call. He will even come onto the farm if needed. It gives you even more confidence in the product as the back-up is there to help you if you need it."

For more information about Launde Farm Foods, please visit [www.laundefarmfoods.co.uk](http://www.laundefarmfoods.co.uk)

# Baler Twine Standard



## HD Extra

Pack length 2600m

Specially designed for use in balers in the 'Extra' high-density sector, for making extremely dense bales, or when baling in extreme conditions – high temperatures, low humidity.



## LSB Power

Two-Spool pack length 2600m

or



## LSB Power XL

Single Super Size pack length 1650m

The best performing options for all crops and balers where higher density is required. Use these for silage and for higher density hay and straw bales.

Resistance and performance as Type 130



## Big Spool Type 72

Pack length 9,600ft

A standard big bale twine, suitable for use in all crops and in normal baling conditions.



## Big Spool Type 86

Pack length 10,600ft

A twine suitable for use in any big baler, when only the lowest bale density is required. Gives the maximum spool length.

Come and see Tama's range of Twines, as well as the 3,800m & 4,500m Tamanet, at the Lamma Show this January, stand 817



[www.croppackaging.com](http://www.croppackaging.com)

THE CROP PACKAGING ASSOCIATION

Tama UAT Ltd, 5 The Windmills, St Mary's Close, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1EF  
Tel: +44 (0)1420 545800 Fax: +44 (0)1420 549549 Email: [sales@tama-uat.co.uk](mailto:sales@tama-uat.co.uk)

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