



FSP: 4779
Date: 31st May 2011

Ensure new grain storage is up to standard

Exhibiting for the first time at Cereals will be Simpson & Allinson Ltd, who will use the show to highlight the importance of good design in farm buildings. This follows the collapse of around 4,000 agricultural buildings, including some grain storage buildings, over the past couple of winters due to snow.

However, whilst snow loading has been a particular issue in some parts of the country, farmers looking to invest in new or expanded grain handling and storage facilities, also need to be aware of the impact that features such as solar panels, conveyors or grain stirring systems can have on the structural loading of the building.

Currently in England & Wales, agricultural building construction is unregulated, and whilst it is advised that any building complies with BS 5502, this is not mandatory. The result is that whilst farmers have assumed that any quotes they obtain will be for a building that is fit for purpose and to a similar standard to other quotes received, this may not be the case.

However, as from 2013 this will change following the introduction of CE Marking for agricultural buildings. This will require all frame manufacturers to have in place a quality control system that meets the requirements of the relevant code, but also all steel, concrete and timber buildings will have to be designed and built to this standard.

According to Geoff Simpson, Managing Director of Simpson & Allinson and Chairman of RIDBA (Rural & Industrial Design & Building Association), when specifying a building, farmers need to be aware that different quotes can vary considerably in what they allow for and the overall strength of the building.

With farmers also looking at adding solar panels on the roof or where installing conveyors and grain stirring equipment, all of this has to be allowed for in the initial design of the building, due to the loading that such items will place on the overall structure.

Location is also another major consideration, not only in terms of topography and exposure to prevailing winds, but also in terms of proximity to other buildings. In one instance last year, snow from the roof of a grain store slid-off and dropped down onto the roof of a new lean-to store built alongside, the impact of which smashed the roof sheeting, which in turn fell into the building.

For farmers looking to invest in new grain storage and handling facilities, the message is clear that:

- They should obtain a number of quotes
- Do not assume that the specification will be the same
- For specific situations, consider getting engineer's calculations
- Speak to other farmers
- Ensure that a supplier is a RIDBA member and that the building is to BS 5502 standard

For further information, please contact either:

Simpson & Allinson Ltd or
Harmire Enterprise Park
Barnard Castle
North Yorkshire
DL12 8EH

Richard Whiskard
Four Seasons Publicity
Bury Barn Farm
Bury Barn Lane
Bourton-on-the-Water
Gloucestershire GL54 2HB

enquiries@s-and-a.co.uk
Tel: 01833 690379

richard@four-seas.co.uk
Tel: 01451 822709