MILKING SYSTEMS

HD 97,7

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CENTER#15

#125,6

WAIKATOMILKING.COM

# Farm Gate

2017 TO 2023





### CONTENTS

#125,6

### MOORBY FARM | JOHN & DEBBIE MOORBY | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "We'll get more throughput but also be able to cut back on time in the parlour." CROSSROADS FARM | PHILLIP & SHARON DENCH | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "One person gets to see every cow at every milking so they notice any changes in cow health and behaviour." KAIKAHA DAIRIES | PETER & MAREE HUGHES | SOUTHLAND, NZ "The cows are getting on really well and seemed very happy during the first two weeks with no issues." SCHULER BROTHERS LTD | KEVIN & PAUL SCHULER | TE AROHA, NZ "We wanted a milking platform that was efficient and offered quick milking for two people." GREEN PARK SHEEP | PAUL & DIANNE WHITE | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "The big advantage of the plant is its Rapid Exit System, which maximises throughput." KIWITAHI PASTORAL | DUNCAN ENERSON | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "SmartWASH is a stand out feature because it automates the end of milking wash process." BROWNE'S PASTORAL | ALLAN & TONI BROWNE | CAMBRIDGE, NZ "We'll be able to reduce labour from three to two people at milking time." LONGREACH DARIES | FRASER STORY | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "Over the course of milking there's a lot less fatigue on the operator." SIMSON FARMS | ALLISTER SIMSON | WHENUAKURA, NZ "Since installing a 60-point Centrus Composite Rotary, milking time has become more efficient and enjoyable." TOTMAN DAIRIES | AARON OLESON | TE AWAMUTU, NZ "The ability to adjust spray application is a major advantage of the SmartSPRAY system." GLENN FAMILY TRUST | JOHN GLENN | WHENUAKURA, NZ "The parlour was modernised by incorporating milking automation technology."

VERNON & THERESA CORBETT   OTOROHANGA, NEW ZEALAND "We achieved our goal, which was a shed that was efficient, minimises labour input and works well."	26
LEANNE BLAKELOCK & IAN POWELL   COWTRAQ™ COLLARS   TARANAKI, NZ "CowTRAQ™ Collars have taken the question mark out of mating."	28
LEANNE BLAKELOCK & IAN POWELL   SORT GATE   TARANAKI, NZ "Draft for any purpose and they'll be standing there at the end of milking."	30
MIKE TILLEMANS   SUPA4   PUTARURU, NZ "Milking is more efficient, and we have better cow flow."	32
MATTHEW JONES   WALKOVERSPRAYER   MANAWATU, NZ "The walkover unit is very strong and robust under the cows."	34
PHILIP & SHARON DENCH   ELECTRONIC MILK METER   TE AWAMUTU, NZ "The more information and parameters I have, the more I can define what I need to do."	36
ANDREW SLATER   SMARTD-TECT   TARANAKI, NZ "I was looking for technology options, rather than manual labour, to help identify cell count cows."	38
JASON & LEANNE ERB   ECR PLUS   EDENDALE, NZ "Cup removers were at the top of the list when it came to planning the new rotary."	40
REUBEN ALLEN   ECR-S   WAITAKI RIVER, NZ "I was looking for a simpler system, with less maintenance and lower costs to maintain."	42
CRAIG CLARKE   ECR-S   TARANAKI, NZ ""The cup removers make milking time a more pleasant environment."	44





A

JOHN AND DEBBIE MOORBY TE AWAMUTU, NEW ZEALAN

**Centrus Composite Rotary** 

1150 Cows

80 Bails

Commissioned 2019

**ECR Plus** 

SmartD-TECT

SmartSPRAY

BailGate Straps

Waikato 320 Claws

Industrial Double Bank Plate Cooler

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



#### BEN FREDERICKSON

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### Replacing two dairies with one to improve efficiency and lift production

When John and Debbie brought their neighbour's farm they completed their first season in the two existing Herringbone sheds - milking 640 cows on the home farm, and 460 cows on their new farm.

With five staff needing to be involved in milking, and three relief milkers covering time off, the idea had always been to undertake a major redevelopment and install a big shed at some stage to improve efficiency and lift their production.

As a part of their research into a new dairy plant, Waikato Milking Systems, and their dealer Qubik, flew John and Debbie to the South Island to look at several 80 bail sheds to give them an idea of what would work best for them. The decision was made to install an 80 bail Centrus Composite Rotary platform for its structural integrity and durability - and its composite deck that is 75% lighter than traditional concrete or steel alternatives.



Working alongside Waikato Milking Systems, John and Debbie worked out what technology and automation they would put into the shed, and in November 2018 construction began, with the new dairy being commissioned in July 2019. And from their first day of milking, Waikato Milking Systems and Qubik were on-site for three to four days for every milking, fine-tuning the system to ensure everything was running efficiently.

