



Kubota M6-142:

# The middle man

With the M6002, Kubota has added another option to its 120-140hp offering for owners demanding more sophistication in a relatively compact package. New from the ground up, we drove one of the pre-series machines in Germany

**H**aving gone to the considerable effort of developing a new tractor range, for some reason the Kubota design team decided to dress it with the same uninspiring styling of the MGX-IV rather than snazzier M7003. In fact, from a distance the M6002 looks pretty much identical to the lighter frame MGX, and the two tractor ranges have several other similarities. Providing power is the largest four-cylinder lump currently used in the ag market: Kubota's 6.1-litre V6018-TIEF5, which also makes an appearance in the bigger MGX tractors and all M7003 models. Within the range-topping M6-142 it punches out 106kW/143hp, which shrugged off the test cultivator's attempts to kill it. It gets even better on the road, where an extra 20hp becomes available.

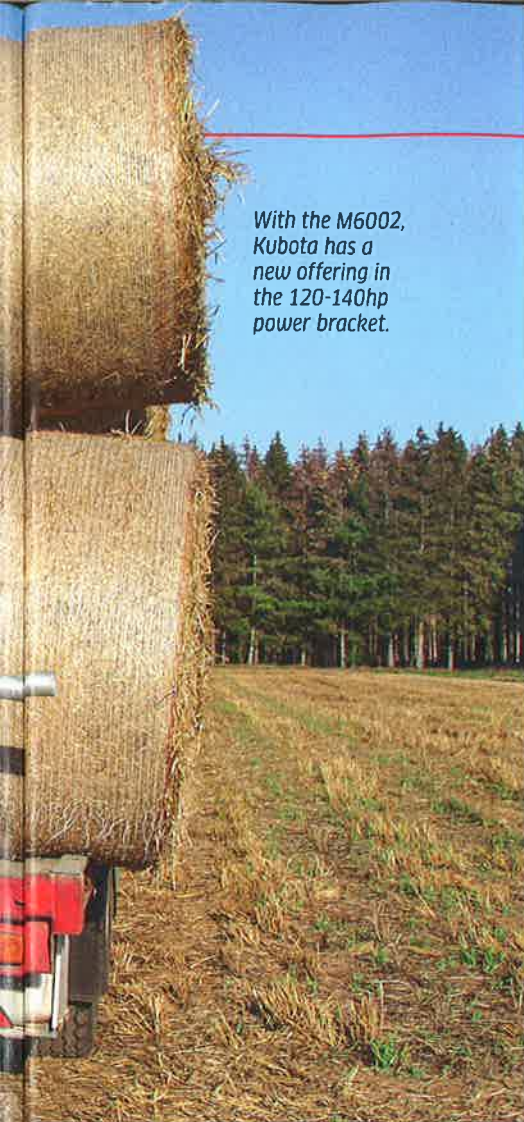
## KEY POINTS

- ▶ A completely new range, the M6002 is built in Japan.
- ▶ All of the main components, such as the engine, transmission and axles, are manufactured in-house.
- ▶ With an eight-speed powershift, 115-litre/min load-sensing hydraulics and a 7.0t rear lift, the new range is an all-rounder.
- ▶ The M-GX is about 700kg lighter, while the M7003 is around 1,000kg heavier than the new M6002. The latter has an unladen weight of 6.0t.

## Eight powershifts and 40km/hr at 1,640rpm

In the gearbox department, the new M6002 utilises the same three-range, eight-speed powershift format as on the MGX (see profi 3/2014 for our tractor test), although it's a completely new box. In the new range the gearstick has been replaced by buttons to work your way through the three ranges, while nudging the controller back and forth allows you to manually work the powershift, with the current gear selection shown on the central dash display. You can romp along at 40km/hr at a fuel-sipping 1,640rpm thanks to larger back-end gearing. A dial under the armrest lid allows you to broadly set the automatic up and down shift points for the powershift, and you can have





With the M6002, Kubota has a new offering in the 120-140hp power bracket.

Under the bonnet is Kubota's familiar four-pot, 6.1-litre motor, which has been used since day one in the M7 models.



The portal front axle comes with the maker's own double bevel gear drive.

## DATA SHEET

### Kubota M6-142

#### Engine

Kubota 6.1-litre, four-cylinder V6018-TIEF5, 106kW/143hp rated power, 120kW/163hp max power, Stage V, 230-litre fuel tank and 20-litre AdBlue tank

#### Transmission

24F/24R gears with three ranges and eight powershifts, £1,675 creep option, powershuttle, 40km/hr at 1,640rpm, 540/540E/1,000/1,000E pto speeds

#### Hydraulics/linkage

7,000daN rear lift, ELC, swash plate pump with 115 litres/min, max of four mechanical spools with flow control, power beyond on request

#### Tyres/weights

Tyres: front 480/65 R24, rear VF 650/60 R38. 10.5t gross weight

#### Prices

Base specification lists at £79,924; tested tractor with front linkage, front pto and front loader £95,340

Manufacturer information



different settings for the L, M and H ranges. While it works OK, we would like the option of fine-tuning the auto-shift points in relation to engine speed using the optional 7in touch screen, and it would also be helpful if the tractor could automatically switch ranges, even if this was just limited to road work. On the pre-series machine there was an annoying beep for each and every shift, but this will be thankfully muted on production machines. Good news regarding the pto, as there are

four speeds as standard (540, 540E, 1,000 and 1,000E, with two levers used to select the speed), and a few taps of the touch screen allow you to alter the pto clutch behaviour in several steps.

