



THIS FARMING LIFE IN 2025

# A Conversation with DAVID SEDGELY

By Mike Beckett

For many years, we have imported around 40% of our food and produced 60% within the UK. The majority of imports have been in fruit, vegetables and beverages. Around 71% of Britain's total land area (17 million hectares) is used in agriculture, with 25% of that used to grow crops. Farming is considerably different from the majority of businesses as it is not in control of many of the aspects involved in crop production. No control over weather conditions, input costs like fertilisers, agrochemicals and fuel, and when it comes to selling produce, again the market prices are not set by the farmer and often they have to accept a lesser reward for the work involved.

I have known David Sedgely for many years and our last conversation for Link Magazines was five years ago. But things are changing and I, for one, have felt increasingly that UK farming is not receiving the help that it deserves. I do not want to make this a point of politics, but more about how farming today has to be managed as a business in the same way that a

company builds a plough. So, I asked someone who is on the front line just what we could expect from the coming years.

"I have been at Silverwood Farms for just over 22 years, so I have seen quite a few changes in UK agriculture during this period, and I am also a Trustee of the Processors & Growers Research Organisation at Peterborough. I'm currently looking after some 3,000 acres of arable combinable crop farm, but I'm not sure that I will make any radical changes at the moment.

