

STAYING ON TRACK

Tracked harvesters, manufactured with forestry in mind

With some new developments in the offing, we take a look at what's available.

John Deere

Nine years have passed since Timberjack introduced the concept of levelling tracked harvesters into the UK with the 2628 harvester.

Today the company has a comprehensive product offering with a total of five different harvester models to choose from, including two levelling harvesters.

The smaller 700 series machines have replaced the common 608 machines of which there are a few in the UK. As well as the 703JH, the range includes the 23-ton 753JH, and the 27-ton 759JH harvester. Both have the same engine, a John Deere 6081H producing 241hp gross. The 759 features Deere's patented 'shift-tilt' levelling mechanism. This offers sufficient tilt of the upper structure to enable the operator to remain level on slopes up to 51%. Both machines are fitted with a purpose-built harvester teleboom offering 10m reach with both the 758 and H480 harvesting heads.

The 800 and 900 series machines were introduced at the beginning of the year, and Deere have also included a leveller in this segment. The 909JH weighs in at close to 35 tons and should make its UK debut later this year. Its lifting capability and stability enable the machine to operate Deere's XL size class H290 harvesting head at a reach of 12

-metres.

All of John Deere's tracked harvesters are fitted with the TimberRite measuring and control system.

John Deere 0870 224 3745

Neuson-Ecotec

Neuson-Ecotec – formerly MHT – has five different models of track harvester from 11 to 25 tons, all built for rough terrain and hard work in the forest. Depending on the model, they can be used for first thinning right up to clearfelling.

The 9002 HV is ideal for first and second thinnings, with performance of up to 16 cubic metres per hour. The specially designed 10m Neuson harvester forest crane gives optimal reach.

The 132HVT is an all-round machine ideal in steep terrain. At 14.4 tons the 132HVT is situated in the centre of the range. Fitted with a CH135S parallel crane, the 132HVT has user-friendly joystick controls, low fuel usage, and optimum stability.

At almost 20 tons, the 182HVT is an all-round machine for thinning and final felling in extremely difficult areas. The excellent gradient ability of up to 58% distinguishes this machine from others. This machine delivers low impact to the soil structure because of the use of different track grousers (single grip, triple grip, and polyurethane grousers).

An ideal machine for clear-cutting, the wide 296cm chassis of the



John Deere 903J with factory-installed TimberRite measuring system.

242HV allows optimal stability and its extremely short tail-swing radius allows it to work well in narrow terrain as well as in clearfells. With a roomy cabin, powerful common-rail diesel engine, and strong forest parallel crane with 14m reach, the 242HV is the largest in the range.

Phil Cooper 01377 271399

Tigercat

The H855C is a purpose-built carrier suited to clearfelling and processing applications. Based on Tigercat's flagship 860C series carriers, the H855C uses the same forest-duty upper frame structure, cab and cooling system as the feller bunchers which are field proven at both temperature extremes in demanding applications throughout the world.

The engine and hydraulic system are designed to achieve maximum performance and minimum fuel consumption in harvesting and processing applications. Tigercat say the H855C is a machine perfectly matched to the vast majority of the world's harvesting and processing

applications at a purchase price that is competitive with much less capable excavator conversions.

The H855C is powered by a 6.4 litre turbocharged and aftercooled Tier III Mercedes 906, delivering 205kW (275hp) at 2200 rpm. The same engine is used in the Tigercat forwarder line and the H845C harvesters. High horsepower allows the H855C to maintain hydraulic flow as the pressure increases, keeping roller speed up, to significantly boost productivity.

Because the H855C's hydraulic system is designed specifically to power harvesting heads, it is far more efficient and productive than modified excavators. "A dedicated attachment pump supplies oil to the primary head functions, delivering flow and pressure to match the demands of the head without interference from other machine functions," explained Grant Somerville, advanced engineering manager, track machines.

"Under high flow conditions, like roller or saw operation, additional oil is supplied from the main



(Left) The 182HVT from Neuson-Ecotec works well in extremely difficult areas. (Right) Tigercat's LH845C, primarily designed for clearfell harvesting on slopes.



Smallest in the Volvo C-Series, the 167hp FC2121C.

load sensing system. The result is a hydraulic system that provides high head performance and multi-functioning capabilities while still delivering excellent fuel economy." Field reports indicate that H855C fuel usage can be as low as 18 litres an hour.

Another big advantage of the H855C is the high capacity cooling system. The reversible fan is hydraulically driven and computer controlled to match cooling requirements. This improves fuel efficiency and makes cold weather starts easier. The variable speed fan helps keep hydraulic oil temperatures more even in cold weather conditions for improved measuring system performance and accuracy.

The 845C series harvesters are available with a standard fixed undercarriage (H845C) as well as the F8 levelling undercarriage (LH845C). The cab is equipped to the same standard as the H855C, with front access, floor-to-ceiling front window, plenty of room behind the seat and excellent visibility to the right side. With 21 degrees of forward tilt and excellent hill climbing ability, the LH845C is ideal for steep slope clearfell harvesting.

Although the 845C has a compact upper assembly design and limited tail-swing, component layout is optimised and the clamshell-style retracting roof provides excellent access to the engine and valves. The pump stack is housed separately from the engine. A large door on the right side of the machine accesses all major engine service points.

Both the H855C and H845C harvesters are available with two-piece or telescopic boom systems. The patented ER boom system allows the machine operator to extend and retract the boom on a horizontal plane smoothly and quickly using a

single joystick.

Treetop Forestry 07768 613036

Volvo

Volvo is making strides into the forestry sector, and at Elmia Wood it made great play of the fact that it sees itself as a 'total solution provider to forestry customers worldwide'.

The company is developing its own forwarder, in the form of the hybrid power El-Forest, but still lacks wheeled harvesters, or, indeed, harvester heads. However, in addition to the familiar excavator conversions, Volvo now offers the 'FC' family of tracked forestry carriers, designed and built specifically for forestry applications using various forestry attachments including harvesting heads.

Key features include a Volvo Tier III compliant engine with V-Act (Volvo Advanced Combustion Technology) offering high torque at low revs.

There are four machines in the family, the 2121C, 24212C, 2924C and 3329C. They range in weight (without head) from 24.5 tons right up to a hefty 37.8 tons.

The FC models sport a number of features, either as standard or as options, to distinguish them from conventional excavators, including a dedicated hydraulic system for the head; heavy-duty side panels, reinforced side doors, deflector rails to protect the superstructure; purpose-built 'high-walker' undercarriage with high capacity track motors; full length track rock guards; 8mm underbody guarding; forestry guarding on the boom and arm; and a 'Forestry Care Cab' with an 18 inch cab riser and globally approved guarding. Also available, but not on every model, is a 'gull-wing' design engine cover.

Volvo 01223 836636

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