Continuing the tailored design theme, you can set the responsiveness of the shuttle using another dial under the armrest cover. The shuttle is duplicated so it can be operated from the steering column and the armrest controller.





Armrest controls look after the gearbox and linkage. Mechanical spools and the front loader stick (this was not yet fully finished on our test machine) are located on the side console. Spool valve levers are not colour coded and, much like some other parts of the interior, feel a little cheap.

### Turning with 'BiSpeed'

Most Kubota operators will be familiar with the longstanding BiSpeed steering system. Once the steering angle exceeds 30°, the front axle goes 40% faster, effectively pulling the nose of the M6002 into the next bout for a sensationally small turning circle. It's a system that works really well in the field but cannot be used on concrete with a front loader. Even without the BiSpeed engaged, the 55° steering lock still ensures a tight turn, despite the 2.69m wheelbase. Another Kubota trait is the double bevel gear on the portal front axle instead of more familiar universal joints. Even with the swing arm front axle suspension there is a whopping 58cm of ground clearance. Unfortunately, this is eroded by the optional under-support for the front linkage. Comfort from the tractor's front axle and cab suspension is top notch.

### The office space

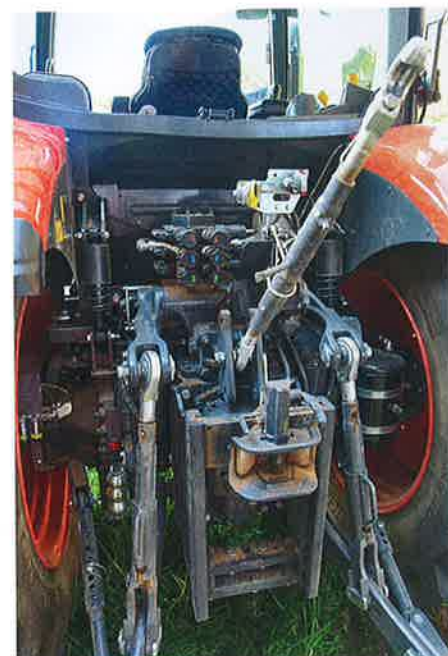
Hopping into the M6002 cab, it offers plenty of space once the seat is shoved back; it is actually the same frame as the M7's but with entirely different furnishings. The all-round

view is pretty good, although it does need a larger glass roof hatch for when working with a raised loader.

On the armrest, the main controller operates the transmission, linkage and pto. At some stage in the future an electric cross controller for operating the front loader will also be available for the armrest. Our M6-142 had a separate MX low-pressure hydraulic cross controller on the side console for the French-made boom. This smacked off the optional terminal, which was mounted on the end of the armrest on our test tractor.

### Around the back

There are few quibbles with the rear end. Lift capacity is claimed to be a decent 7,000kg; the swash plate pump is an equally useful 115 litres/min. Up to four mechanical remotes can be fitted to the rear, with colour-coded flow adjustment dials behind the seat. Levers for the manual spools are on the side console. There are external control buttons on both mudguards for the linkage and pto. And, if you opt for the £2,213 K-Monitor, you also get an ISObus plug at the back. GPS-controlled



Cab suspension, 115-litre/min load-sensing hydraulics and 7,000kg rear lift. There is not much missing from around the back. Pick-up hitch will be sourced from Dromone.

steering relies on a wheel-mounted motor, as current orbital motor designs are said to be not quick enough.

### Further details

- The 230-litre diesel and 20-litre DEF tank can be easily filled next to the wide steps.
- Maximum back tyre size is 650/60 R38, and on the front it's 480/65 R24.
- 16 LED work lights are a £437 option.
- The three models (123hp, 133hp, 143hp) are only now starting to appear in the UK, and they should arrive in Ireland in the coming months.

**Summary:** With the new M6002, Kubota has a new middleweight in the 120-140hp market. The powerful four-cylinder and eight-speed powershift are good in the field, with the BiSpeed steering and piston pump making it ideal for loading bales.

But we all know that price is going to be key to succeeding in this segment of the market. A base spec M6-142 lists at £79,924 with the firm's five-year/5,000-hour warranty. Our test tractor was kitted out with front linkage (£2,884), pto (£2,475), the 7in touch screen (£2,213), LK2100 front loader (£6,810) and the biggest tyres available (£1,034), which pushes the price tag to £95,340.

If you're interested in the larger frame M7003, don't miss the March issue of *profi* for our exclusive tractor test.

**Hubert Wilmer**

### NEW MODEL RANGE

	M6-122	M6-132	M6-142
Rated output (ECE-R120)	91kW/123hp	98kW/133hp	106kW/143hp
Maximum with transport boost	106kW/143hp	113kW/153hp	120kW/163hp
Maximum torque	549Nm	594Nm	645Nm
Base price	£73,869	£77,236	£79,924