The technology fitted to the Centrus was chosen by John and Debbie to make milking time easier and more efficient, while reducing the amount of labour required.



"Waikato Milking Systems has proven products, and their dealer Qubik are based nearby to us in Te Awamutu, so if something goes wrong they're not far away. That's really important to us."

SmartSPRAY has meant that the cows udders can be sprayed straight away, so there are no variables with teats closing or not being sprayed on time, making it better for the cows - while SmartD-TECT stimulates pre-milking so the cows let their milk down faster. The device also provides early warnings of potential udder health problems, reducing treatment time and cost.

The platform also has BailGate straps to manage cows on the platform - which can be lowered or raised automatically when the cup removers are activated. This means they don't require someone to be working at cups off - the cows are released from the platform automatically and begin their walk back to the paddock.

While there was a learning curve for the staff and animals, with most of the cows having to be pushed on at least once, the in-shed feeding meant "the cows were away" within three to four milkings, says John.



The new shed has highlighted the efficiency of their staff, and their staff's time-management. They are now milking 1150 cows with three people - two milking while the other brings the herd in - whereas previously they required five staff plus relief milkers. Their staff are loving the whole setup and the easy cleaning process - and are comfortable and happy in their new working environment.

John and Debbie are extremely proud of how they have developed their dairy business over the

years, while raising a family - and are impressed with how Waikato Milking Systems and Qubik made the process of installing their new rotary smooth and efficient.

And while John doesn't want to be milking full-time for too much longer, the technology that has been installed on the platform will allow him to keep "an eye on how things are going".





#125,6





Orbit Concrete Rotary

54 Bails

680 Cows

Commissioned 2017

NaviGATE addition 2019

SmartECR's

SmartD-TECT

SmartSPRAY

BailGates

NaviGATE Sort Gate

SYSTEM PROJECT MANAGER AND SALES:



TE AWAMUTU, NZ

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### Simplicity, strength and sophistication

plant will allow us to

increase our herd

size if needed"

In 2016 Philip and Sharon were faced with a total upgrade of the infrastructure of their Te Kawa dairy farm - effluent system, feed pad and dairy.

Philip recalls it was taking two people 3.5 hours
twice a day to milk the then herd of 780 cows
The new R
through the 50 a side herringbone with another
member of the team
bringing in the second mob.
"The new dairy

We watched a milking in the neighbours 60 bail Waikato Milking Systems rotary – and that convinced me us was the way to go. I

wanted a dairy with technology which could easily be upgraded so the shed would always be current. Waikato Milking Systems came highly recommended by all the farmers I talked to. It's a New Zealand owned company, which I liked, which equates to good backup and I liked the simplicity, strength and sophistication of the gear". With this in mind Philip

and Sharon opted for a 54 bail Orbit Concrete Rotary platform. They included SmartD-TECT (mastitis alert system), Smart ECR (automatic cup removers), BailGates, Stainless steel double bank cooler, SmartSPRAY bullets.

The new Rotary milked 680 cows in the first season (2017) rising to 780 with the potential to increase to

a maximum of 1000 cows.

Two Operator Consoles
display real time milking
information and are
positioned at cups on
and cups off. This provide
the operator/s with the

flexibility to access a console on either side of the bridge. A keyboard at each console allows the operator/s to quickly enter commands, for example, to enter a treatment, or automatically sort cows as they walk through the sort gate. The advantage is that an operator doesn't have to rush into the parlour office to set up the commands on a PC. Transitioning



"One of the biggest
advantages of a rotary
platform is one person
gets to see every cow
at every milking so they
notice any changes
in cow health and
behaviour."





cows which have only been milked in a Herringbone is often described as "a challenge requiring additional manpower" but Philip says it was "incredibly simple".

Philip and Sharon Dench say the new dairy is "all we'd hoped it would be. We've achieved our goal of labour efficiency with one person comfortably milking 680 cows with another member of the team bringing the second herd in. One of the biggest advantages of a rotary platform is one person gets to see every cow at every milking so they notice any changes in the udder, or cow health and behaviour," Philip said.

In 2019, changes to the farm's sort gate software by its original manufacturer, meant it was no longer able to communicate with the milking automation technology onboard the rotary.

Head of Waikato Milking Systems Sales Support and Technical Services, Diego Brandao, said finding a solution was simple. It involved removing the existing sort gate controller and replacing it with the NaviGATE Dairy Management System. We kept the physical gate but removed its control box and reader, and replaced it, and the reader, with NaviGATE. The advantage with NaviGATE is that it allows you to change its settings to suit most common styles of gate hardware in the industry.

A NaviGATEcontrol system and ID reader manage, detects and identifies each cow and uses the gate to automatically draft animals. The old office computer was removed and we installed NaviGATE Office Control. Everything is now linked back to a new

system where the operator can review the milking information of each cow and set up predetermined sorting options for the gate.

