COMBINE-HARVESTERS.FARMYARD.IM

Filled sacks in the stubble, and a tanker working for a church

A typographic fact sheet. No photographs.

Even after cutting and threshing lived in one machine, the grain did not always go quietly into a tank. For a long time, someone still had to stoop.

A Finnish harvest, 31 August 1963

Erkki Voutilainen photographed a combine at work in Finland, with filled sacks already lying in the stubble. It is a picture of a machine that has cut and threshed, and of a job that still needed hands at the end of the spout. The photograph belongs to the JOKA Press Photo Archive of the Finnish Heritage Agency.

A 1945 tanker, and Little Casterton church

On 19 September 2009, at Little Casterton in Rutland, Michael Trolove photographed a 1945 Massey Harris 21A tanker combine harvesting wheat at a working weekend of rare and unusual farm machines. The proceeds of the entry fee went towards the maintenance of Little Casterton church. A tanker combine was the later answer to the bagger: grain went into a tank, not into sacks left in the stubble.

What the official figures do — and do not — say

Defra's Farm Business Survey, covering England in the March–February year 2023/24, finds that farms spent £2.3 billion on machinery, 3% lower in real terms than in 2014/15. The highest average (median) spend was on tractors, at £62.8 thousand. The notice does not publish a separate official figure for combine harvesters, and this sheet does not invent one.

Sources, checked 17 November 2026: Wikimedia Commons file pages for the Voutilainen and Little Casterton photographs; Defra, "Machinery investment on farms in England: 2014/15 to 2023/24," updated 17 March 2026. This is not a Defra publication. combine-harvesters.farmyard.im is part of the ReallyByte network, run by REALLYBYTE, based in the Isle of Man. ReallyByte — Fun. Educational. Useless.