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| **Press Release** | 01/08/22 |

Colin Chappell lifts inaugural Rawcliffe Bridge Award for Sustainability

* Carbon, soil monitoring, implementation of multiple wildlife schemes and reducing nitrogen demonstrated by winner
* Engagement with economically deprived children, and on-farm visits impress judges
* Three stools of sustainability vital for future – economic, environment and societal

Colin Chappell of Gander Farm in North Lincolnshire has been awarded the inaugural Rawcliffe Bridge Award for sustainability, coinciding with a special 20-year celebration of the ongoing biodiversity and advocacy work at Rawcliffe Bridge, in partnership with BASF and the Hinchliffe family.

The award is aimed at celebrating those farmers who manage to strike a balance between supporting ‘people, profit and the planet’ and judges had a difficult job choosing between the two finalists, with Guy Prudom of Northfields Farm, North Yorkshire, being awarded runner-up.

On winning the award, Colin Chappell said: “I am unusually lost for words. I know some of the people who applied for this award and to have pipped them all is just incredulous. It was an honour to have been in the final two with Guy and as soon as harvest is over, I want to go and see his farm and see what I can learn from him.”

Commenting on the future of sustainability in farming, he added: “We need to have a conversation about sustainably producing food, whilst also caring for the environment, the water and the people around us – that is what it is all about. That is true sustainability.”

Mr Chappell, who runs an arable unit on the banks of the river Ancholme, impressed judges with his engagement with carbon and soil monitoring; implementation of multiple wildlife schemes; his approach to reducing nitrogen, but above all, his dedication to community.

The award was supported and judged by representatives from BASF, Farm 491 and the Institute of Agriculture Management. Fellow judge Richard Hinchliffe of Rawcliffe Bridge Farm said: “The thing that really impressed me about Colin’s setup, is what he did with some more economically deprived children from the local area, bringing them on farm and engaging them about agriculture and where their food comes from, and you could really see the passion he had for this. We had two fantastic finalists but a really special winner.”

BASF Agricultural Sustainability Manager, Mike Green explained why they felt it was important to introduce this new award and what legacy they hoped it would build.

“We had the 20 years celebration coming up at Rawcliffe Bridge Farm and we wanted to find a way of recording the value that people put on sustainability in their businesses and to find a way of celebrating them for the work they do.

“There are a lot of people who claim to be sustainable and are incredibly technically competent and are supporting biodiversity on-farm, but maybe weren’t interacting with the social side. We wanted to have a competition which recognises that there are three legs to the stool of sustainability, economic, environment and societal, and you have to be supporting all three of them, to keep it steady.”

Echoing similar sentiments to his fellow judges, he said that both finalists’ dedication to community was a “societal good that can often be overlooked in conversations around sustainability”.

During the award ceremony, Colin Chappell received a bespoke ceremonial plate, painted by a local artist, and both finalists have been given a free ticket to the Institute of Agricultural Management’s annual conference, and access to the expert network run by Farm491.

Rawcliffe Bridge was developed by BASF and the Hinchliffe family, to understand how to balance intensive farming and wildlife management. Over the last twenty years it has captured extensive data and welcomed thousands of visitors to learn how a productive arable farm can improve the natural environment, without sacrificing yield and profit.

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