Finally we installed a NaviGATE Rotary ID/positioning system that identifies each cow and the bail she is being milked in. SmartLINK transfers the data wirelessly from Electronic Milk Meters and SmartD-TECT to the NaviGate Software. The data collected from the sort gate and rotary ID systems can now be sent to the parlour office and reviewed on a PC.

"Overall, every aspect of the project went smoothly. It's really future-proofed the farm and we're rapt, we couldn't be happier."





Orbit Concrete Rotary

1200 Cows

70 Bails

Commissioned 2020

ECR-S

SmartPULS

Cow Restraints

Multi Roller

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



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Efficiently milking 1200 cows just became a lot easier

Their new Orbit Concrete Rotary parlour was commissioned at the end of July, in time for the start of the new 2020-21 milking season. Project manager James Norman, from Progressive Rural Trade Services, said there was a bit of uncertainty when Covid-19 forced New Zealand into the alert level 4 lockdown in April.

But by the end of May the team was back on site and the installation project back on track. "It was pretty much a new build, only the round yard was used again from the original milking parlour. We removed the old platform and milking system, demolished the shed, cleared the site so we could start from scratch."

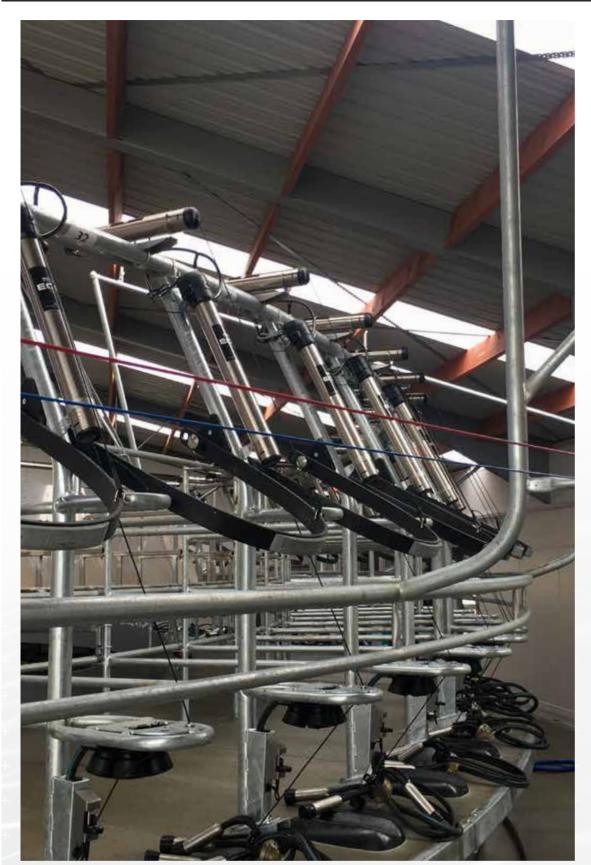
James said the Hughes family was an existing customer and Progressive had installed a rotary system for Kaikaha Dairies, on a different property, about 10 years ago. "We've spoken informally in the past few years about the options for a new milking system and this year Peter decided to go



ahead with it." James said it was time to replace the property's tired 50-bail milking system.

"We had upgraded it a few times over the years, we put in pulsators and a vacuum system. But it was starting to cost a lot to keep it going. They were working hard to put 1200 cows through a 50-bail so it was time to go bigger, to a 70-bail rotary, to make it more efficient."

The new Orbit Concrete Rotary parlour features ECR-S, electronic cup removers, to reduce labour at milking time. "The old rotary didn't even have cup removers so that certainly helps with







"James said it was time to replace the property's tired 50-bail milking system. They were working hard to put 1200 cows through a 50-bail so it was time to go bigger, to a 70-bail rotary, to make it more efficient."

input as far as labour into the shed goes." Other milking automation technology options on the Orbit included BailGates, for cow retention and SmartPULS, for independent pulsation. "We don't have SmartSPRAY on there at the moment, we've just got the bullets installed on the platform but that gives the owner the option of adding the automatic teat spray system later on."

The Orbit is underpinned by the Multi Roller undercarriage, which uses cast nylon polymer,

engineered for industrial roller applications. It ensures the weight on the platform is distributed evenly, increasing durability. James said Progressive used a local builder it worked with regularly to construct the parlour's new building. "We worked on everything else, installation of the platform, the milking machine, pumps, electrical and refrigeration."

James has returned to the property a few times since the Orbit was commissioned in late July to see how it was operating. "The cows are getting on really well and seemed very happy during the first two weeks with no issues."

