

# Stowmarket Monitor Farm Update

**Meeting:** Weed control strategies  
**Date:** 6 March 2015  
**Venue:** Lodge Farm, Westhorpe, Stowmarket  
**Speakers:** Paul Neve, Rothamsted  
 Ian Robertson, Sustainable Soil Management  
 Jack Watts, AHDB Market Intelligence

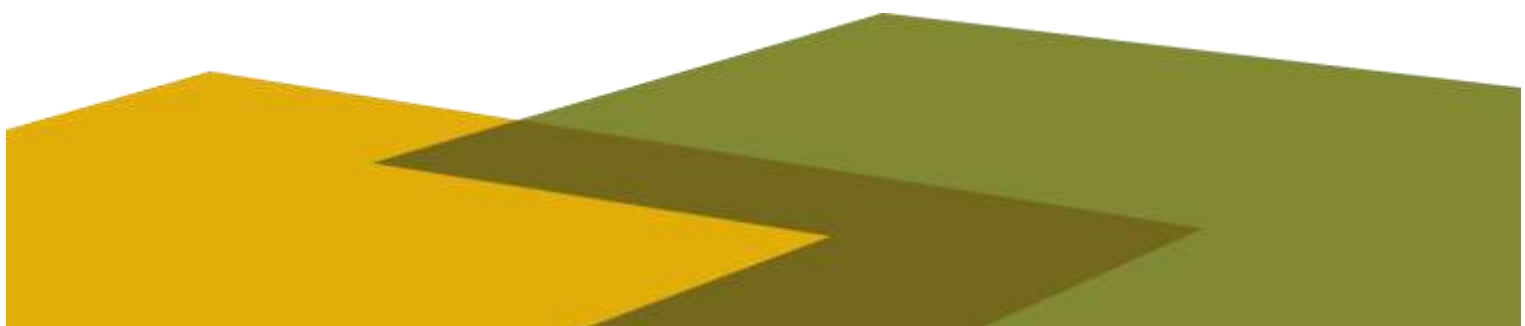
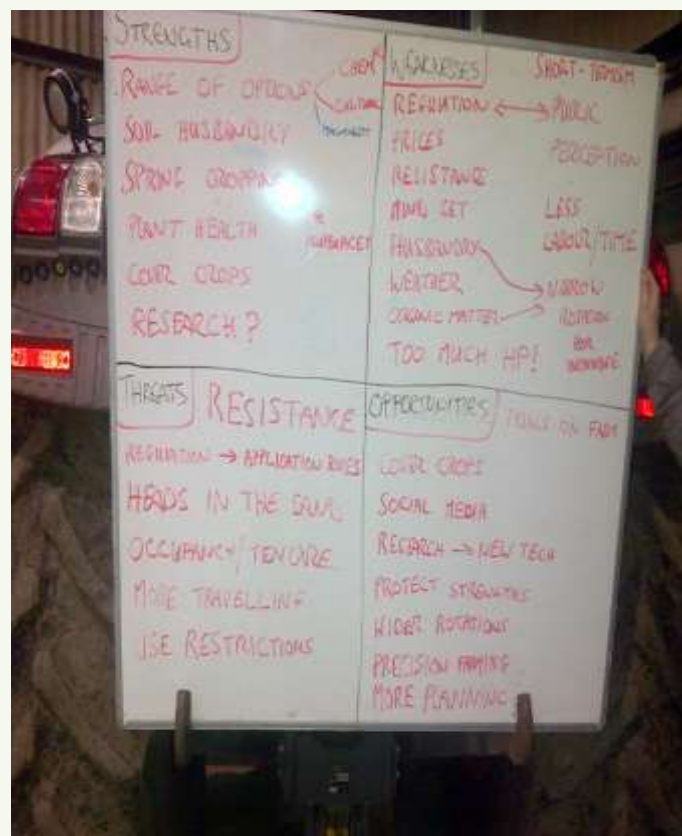
**Brian Barker**  
 Monitor Farmer



## Summary of meeting

- *Chemical & cultural options*
- *Role of drainage & soil management*
- *Threats of resistance & regulation to key actives*
- *Arrival of new in-field resistance testing kits*
- *Problems of too little time & too much horsepower*
- *The need for new, longer term approaches based on research at all levels*
- *The role of social media in spreading lessons learned*
- *More respect needed for current chemical options*
- *Use of precision farming technology*

Group sessions identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of different weed control strategies:



## Cover crop benefits:

1. Better drainage
2. Higher organic matter level
3. More workable soil structure
4. Greater availability of nutrients
5. Earlier drilling of spring crop
6. Reduced weed burden
7. Cost savings in subsequent crop
8. Reduced soil erosion

## Cultural control options:

1. Improve drainage
2. Vary cultivation
3. Use spring crops
4. Consider later drilling
5. Drill at higher seed rates
6. Plant competitive varieties
7. Widen rotations
8. Try cover crops

## Next Monitor Farm meeting

- Tuesday 31 March 2015
- Visit to Claydon Drills
- Bunters Road, Wickhambrook, Suffolk, CB8 8XY
- Arrive 1.30 for 2pm start
- Tour will include cover crop trials, soil management & machine assembly line
- BBQ at 4.30pm

## *Summer meeting:*

*Friday 19 June 2015  
Farm Walk & BBQ  
Lodge Farm, Westhorpe  
IP14 4TA*

## Farm Summary

- 628ha of combinable crops – mixture of owned, rented and contract farmed
- Cropping includes wheat, barley, OSR, linseed, herbage grass & beans
- Family partnership
- Range of farm diversification enterprises
- Conservation work balanced with pushing arable yields
- Labour consists of Brian Barker, 2 full-time employees & various family when required