

To whom it may concern,

I am the tenant of 240 hectares of light stoney land in rural mid- Norfolk, over the past few years several new Anerobic Digester Plants have been built in this area and we now sit centrally to three that are run by one company. These units have to be fed with organic material and when efficiently managed produce green renewable electricity 24/7 regardless of wind, sunshine or any other variable element

For many years we have struggled to remain profitable on drought prone, low productivity land unsuitable for wheat, potatoes or sugar beet but in 2017 we began growing Rye and Maize for whole crop production to supply a local AD unit. The results have been a resounding success for both us (the grower) and the contractors and operators of the production plants with good yields produced from poorer soils with minimum cost or wastage and maximum efficiency. Compared to most other arable crops Rye, and Maize in particular are very environmentally friendly, they require very low pesticide applications with maize receiving little more than one weed control spray, no insecticides and no fungicides thereby being extremely kind to insects and wildlife. Consequently we have seen the Grey Partridge population grow and likewise the Brown Hare numbers, with the crop providing the young with cover from raptor predation in summer. Post harvest the contractor cultivates around the remaining stubbles and across slopes to prevent run-off and gulleying, leaving at least 80% untouched until next Spring, this is rich in scattered cobs dropped by the forage harvester and large numbers of invertebrates that were encouraged and hosted by the vast green crop canopy, providing a very valuable food source for birds overwinter when it is particularly scarce.

So not only do AD crops provide renewable green energy, they are extremely good for the environment, wildlife bees etc., furthermore the organic by product of the fermentation process known as 'Digestate' is returned to the fields and is rich in Nitrogen and Potash, both elements that are vitally required on light soils, very importantly the industry has provided work for many young people wishing to be involved with agriculture from tractor drivers to plant managers who have had an opportunity to demonstrate their skills in what is hopefully a growing and long term business that should be recognised, encouraged and supported by government policy

Yours sincerely

Peter Rivett  
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