**MAIKATO** 



Agili Rapid Exit 40 aside swingover herringbone 640 Sheep

WAIKATO, NEW ZEALAND

Commissioned 2020

SmartPULS

Integrated stainless steel feed bins

Milking cluster with automatic shut-off valve

Cluster Wash System

PROJECT MANAGER:



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Components

P +64 21 372 283 E andy.geissmann@waikatomilking.com Maximising their milking efficiency, and animal flow.

The unique Schuler Brothers dairy operation in New Zealand, run by third generation farming brothers Kevin and Paul Schuler, is underpinned by diversification and sustainability.

Their 230-hectare family property in Te Aroha West, in New Zealand's Waikato region, had traditionally been a cow dairy - but Kevin and Paul were looking for opportunities to diversify, and the higher payouts and lower environmental footprint of small ruminant dairy farming were appealing. In 2020 the Schuler Brothers introduced sheep to their farm for the first time, having already introduced goats around seven seasons prior. "The goats provided good, strong cashflow and we saw the same opportunity with sheep" said Kevin, who wanted a good mix of animals to provide them with diversity and sustainability, and a strong dairy operation for their future.

When they were looking to bring sheep onto their farm, the Schuler Brothers made the most of their

longstanding relationship with Waikato Milking Systems and its dealers Paeroa Farm Services and Qubik to recommission an old cow shed they hadn't used for many years.

"The rapid exit has been really good. In the shed, the feeding system works well, cupping is efficient and milking times are quick, which means we can get on to other work around the farm."

Schuler Brothers decided to convert the old shed into a 40 aside Agili Rapid Exit parlour to handle the farm's 640 milking ewes, and to allow room to expand the flock in the future. "We wanted a milking platform that was efficient and offered quick milking for two people, that had good animal

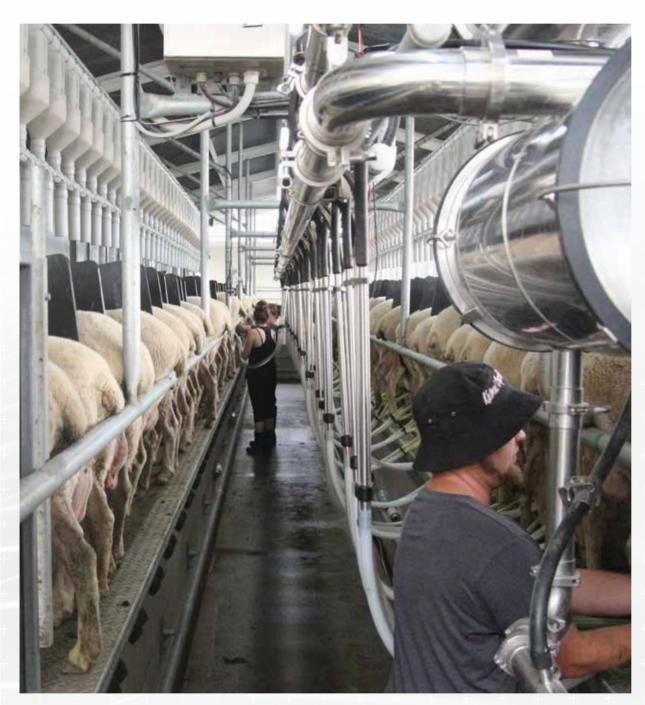
flow and that would lead on to good milk quality." said Kevin.

The Covid-19 alert levels in 2020 provided a few initial challenges as the shed was only just up and running when the sheep had arrived ready to go - and they hadn't had the advantage of running them through before milking to familiarise them with the new system. However, while they were a little hesitant to begin with the sheep were soon

motivated by the feed enticement in the shed, and once they learned where to go "they settled really well" said Kevin.

Towards the end of the Schuler Brothers first season, two people were milking 550 sheep in 45 minutes. This meant that with two people they would be able to milk around 750 sheep an hour, and with three people they could get close to 900 sheep an hour "which would be outstanding" says Kevin.

"With two people we will be able to milk around 750 sheep an hour which is good. With three people we could get close to 900 an hour, which would be outstanding."







Kevin says that the milking time made it easy on their staff and provided them with more time to pick up on any health problems and milk quality with the sheep. "We rely on our staff and if milking time is quick and efficient, they're more likely to identify problems with the ewes' udders for example, and make a decision to sort it out." says Kevin.

Because Kevin and Paul wanted to keep their milking system simple they haven't fitted a lot of automation into the parlour, however they are looking at installing automatic cup removers as an option in the future. Kevin says the parlour is working well as a basic system and the shed has "a really good flow and it's a good environment to work in."

Kevin says he would "definitely recommend"
Waikato Milking Systems to other farmers, adding
that "from our experience they've been reliable,
adaptable and worked with us. Building a new
shed is great but there are always a few hiccups
and the after-installation support has been
outstanding."





