

Agri-tech Services (UK) Ltd

Appendix 9A

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4th November 2021

To whom it may concern

I am Simon Turner founder and Managing Director of Agri-tech Services (UK) Ltd. The Company was founded in 1992, and for nearly 30 years it has been focussed on the precise use of water and fertiliser to help its clients to produce high yielding and high value produce in a responsible manner.

Today the Company prides itself on providing advice to some of the most professional growers both in the UK and overseas. The cropping range it is involved with varies from broad-acre vegetable crops, to intensive horticultural fruit crops, being grown as far afield as South Africa, China and Australia. In the UK the company schedules irrigation on over 20,000 hectares of broad acre vegetable and salad cropping. The Company utilises the latest IOT technology to provide information and advice to enable its clients to maximise both yield and quality of their crops in a sustainable way.

This ensures that water is used to maximum effect at critical times. With the effects of climate change leading to wetter winters but drier summers, and with the changing pattern of rainfall to much heavier rainfall over a shorter period than previously, we foresee an increased demand for more targeted application of water over a wider area of the UK.

I have been advising AG Wright for over 10 years. The farm is shown on the attached plan. We are specifically involved with scheduling irrigation on their potato production enterprise. This amounts to approximately 40 hectares of land every year. We provide 'in field' monitoring equipment to measure the moisture levels in the soil, which in turn allows AG Wright to determine whether or not irrigation is required.

I can therefore confirm that the land in question is unique. The soil has excellent drainage characteristics, critical for Autumn harvesting of root crops, but also has good water retention, providing a freely available "reservoir" of water to the growing crop. This is borne out by the infield readings we take. Over and above this, due to its relative free draining nature, the land never sits waterlogged for prolonged periods, a critical prerequisite for the production of vegetables.

The farm has a winter fill reservoir that provides any additional irrigation water, thus enabling the farm to provide a guaranteed supply of high quality Maris Piper packing potatoes to its customers, regardless of varying weather patterns. The nature of the diseases which affect skin finish are highly influenced by the presence of water at specific times in the crop development- relying solely on rainfall is unlikely to produce the quality required.

The soil has the ability to produce consistent high yielding potatoes, with the necessary clean and bright skin finish to meet the requirements of the UK's top brand supermarkets. In my opinion, the soil in this area is ideally suited to growing vegetables and it would not be easy to find more land which would be equally suited. Moreover the free draining nature of this soil (sometimes referred to as droughty soil) is actually a benefit for high value vegetable production. With the change in weather patterns being forecast in the future, with more extreme weather events predicted, it is exactly this type of land which will become of greater value due to its flexibility. The heavier soils with poor drainage and slow infiltration rates will become less suitable for the production of vegetable cropping, where land access for harvest machinery movement during the Autumn is essential.

This land is therefore key to the AG Wright business, and future proofs the farm for long term vegetable production.

Should you require any further information please feel free to make contact with me,

Kind regards,

Simon Turner FACTS
Managing Director
Agri-tech Services (UK) Ltd