



The strength behind farming today



HJ Lea Oakes is perhaps the longest established independent animal feed manufacturer in Britain, with a lineage dating back to Swettenham Mill in 1675 where the Lea family began milling feeds to supply the Cheshire farming community.

Centuries later, the company has expanded and developed to become one of the region's most essential assets, supplying the agricultural community with a vast range of quality feeds across the North West, the Midlands and Wales. The HJ Lea Oakes fleet of special-purpose trucks are regularly seen delivering

hundreds of thousands of tons of quality feeds to the region's farmers that form the backbone of the UK's food suppliers.

With mills in Congleton, Sandbach and at Aston, near Nantwich, HJ Lea Oakes now runs what are probably the finest plants of their kind in Europe. Over the last five years in particular there has been massive investment at all levels to put the company at the forefront of new technology, bringing the economies of scale to the benefit of the farming community at the time they need it the most.

Over the last ten years, the company's development in the region has superbly demonstrated it's total commitment to UK farming.

For example, in 1999 under the new UKASTA Feed Assurance Scheme all feed mills were obliged to meet stringent standards for accreditation. All three HJ Lea Oakes mills were simultaneously approved for this; the first in the region to achieve such high standards and something no other mill in Cheshire was able to do.

Congleton Mill



Aston Mill entrance



Friendly efficiency





Aston Mill

Unsurprisingly, HJ Lea Oakes are also at the forefront of the new trend towards Organic Farming. At Congleton the HJ Lea Oakes mill was formerly known as Oakes Millers, being part of the Northern Foods Group until 1995. Following their purchase of this, the company has invested to convert it to the production of organic compounds and feed made from ingredients sourced from crops not subject to genetic modification. Congleton Mill is now one of the few dedicated Organic Mills for over 100 miles and the UKROFS accreditation combined with its UFAS certification gives the company the industry's highest accolades for excellence in this important and developing area.

The once niche market of Organics is rapidly becoming mainstream and the new niche is GM-free feeds. HJ Lea's Heritage range of feeds supplies these farmers and those in conversion to Organic status.

At Aston Mill, HJ Lea Oakes now manufacture ruminant and monogastric feed, products which are relied upon by many of the nation's largest agribusinesses from the North to the West. The company runs its administrative offices from here, working in an attractive cottage environment within, appropriately enough, a conservation area. This provides a perfect showcase to demonstrate the importance of successfully integrating the region's most important and fundamental businesses into a local community.

At Wheelock Mill the company now mill their own formulation blends and pet foods, supplying many pet shops throughout the UK as well as HJ Lea Oakes's own group of Pet Food Superstores, with own-brand labels such as Kennel Cuisine for dogs and Equerry for horses and ponies being sold at shops throughout the region and beyond.



Computerized processing plant





Packing at Aston Mill



We hope you have enjoyed finding out more about this unique independent company and feel as excited as all HJ Lea Oakes staff are about the company's leading role in taking agriculture, possibly the world's oldest industry, forward in the new millennium.

HJ Lea Oakes
THE BEST IN THE WEST!

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