**GREEN PARK SHEEP** WAIKATO, NEW ZEALAND

> Agili Rapid Exit 40 aside herringbone 850 Sheep Commissioned 2020 **Milking Control Unit SmartCONTROL User Switch** Rapid Exit Gate

PROJECT MANAGER:



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Get involved with people you can rely on.

Long-time Waikato dairy farmers Paul and Dianne White were looking for an opportunity for their two sons, Brad and Kieran, to enter the farming industry.

Paul and Dianne already had their youngest son, Andrew, contract milking on the home property. They wanted to diversify from the dairy and drystock operation as part of their family succession plan. "We looked at what opportunities were available on our existing land, or perhaps on a new property," Paul said. "Then we discovered dairy sheep milking and started to investigate it a bit more.

The couple started their due diligence on setting up a dairy sheep operation. "We visited several sheep milking and breeding properties including Maui Milk in Taupō. "We worked out our budgets and our cash flow and it ticked many boxes for us, like profitability, environmental impact. It looked like a golden opportunity and very much like the way of the future." The family didn't want to

convert their existing 520-cow dairy farm near Te Awamutu so went looking for a new property to base their dairy sheep venture.

They purchased Brian and Welwyn Meredith's farm at Kio Kio, between Ōtorohanga and Te Awamutu. Shortly after, they signed a contract with Maui Milk to supply. The family already had a 44 aside Waikato Milking Systems plant built by dealer, Qubik, on their own dairy farm in Te Awamutu. "So we started to plan a Rapid Exit System for our new sheep property through Qubik again, and that led on to Waikato Milking Systems getting involved."

Waikato Milking Systems Small Ruminants Specialist Andy Geissmann was able to lead the project to convert an existing 18 aside Herringbone cow parlour, to a 40 aside Agili Rapid Exit Sheep Milking System, the first of its kind for the company. That involved keeping the existing building but installing new plant equipment, technology and the new milking system. "There was a lot of learning involved as you can imagine.

We had to convert the property, to make it suitable for sheep, as well as converting the shed. "Maui Milk has got a breeding property near Taupō and we bought our ewes, in-lamb, from them and they arrived on the property on June 8."

Kieran and Brad worked in the corporate world at the time. Kieran as an analyst and Brad worked in rural banking. "Our sons quit their corporate jobs and put their efforts into the "We looked at what opportunities were available and then we discovered dairy sheep milking. It ticked many boxes for us, like profitability and environmental impact."

new farm. They are very much leading the farm now and I am in an advisory role."

The new property, now called Green Park Sheep, is stocked with 850 sheep. The animals are getting used to using the new milking plant and Paul expects the efficiency levels to lift as time goes on. "There's been a lot of learning about what works and what doesn't. With Andy's help, we've been able to shave an hour off milking and we're getting about 500 through an hour. "I







think that's about where it will sit at the moment, using three staff at milking. In the near future, I reckon we'll be able to do better, and get it down to just two people milking."

The Milking Control Unit on the parlour automatically removes the clusters to help reduce labour time and increase efficiency. The User Switch at each cluster uses LED lights to signal the operator when milking has started or finished. The sheep enter the system in a single file, managed into their bails using a self-indexing gate system. As the lead animal turns to enter the first open bail, its body triggers the gate of the neighbouring bail to open, allowing the next animal to enter. The process continues

until all of the stalls are occupied, making it an easy and fast way to load the animals into the milking system.

The big advantage of the plant is its Rapid Exit System which maximises throughput. The gate uses a pneumatic system, compressed air, to lift and close quickly, quietly and safely around the animals. The Rapid Exit Gate on the Green Park Sheep plant can be operated in two sections, which gives the operator the ability to release some of the animals, while keeping others in their bails. Paul said the milking parlour has been set up to allow the farm to expand in the future. "We bought the property, it's about 81 hectares, it was milking 200 cows. I think we can go up to

1200 ewes so I think the property has got a good up-side and a great future." There's been keen interest in the new system from neighbours who are waiting to see its results over the next few years.

Paul had some advice to offer other people thinking of switching from dairy cows to dairy sheep. "Do your planning well first because that will take away the stress later on. There is quite a lot of advice out there around dairy sheep, which surprised us. "Get involved with people you can rely on. The build, from Qubik, through to Waikato Milking Systems, all went to plan even with the disruptions of Covid-19."

#125,6



TE AWAMUTU, NEW ZEALAND

**Orbit Concrete Rotary 700 Cows** 

54 Bails

Commissioned 2020

**ECR Plus** 

**SmartWASH** 

**SmartSPRAY** 

**Cow Restraints** 

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### A solution that revolves around their operational requirements

Strategic planning backed by modern milking technology has helped transform one of Kiwitahi Pastoral's dairy farm operations in the Waikato region.

