

The Catros XL has been designed for shallow to medium depth cultivation. A leading knife roller is now on the options list.



Amazone Catros XL 6003-2TS compact disc harrows:

Bigger discs go deep

Amazone's Catros XL 2TS is its answer for farmers wanting to disc at depths down to 16cm. The 4.0m to 6.0m range is only sold in a semi-mounted format, and we tried the 6.0m model on some chitted oilseed rape stubble

Amazone views the Catros XL as a supplement to its wide range of compact disc harrows. Indeed, the company now has four different model ranges: the Catros with 460mm discs for shallow straw incorporation; the Catros+ armed with 510mm discs; and the established Certos whose 660mm discs are for leafy work and coping with plenty of residue.

The newcomer featured here is the Catros XL. It hosts 610mm discs to achieve 'medium' working depths. Up until now the Catros XL was only offered in a fully mounted format in 3.0m, 3.5m and 4.0m widths. But, back in November, Amazone unveiled two new Catros XL ranges at Agritechnica. The first of these has working widths of 4.0m, 5.0m and 6.0m, while the second is the trailed Catros XL 2TX in 7.0m and 8.0m widths.

These new additions can be coupled to the lower links or pulled from the drawbar using a pin hitch or K80 spoon. These latter options mean that you will require a hydraulically controlled drawbar.

Depending on the level of specification, the new semi-mounted cultivator needs up to five

double-acting spools for the drawbar, folding, depth control, running gear and front toolbar. The running gear is rated for 40km/hr and is located at the rear of the machine. The axle can be raised so its weight is shifted onto the discs, boosting their ability to penetrate. Extra weight plates are also available (one set of four 25kg weights costs £1,245). The running gear also benefits from selectable

accumulators that take out some of the travel bounce during work.

First thing to do when arriving in the field is to make sure the machine is sitting level.

Rather than setting the disc depth by adjusting the position of the packer or drawbar, the gangs are raised and lowered within the frame. The advantage of this system is that the discs move away from the rear press, increasing the space between the two for any material to flow through the deeper you go. In addition, working depth is maintained between the front and rear gangs. In standard spec, this working depth adjustment is done manually, or, for an extra £1,035 investment, it can be carried out hydraulically.

No changes have been made to the disc angles as featured on the other Catros models – 17° on the leading gang, 14° on the rear row. The discs are individually attached to cast iron legs, which have been updated: the buffer blocks are now lined with thicker rubber for damping.

Each Catros disc runs in maintenance-free, permanently oil-lubricated bearings with a

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Amazone has added the Catros XL to its disc harrow range, and it is produced at the firm's Leipzig factory.
- ▶ The special depth control system means there is a generous amount of clearance, reducing the risk of a bung-up when working deep.
- ▶ Optional equipment includes LED lighting (£1,630), the GreenDrill 501 seeder (£6,945) and a box for tools and spares (£390).

metal rotary seal. The dimensions of the bearings have also been increased to suit the deeper work. The discs themselves are either serrated or scalloped, and both types are 610mm in diameter and 6mm thick. Adjustable outboard discs and optional side plates (£770) ensure the soil is not thrown outside of the machine pass.

There are several rear roller options. The standard fitment is a 600mm diameter cage roller, while our test machine had a matrix roll that weighs in at 1,232kg on this 6.00m machine and adds £9,180 to the price tag. Clipped to the frame, it is easily swapped for an alternative press if necessary.



The running gear is raised clear of the ground during work. Accumulators take out the bounce.

Depth control alters the position of the disc gang bar, which, in turn, increases the ground clearance for improved soil and trash flow. There is the option of making this adjustment hydraulic.



NEW GREENDRILL 501

Up until now Amazone has been sourcing its rebranded small seeder from APV. With the GreenDrill 501, Amazone brings the small seeder in-house. The plastic hopper is 500 litres, with a screw-top lid keeping out the dust. It's also secured so it can't get lost, and there's a mesh screen in the base to protect against labels and other oddities finding their way into the metering unit. Inside, two seed level sensors report back to the in-cab control box.

The metering unit itself is tried and tested Amazone technology, albeit with different metering rollers. The hydraulically powered fan requires a flow of 28l/min. The speed signal is sourced from the tractor's ISObus system or radar.

The distribution head is segmented and can have anything from 12 to 48 outlets, and, unusually for this type of drill, a tramline feature is standard.



The GreenDrill 501 has a 500-litre hopper, with a sturdy operator platform easing refills.



The fan and metering system are taken from Amazone's Cirrus drills.

The drill can handle mono seeds and mixes as well as fertiliser. Distribution is either via vanes or pipes located behind the cultivating discs. The new GreenDrill 501 is ISObus-ready and operated from a compatible terminal. It can also be employed as a 'third' hopper on the likes of a Cirrus drill. In the UK, prices start from £6,945.

DATA SHEET

Amazone Catros XL 6003-2TS

Work width	6.0m
Transport width/length/height	2.95/6.88/3.70m
Forward speed	12-18km/hr
Input power	176kW/240hp plus
Spool requirements	Five double-acting
Operating weight	6,270kg
Frame dimensions	100 x 100mm
Disc diameter	610mm
Disc thickness	6mm
Work depth	5-16cm
Cutting angle front/rear	17°/14°
Disc-to-disc spacing	12.5cm
Wedge ring roller diameter	650mm
Price	
Standard specification	£69,425
Test specification	£92,090

Manufacturer information

Like many of its competitors, Amazone is now offering a choice of leading tools. Customers can choose between a knife roller, straw rake, a paddle tine board and gauge wheels. Our



The leading knife roller is new. The blades are staggered to avoid soil building up between them.

Catros XL 6003-2TS was kitted out with the 330mm diameter knife roller (£13,485), which runs on permanently lubricated spherical roller bearings.

The reversible knives are manufactured from 8mm thick boron steel and are bolted to the rotor. Arranged in a chevron pattern to avoid any soil drag and vibration, they produce a nominal chop of 165mm. The knife roller is hydraulically engaged, with accumulators in place to provide at least some 'give' if a knife encounters a stone.

Summary: Working in wet, green rape stubble we were impressed. At 16km/hr, the John Deere 6250R was always on top of the job, with the Catros XL set to around 8cm deep. Just like the discs, the knife roller needs an optimum speed to come into its own. The stubble was cut by the roller before being sliced/incorporated by the discs and covered with enough soil to start the organic matter breaking down. Setting up the machine was simple enough thanks to the optional hydraulic depth adjustment.

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