

The Institution of Agricultural Engineers

Founded 1938 – Incorporated 1960

IAgrE President's Award

Kit Franklin

AMIAgrE

The Institution of Agricultural Engineers President's Award for 2020 is presented to Kit Franklin from Harper Adams University. This award is made annually to recognise mid-career engineers who are deemed to have made considerable progress in their careers.

During the course of gaining an MEng degree in Agricultural Engineering at Harper Adams University Kit worked for Lite Trac Agri, manufacturers of high capacity self-propelled crop spraying and fertiliser application machines taking responsibility for their CAD design.

Following graduation Kit re-joined the Harper Adams Engineering Department first as a Research Assistant and then appointed Senior Lecturer.

From a farming background, Kit pursued his interest in the potential for the use of autonomous vehicles in agriculture. Obtaining some funding and putting together a small research team the

'Hands Free Hectare' project was started under Kit's leadership. This project was ground-breaking, literally, in that in a very short time span, with a small budget the concept and practicality of growing and harvesting a 1 hectare plot of barley using only autonomous vehicles was proven. The publicity that this work has created for Kit and his team, Harper Adams University and the Agricultural Engineering industry in the UK is truly extraordinary with exposure through the national press, national television and social media channels.

Not surprising further funding has followed and his team are now engaged in up-scaling the project from plot to small farm size.

Kit's ability to drive this project and then present the work to listeners at all levels demonstrating understanding, not only of the technologies involved but of the challenges that application of these technologies face in the agricultural field situation make him an exceptional ambassador for the Agricultural Engineering profession. To have achieved this during the early stages of his career make him a worthy recipient of this year's President's Award.