The company bought the One Bird dairy farm in 2018 which comprised 303 hectares backing on to the Maungatautari reserve. About 270ha is effective and about 33ha is native bush which the company is fencing off for protection. Operations manager Duncan Enersen said the farm came with an old 22-aside Herringbone but it was located in the corner of the property.

"The cows were taking a huge amount of time walking to the shed and it was having an impact on their health, on production and making it hard on our staff as well." Those factors led Kiwitahi to plan for a new rotary shed about 1km into the middle of the farm. "That would allow us to increase cow numbers, lift production and make life easier for our staff and particularly our animals, so they didn't have to walk so far."



Kiwitahi looked around to see what the options were for a new rotary milking plant. Duncan met with dairy equipment specialist Qubik, based in nearby Te Awamutu. "Qubik took us to see a Waikato Milking Systems rotary working on another farm. "They also took us to see the Waikato Milking Systems manufacturing plant and it was good to see how things were designed, made and how they worked." Kiwitahi decided to model its new rotary based on the milking plant Qubik had shown them earlier. A few adjustments were made to suit the farm's unique requirements and the installation started in August 2020.



"The driving factor for us was the concept of having a platform that offered a total solution for the way we wanted to operate the dairy farm."

Qubik handled the installation, Don Chapman Waikato completed the building work and Waikato Milking Systems manufactured the plant equipment. "All three were all great right from the start, I could not fault them."

The new 54-point Orbit Concrete Rotary Milking Systems was commissioned in November 2020. The system features ECR Plus (Electronic Cup Removers), SmartSPRAY (automatic teat spray), SmartWASH (automatic washing system), BailGate straps (for cow retention) and the NaviGATE sort gate. Duncan said the high level of automation eliminated many of the traditional manual tasks and it delivered on the farm's goal to make the plant a one-person milking system.

He mentioned SmartWASH as a stand out feature because it automated the end of milking wash process. Its ability to consistently use the correct chemical mix ensured it complied with health and safety and hygiene regulations.

Duncan also liked the Variable Speed Drive which delivered only the vacuum required by the milking plant, reducing power consumption while lowering noise in the dairy. "The cows took a bit of training to get used to the rotary but since we commissioned the plant we haven't had an issue with it. "The cows love the new rotary milking system because they don't have to walk so far, the staff love it because it's easy to use and it has really transformed the farm."

Herd size is now 600 cows and calving takes the number up to 650. "We'll probably calve up to 700 next season but I don't think we'll move beyond that mark."

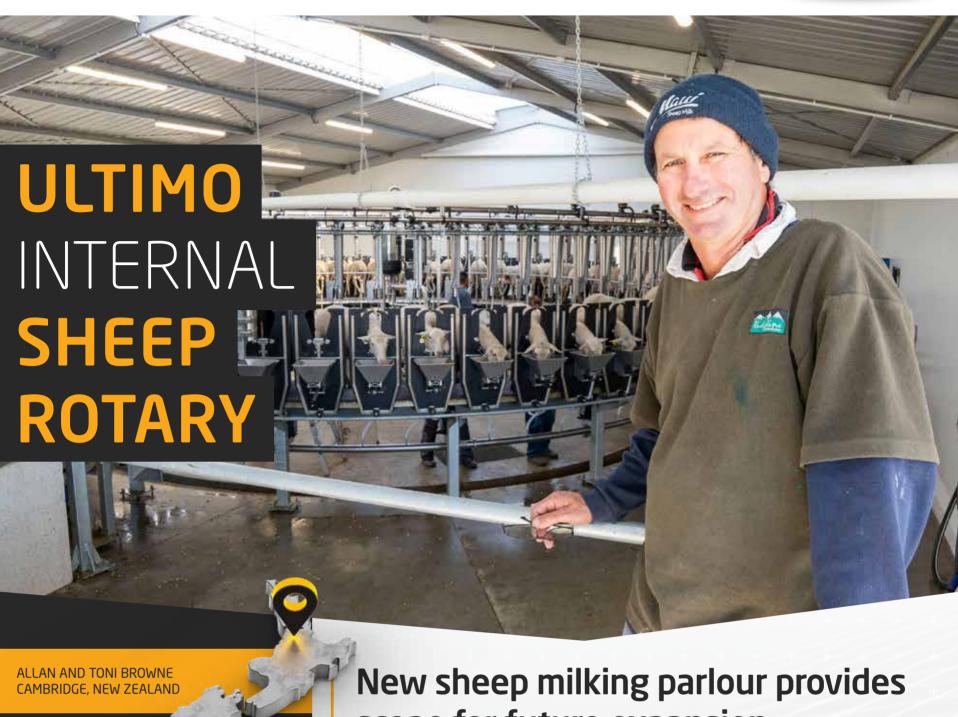
Duncan said research was the key to the successful installation of the Orbit rotary and he suggested others looking to redevelop do the same. "We had a look at quite a lot of farms and read up on all of the options. Our biggest thing was that we wanted to work with good people and to have that good relationship.

