



BOOTS ON THE GROUND:

Farmplan

A YEAR IN THE LIFE ON FARM

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Establishing boundaries

Porters Farms is a family-run farm in Walpole, Suffolk. The farm operates arable land which includes crops of peas, beans, wheat, oats, OSR, barley, and linseed. James Porter runs the farm alongside his parents, whilst his wife, Laura, runs their farm management software, Gatekeeper.

We're coming to the end of a particularly busy period and have just finished drilling the pea crop, which we provide to Anglian Pea Growers. Now that's all done and dusted, we can focus on our GPS boundaries.



Conservation has always been important to us, which is where Gatekeeper comes in. Using a gator and GPS equipment, we've established a one-metre margin around all of our fields. We can then manage the data and make changes as we see fit.

The GPS data has all kinds of benefits for us. If the weather conditions aren't 100% correct, we can go

out at night if necessary. Setting the tractors to self-steer means even if it's pitch-black, the boundaries are accurate and we can spray when it works for us. Darkness doesn't grind everything to a halt.

These accurate boundaries also completely remove the human error factor. We can be cross compliant, maintain wild bird and stewardship areas, and pull accurate maps or reports from Gatekeeper instantly. It only takes a moment to cross-check everything and



- Conservation
- Measuring and managing boundaries
- Cost-effective approach

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James Porter
Porters Farms, Suffolk





make sure we're completely aligned with stewardship schemes and performing as we should be.

We also run contract farms, where we're unlikely to be as familiar with the area as we would with the family farm. Managing our boundaries through Gatekeeper lets us stay precise, and we can therefore push the machinery that bit further and spray that much more.

Measuring boundaries and managing them in Gatekeeper requires a little time investment but it's absolutely worth it. You can work out exact field working areas and set different margins easily. We know how much we're spraying and can determine the most cost-effective approach. Without it, we would be relying on our best estimates.

The next couple of months will see us carrying along with the spraying and getting ready for harvest. I've been using Gatekeeper for several years now. It's been perfect for achieving results for us, both in terms of farming and conservation. In just a moment, we can pull up reports, generate maps, or establish new working widths. It gives us complete control over our farm, metre by metre.



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Laura Porter
Porters Farms, Suffolk

Find out more at www.farmplan.co.uk/bootsontheground

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