



Seed is delivered by tubes into the shadow of each disc on the Sumo Trio D-spec cultivator-drill, where it is covered by soil thrown across by the adjacent disc. The Multipacker roller and finger harrow finish the process.



Vaderstad has joined the ranks of direct drill suppliers through a partnership with Canada's Seed Hawk, which supplies the twin-tine seeding and fertiliser placement coulters assembly to go with Vaderstad's frame, 3900-litre hopper and metering/distribution system. Operated behind a 150hp tractor at 8-10kph, the 6m version followed by spraying will consume about 8 litres/ha of fuel, the company's Mark Littleford calculates. This compares with 28 litres/ha for a 6m Rapid preceded by stubble and seed-bed cultivation and 37 litres/ha for the plough-based approach.

ing/press wheel for the adjacent coulters tends to pull any accumulating straw away from the tine," said Mr Dale.

Moving the discs closer together and adding a seed distribution and discharge mechanism turns the Sumo Trio high-speed cultivator into a min-till seeder.

"Having seen the success of sowing oilseed rape in this way, a lot of growers asked us about using the same technique for cereals," said Stewart Peckitt of SW Agriservices. "It will be interesting to see how crops sown with the prototype last autumn yield at harvest – they certainly

looked good after establishment."

The Trio has deep soil-loosening tines to promote good drainage and two rows of fixed-angle discs to till the surface. The trial crops were cultivated and sown in one pass using less than 30 litres of fuel a hectare.

"I don't think it's an approach growers would use across the entire farm," said Mr Peckitt. "But it's kinder on the soil structure when conditions are very wet and also better than broadcasting when time is running out to get a crop in late in the autumn."

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For more information on saving fuel, see pages 41 and 50.

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DIRECT DRILLING

Other than leaving a field fallow, cutting out stubble cultivations and seed-bed preparation by drilling direct is the ultimate fuel-saving measure, say enthusiasts for the technique.

"I know it's not for everyone, but on the right soils and with the right management, direct drilling can be used successfully," said Jack Dale of John Dale Drills at the event. "One option is to use it selectively, using a contractor to direct drill fields and crops suited to it in a particular season while sticking with minimum tillage or conventional establishment on the rest of the farm."

The latest Dale drill is a 4m mounted unit with a telescopic coulters toolbar that reduces it to 3m wide for transport.

"It works fast, at about 11kph, and it only needs a 100hp tractor," said Jack Dale. "It can also be used in a minimum tillage system."

The purpose-designed chisel tines are mounted five at a time on an assembly that pivots to follow ground contours for even sowing depth and is attached to the toolbar by parallel linkage. Linked hydraulic cylinders maintain even pressure across the drill and all five tines are adjusted for working depth using a single tumbuckle.

"In conditions where there is a lot of stubble, the depth regulat-

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