"That's what we found straight away with Qubik, Don Chapman and Waikato Milking Systems. It made the process a whole lot easier."









**Ultimo Internal Sheep Rotary** 

70 Bails

1200 Sheep

Commissioned 2020

**ECR-S** 

**SmartPulse** 

In-Bail Feed

SR Cluster Washer

**Automatic Headlocks** 

PROJECT MANAGER:



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### scope for future expansion

As "career sheep farmers" Allan and Toni Browne diversified into sheep milking a few years ago - recognising it as an emerging market that was showing keen demand and good returns.

While they also have about 450 cows on their family's combined 570 hectare property near Cambridge in the Waikato, "dairying is still new to us," says Allan. "We became interested in dairy sheep as a concept because we had some skills, land and experience available which led us to look at it more seriously."

In 2018 the couple leased some Southern Cross Dairy rams from Maui Sheep Milk to set up their dairy sheep operation and gain access to the new European genetics. "We knew using those genetics, we would be able to produce more milk than anything else in the country," says Allan.

To extract the most value from those genetics Allan and Toni needed a rotary milking parlour

that could manage milking 1200 sheep in the first season, with the ability to increase to 2000 at a later date.

"It was exciting watching the new parlour come together and the rotary was now "cranking out" between 600 to 700 sheep an hour, using three staff during the milking process. "

After approaching three major dairy technology companies, Waikato Milking Systems stood out as the preferred supplier because they could design and manufacture their new plant locally. "Another bonus was knowing that service and support would never be too far away if help was needed,"

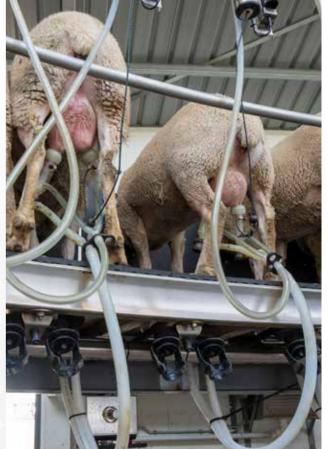
says Allan. The 70-bail Ultimo Internal Sheep Rotary they selected "was a novel prototype design" but they took Waikato Milking Systems "for their word that they were going to deliver for us - and they have."

Working with Waikato Milking Systems Small Ruminants Specialist, Andy Geissmann, and their local dealer Qubik Te Awamutu from concept design and manufacturing through to construction, the new rotary parlour was commissioned in 2020.

constructed from stainless steel, the system is built for longevity - a key point of difference when compared to other sheep rotary systems. And for animal comfort, rubber mats are fitted to the deck for the sheep to stand on during milking, which also reduces noise and stress for both the animals and the operator. The internal

"The sheep grasped the concept of using the rotary after about half a dozen times, and I can see that once the sheep are fully educated on how to use the rotary"







platform also means the operator is standing inside the rotary so they can easily observe all of the sheep, all of the time.

Allan says "It was exciting watching the new parlour come together" and the rotary was now "cranking out" between 600 to 700 sheep an hour, using three staff during the milking process. "The sheep grasped the concept of using the

rotary after about half a dozen times, and I can see that once the sheep are fully educated on how to use the rotary - we'll be able to reduce labour from three to two people at milking time."

The Browne's Ultimo Internal Sheep Rotary is fitted with ECR-S (automatic cup removers technology to automate the milking process and

reduce time spent in the parlour. The ECR-S can be set to remove the cups in two modes; if the milk flow drops below a certain level, and at a preset time after milking starts.

Allan says the farm is supplying milk to Maui Sheep Milk, and "the new milking parlour has given the farm scope to expand in the future." CENTER#15 #125,6 MHD 97,7 94,4 CENTER#15 #125,6

**WAIKATO**°



Orbit Concrete Rotary

LONGREACH DAIRIES

TE AWAMUTU, NEW ZEALAND

70 Bails

1020 Cows

Commissioned 2022

ECR-S

320HP Milking Cluster

SmartSPRAY

**Cow Restraints** 

SmartWASH

Multi-Roller Undercarriage

SYSTEM PROJECT MANAGER AND SALES:



RAY STOWE
Regional Manager Sales & Service
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P +64 021 193 9413 E ray.stowe@waikatomilking.com Reducing operator fatigue, while improving teat condition and health

When Fraser Storey redeveloped the infrastructure on his farm, replacing his two older rotaries, it was the perfect opportunity to trial the new Waikato 320HP Milking Cluster.

