

J. Gilbert & Son Ltd

J. Gilbert & Son Ltd is a family Arable farming company based in Littleport, near Ely in Cambridgeshire. The main crops that the company produce are wheat (contracts include Hovis and Warburtons), sugar beet and potatoes which are sold to UK restaurants and ASDA supermarkets.

To grow the business, J. Gilbert & Son applied for grant funding via the Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative to purchase and build a 1,800 tonne capacity combinable crop store with continuous flow dryer, to increase the company's productivity and improve their efficiency when harvesting and drying crops.

Vision

To replace the current 1,200 tonne crop store with a larger crop store that can make the company more productive and efficient, by drying the crops quicker and more effectively during wetter seasons and also providing a bigger storage space for the dried crops.

Results

The store complex was completed by the end of July 2015, just in time for Harvest. The new store has enabled J. Gilbert and Son to combine the crops when the quality was right, rather than having to wait for the weather to improve and risk the quality deteriorating.

Also, thanks to the use of the drier, harvesting the wheat on the farm was completed more quickly, allowing the company were then able to carry out additional combining for a neighbouring business.

Mark Gilbert, from J. Gilbert & Son, said: said:

“We were thrilled to receive additional funding through the Agri-Tech grant scheme. The additional storage area was a relief in a season of higher than average yields. The store now allows us to offer a complete harvesting, drying and storage solution to existing and new local farming customers, as well as investigating opportunities in alternative and high value combinable crops.

The design of the building incorporates environmentally friendly features such as Rainwater Harvesting and energy savings, helping us boost our efficiency. We are looking forward to Harvest 2016; we have increased our area of high-quality bread making wheats, and plan on growing Soya for the first time.”

