

Buyer's guide: Ground-clearance machinery

This month's buyer's guide takes a look at some of the scrub- and ground-clearance machinery currently on offer. Whether you are seeking to mulch to ground level to allow for replanting or redevelopment there is a piece of equipment out there – be it excavator- or tractor and skid steer-mounted equipment – that will be ideal for a variety of applications. The compact size and manoeuvrability of the smaller machines enable them to work within woodlands or SSSIs with minimal impact. Long-reach excavators, on the other hand, fitted with appropriate attachments, can be the ideal solution for clearance work on steep, inaccessible gradients.

RAPTOR 800 & 300 AHWI MACHINERY

HAVING to embrace new exhaust emission standards, the latest Raptor 800 and Raptor 300 from Ahwi machinery have Caterpillar Tier IV engines using Ad Blue, offering reliability and good fuel economy. Like all Ahwi carriers they feature efficient mechanical drives with a turbo-clutch. The Raptor 300 can be had with a standard three-point linkage and 1,000 rpm PTO (allowing other attachments like stump grinders and chippers to be used) or a direct belt drive to the mulcher. The Raptor 300 can also be had with a rubber track system for short trips on the road. The 800 has a dedicated heavy-duty drive line to the 900mm-diameter rotor, making it one of the largest self-propelled mulchers available.

The RT400 crawler will be replaced by an all-new Raptor 500 model with Cummins engine in 2018, so look out for this at the APF show. Ahwi are also manufacturing a range of mulchers, stump grinders and rotovators for mounting on tractors, excavators and special carriers.

PVFM are the importers for the UOT Range of scarifiers and mowers. Available as tractor- or forwarder-mounted units, these are ideal for tree establishment on restock sites or bare ground. The machines are simple and tough, using high-quality components such as Black Bear motors for their disk drives.

Something worth noting, and often overlooked, is that mulching of clearfell sites for restocking often leaves a loose, friable layer of fine mulch and soil over a somewhat compacted layer. If this layer is deep and the new crop is not planted into the mineral soil below, high losses can occur. In summer, this layer is prone to drying out and in winter can be washed away. Scarifying after mulching will expose the mineral soil and break up the compacted layer, leading to better establishment rates.

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Raptor 800 on one-metre tracks working in Northumberland.



UOT 2000 scarifier working on a restock site.

CONTRACTOR RANGE RYETEC

THE Contractor heavy-duty flail mower collectors from Ryetec are used for a wide range of applications, to do everything from cutting and collecting at sports fields and golf courses to the conservation of wildflower meadows. Many Contractors are now being used in specialist areas to cut and collect heather for regeneration purposes and to clear problem species such as bracken and gorse. The machines come in a variety of widths from 1.2 m up to a new 2.2 m model to be released in January. This has been introduced to the range following a high demand for a larger machine.

The machines feature a cast, hammer-type flail that is particularly suitable in long or wet grass, scrub, heather and bracken. Suitable for use with larger compact and agricultural-type tractors, it has a hardened cutting edge and weight is approximately 1 kg, allow the machines to cut through material up to 75 mm in diameter.

The 'shovel' design effectively throws the cut material into the hopper without requiring extra 'draft or wind paddles'. The throwing action gives more efficient collection even in the wet. The straight cutting edge leaves a high-quality finish and flails can be sharpened in situ several times through their normal working life. Flail



Contractor collection from Ryetec.

maintenance is made easy by the automatic locking of the hopper in the raised position to allow full access to the blades and rotor from above.

Designed to perform even in the most extreme conditions, the Contractor machines are three-point linkage mounted, meaning they can be easily manoeuvred even in confined areas and difficult terrain. Ground or high tipping models are available, and an easy-to-control working height and floating linkage allows the machines to

follow ground contours effectively.

The special Super version has a stronger flail rotor, flails and mountings (18 mm fixing instead of standard 16 mm), heavy duty rotor bearings and skids.

Ryetec also offer mini mower collectors for small compact tractors and professional mower collectors for managing golf courses, larger gardens, paddocks and estates. The professional range and mini range can also both be used to scarify.

www.ryetec.net/ Tel: 01944 728186.



Bobcat FRC150ST.

FRC150HT, FRC200HT & FRC150ST BOBCAT

BOBCAT provides the FRC150HT, FRC200HT and FRC150ST high-torque forestry cutter attachments for use with the company's compact tracked, skid-steer and all-wheel-steer loaders. The attachments are compatible with the Bobcat T770H and T870H compact tracked loaders, S770H and S850H skid-steer loaders and the A770H all-wheel-steer loader.

