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ARGO Tractors is the tractor engineering and manufacturing division of **ARGO SpA**.
AgriArgo UK is the distributor of **McCormick** brand tractors in **Great Britain**.

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Lincs tractor dealer celebrates 90 years in business and McCormick performance award

- Open Evening celebrates 90 years in business and top dealer award
- Lincolnshire launch for McCormick X60 tractors – 92hp to 121hp
- Sole stock of Field Marshall and Track Marshall spares still in demand

More than 200 customers turned out when machinery dealership Robert H Crawford & Son celebrated 90 years' service to the farming community in Lincolnshire with an open evening.

Held at the company's premises in Frithville near Boston, the occasion marked the local launch of the new McCormick X60 Series mid-range tractors and finished a 12-month period in which the business was presented with the McCormick National Dealer of the Year award by distributor AgriArgo UK.

"We had a pretty good year in 2011," says Robert Crawford junior, who runs the sales, service and hire departments. "A little over 12 months ago our McCormick territory was extended further west towards Lincoln to take in part of the area vacated by another dealer, so we're working with new customers there.

"And in the spring we moved more decisively into the groundcare sector by signing up to the McCormick X10 Series compact and utility tractor range," he adds. "We see a lot of potential in the compacts, although bigger tractors like the four-cylinder C-Max, new X60 and MC Series, and the six-cylinder MTX, GTX and TTX will remain our biggest sellers."

McCormick tractors apart, the company has become synonymous with the vintage Marshall and Track Marshall marques; first as a dealer for the wheeled

and tracked machines, and today as the leading supplier of parts and memorabilia.

The association began in 1931 when Robert H Crawford took on the Field Marshall franchise; 10 years or so later the Track Marshall products were added.

“We bought all the remaining Field Marshall parts and drawings from British Leyland in the mid-1970s, and then purchased the Track Marshall stock from Gainsborough in 2005,” explains current managing director Robert Crawford senior. “Demand for Field Marshall parts is pretty constant all year round, from enthusiasts here and all over the World; and we always have a good selection of Field Marshall and Track Marshall tractors in the yard.”

Today, of course, new tractor sales focus on the modern McCormick machines, which Robert junior says strike a happy balance between sophistication and simplicity.

“While other makes have become more complex and more expensive, the McCormick tractors have kept a down-to-earth specification that delivers good performance and reliability, and a comfortable workplace for the driver, at a sensible price,” he says. “We had a number of farmers at the open evening who run other makes looking seriously at the McCormick tractors as representing better value for money.”

With vegetable production on the Fens sharing rotations with traditional arable crops of grain and oilseeds, Crawfords supply agricultural tractors across the power spectrum from an 80hp two-wheel drive C-Max to the 225hp TTX230.

His confidence that the new X60 Series is a more than capable replacement for the popular CX was fully justified when a customer at the open evening placed the first order.

“The CX was brilliant, really; we did very well with the final batch in 2011,” says Robert junior. “But I think the X60 will go down well because the extra horsepower will be useful and it’s generally built stronger with a better specification where it matters.”

The bigger tractors too go from strength to strength, he says.

“The six-cylinder MTX150 has been a popular model but we’re now finding users are trading up to the higher-specification XTX165,” notes Robert. “It gives them more power and the XtraSpeed transmission with its eight powershift steps is very versatile.

“With 50kph gearing and the excellent Carraro independent front axle suspension giving a smooth ride, the transmission’s ability to cover a wide speed spectrum without having to shift between ranges makes it an ideal tractor for field-to-store vegetable haulage,” he adds.

“The reliability of these tractors is really good; customers like them and that means we like them too,” says Robert. “With about a dozen MTX and XTX tractors in our own hire fleet, reliability and performance are especially important to us.”

Robert is also a fan of the *C-Max* as a perky, reliable four-cylinder tractor in the sub-110hp category; it appeals to vegetable units and small arable farms alike: “It’s very reliable, competitively priced and has a comfortable, quiet cab without any complications,” he points out.

He hopes the McCormick X10 Series compacts will also prove reliable performers and earn a similar following – not least because his first unit, a 54hp X10.55, has gone out to a customer.

“We’ve had McCormick compacts before but the new range is a better proposition – there are more models with a wider spread of power outputs from 22hp to 90hp, and more features,” he points out. “There’s a greater choice of machines and specifications to suit different users.”

Crawfords are well prepared to support the McCormick range and numerous leading implement franchises; there is a well-equipped workshop at the Frithville premises and a fleet of service vans that can quickly put a trained technician on farm.

Two brand new vans turned out in the company’s distinctive flame red livery have just joined the fleet, which emphasises the importance placed on service and parts back-up.

It was the successful delivery of high service standards that helped Robert H Crawford & Son win AgriArgo’s McCormick National Dealer of the Year award, says Ray Spinks, general manager.

“We chose Crawfords because of the company’s excellent performance across the board – for the level of sales they achieved, their high standard of product knowledge and the level of after-sales service they maintain,” he explains. “With McCormick specialist technicians and a well-stocked parts department run by knowledgeable staff, this is a dealer that can always be relied upon to do the best job for its customers.”

Ends



McCormick – Robert H Crawford 010a.jpg (LEFT)

Managing director Robert Crawford senior, with his son Robert junior who runs the sales, service and tractor hire departments at Frithville-based Robert H Crawford & Son.



AgriArgo Dealer Awards 2011 – Robert Crawford+Ray Spinks.jpg

Robert Crawford (left) receives the McCormick National Dealer of the Year award from Ray Spinks, general manager, AgriArgo UK.



McCormick – Robert H Crawford 005a.jpg

Managing director Robert Crawford senior, with his son Robert junior who runs the sales, service and tractor hire departments at Frithville-based Robert H Crawford & Son.



McCormick – Robert H Crawford 002a.jpg

McCormick MTX (left) and T-Max tractors lined up in front of the characterful showroom of Robert H Crawford & Son at Frithville near Boston, Lincs.



McCormick X60.40 02.jpg

Crawford's open event marked the Lincolnshire launch of the McCormick X60.40 with its all-new transmission, pto, hydraulics and front axle; there are more powerful engines too, rising to 121hp for pto and transport work.

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