Designed for continuous use in shredding and mulching bushes, shrubs and small trees, they are ideal for fast removal of thick undergrowth. Providing cutting widths of 1.5 and 2 m, respectively, the FRC150HT and FRC200HT forestry cutters are designed for continuous work on bushes and trees 100 to 120 mm in diameter, intermittent use for trees with a diameter from

180 to 220 mm and occasional use on trees 250 to 300 mm in diameter. The FRC150HT and FRC200HT replace the previous models in the range and have been enhanced, with a new variable-torque motor providing 40% more power.

Powered by the new M-BOOST high-performance motor with variable torque, the 1.5 m drum on the FRC150HT is equipped with 30 fixed carbide teeth, whilst the drum on the FRC200HT has 36 cutting teeth. Other new features include five rows of counter cutters; a new adjustable push bar configuration; a new reinforced chain protection system at the back; a new HD belt cover; a new Forestry Applications Kit rear window; new adjustable skid shoes; an automatic drum brake system; an ACD control system and a patented fixed-knife rotor with tungsten carbide tips.

For work in confined spaces in woodland and forests, front and rear light guards are added to the loader to protect the lights. A guard protects the hydraulic quick couplers, hoses and wire harness from falling trees and branches. A level II FOPS (ISO 3449) protects the operator and the cab from falling trees and objects, while top and rear polycarbonate windows provide additional protection for the operator.

The FRC150ST forestry cutter mulches trees and underbrush in minutes – leaving a carpet of mulch behind when clearing trees and bushes for any kind of application. The variable front gate can be adjusted to provide the coarseness or fineness of mulch that the finishing requires. Providing a cutting width of 1.5 m, the FRC150ST forestry cutter is designed for continuous work on bushes and trees 100 to 120 mm in diameter, intermittent use for trees with a diameter from 150 to 200 mm and occasional use on trees 220 to 260 mm in diameter.

www.bobcat.com



**TMC CANCELA
D A HUGHES FORESTRY**

TMC Cancela's range of forestry mulchers offer well-engineered PTO- and hydraulically powered mulching heads. The hydraulic units are available to suit excavators between 1.5 and 40 tonnes, with working widths from 50 cm to 200 cm. The PTO-driven models are available to suit tractors between 70 to 500 hp, in workings from 60 cm up to 250 cm.

The TFT-225 is the second-largest model in the range, requiring 200–360 hp, mulching material up to 600 mm in diameter. As one of the top two models, it also features TriAdvance technology, which works in conjunction with existing TMC high-tech systems. TriAdvance, as the term suggests, includes three advanced patented systems. Firstly, a transmission system with turbo clutches to protect the tractor from unexpected power outages and transmission shaft breakages during overload situations. Secondly, an aligned gearbox system to ensure a perfect alignment of the transmission in any position. This system works with the existing three-point linkage and doesn't require any additional parts. And thirdly, fixed hammers with three tungsten carbide tips with two cutting levels combined with counter blades. There is also the option to assemble different rotors – stump/multi/heavy – depending on the work requirements. This special configuration guarantees an excellent finish on any ground.



TMC's range of forestry mulchers benefit from bodies built with high-strength steel, avoiding cracks and breaks in the frames in the most demanding working conditions. Wear-resistant steel is used in those parts in contact with the ground, such as skates, plates, inner shells and counterblades, giving added durability.
www.dahughesforestry.co.uk
Tel: 01691 882138.

**FAE GROUP
JAS P WILSON**

WHEN clearing a site for planting or replanting, it's often necessary to clear the existing trees, stumps and biomass from the site to create the conditions required for economical and productive woodland development. Using mechanical heads that can mulch trees, grind stumps, shred brush, as well as crush stones and rocks is often the most cost-effective means of preparing a site.

Jas P Wilson, the UK's sole distributor of FAE Group machinery, offers FAE's full forestry range, catering for all sizes of tractor-, skid-steer loader- and excavator-based machines. The range includes dedicated mulchers, tillers, stone crushers and stump grinders, as well as some hybrid machines capable of performing two or more of these tasks.

Jas P Wilson not only provide these units, but can also provide a forestry guarding service to adapt an excavator for all kinds of forestry applications. They first developed this for their range of SP and Keto harvesting heads. However, this has led to machines being adapted to work a variety of attachments such as tree shears, mulchers and grapples.

www.jaspwilson.co.uk
Tel 01556 612233



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