Fraser had heard about the new lightweight cluster during the construction of his new 70-point Orbit

Concrete Rotary Milking
System and contacted
Waikato Milking Systems,
saying "The clusters we had
in the old sheds were the
Waikato 320 model which
are still current and very
similar, however the biggest
difference is the weight."
With the new cluster being
1.1kg lighter, the feedback
from staff has been positive

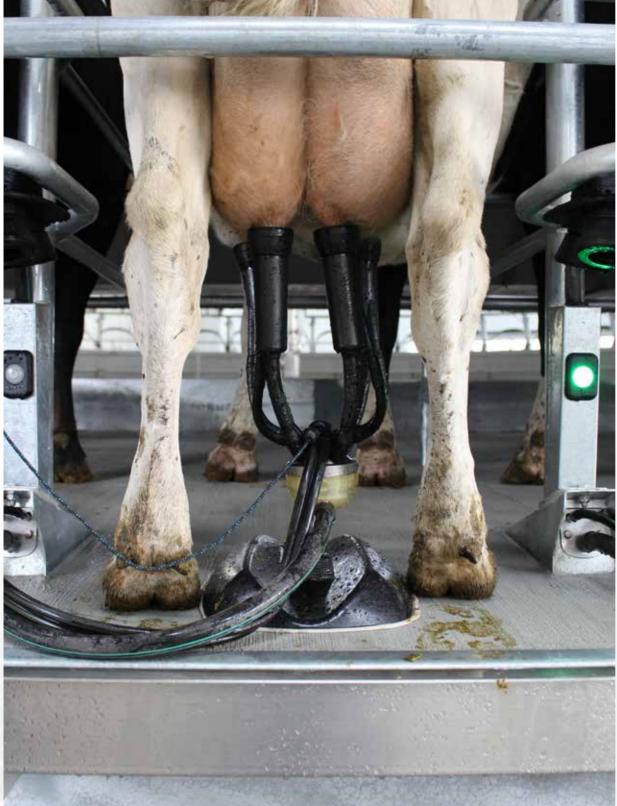
with Fraser saying "Over the course of milking there's a lot less fatigue on the operator."



It was noticeable in the old sheds that his staff were tired from working with the heavier clusters, and they had to work harder to get through milking. "Whereas now, I can see that it's so much easier for our staff" says Fraser, who has noticed his staff were happier at the end of each

milking session. While it took a little time to adapt to attaching the new clusters, "The lightweight nature of the cluster makes it easier to cup the cows and in

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"The change in mood and atmosphere has been noticeable compared to the previous two sheds which had been reasonably stressful to work in for both staff and animals."





turn makes it easier on staff, and lowers the stress on their bodies at milking time."

The new clusters have also had a positive effect on Fraser's animals as the vented liner minimises milk back-splash, which helps to improve teat health. Cup alignment, good teat condition and how well cows are milked out "were the top factors farmers would always look for from a highperforming cluster," says Fraser.

"The other real positive about the 320HP is that we've had a lot less cup slip than we did with the heavier clusters."

As well as being designed to be lightweight, the Waikato 320HP Milking Cluster has also been constructed to be strong and robust enough to handle the knocks at milking time. "It's lightweight, but it is definitely sturdy. Occasionally a cow will stand on it, or catch the detacher rope as she backs off, but we

haven't had any issues with the shells or the cluster at all."

Fraser recommends the Waikato 320HP to other farmers looking for advantages around milking time. "In terms of the new shells, liners and clusters, they've been a positive addition and I would recommend them."



#125,6



Centrus Composite Rotary

540 Cows

60 Bails

Commissioned 2021

**ECR Plus** 

SmartD-TECT

SmartSPRAY

BailGate Straps

Waikato 320 Claws

Industrial Double Bank Plate Cooler

#### **REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:**



SIMSON FARMS

WHENUAKURA, NEW ZEALAND

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### A more efficient and enjoyable milking time, for staff and cows

Since installing a new 60-point Centrus Composite Rotary milking system, milking time has become more efficient and enjoyable for the sharemilkers, staff and cows working on Allister Simson's 300 hectare farm in Whenuakura, South Taranaki.

Working with their Waikato Milking Systems dealers, Hunts Farm Services and Moa Rotary Platforms, the new milking system was installed in time for the 2021-22 season - replacing the farm's original 40-point open centre steel platform rotary that was commissioned in 1982. "The old rotary had served us well, but its steel platform had come to the end of its life and the overall system was too small for the number of dairy cows on the farm now" says Allister.

Because the old milking shed was tight for space, Allister knew that if he were to put a new platform into the old shed it would have to be of a smaller size because of the limited clearance,



saying "That's one of the reasons we decided on a new build instead of redevelopment."

To make the most use of the existing infrastructure including the races, tanker track and effluent system - the new system was built next to the old milking system. The new collection yard, entry and exit points were modelled on the old rotary shed to provide a familiar cow-flow system for the animals to follow. "We designed it that way so it wouldn't be too much of a change for the cows and I think they have adapted well" says Allister.



"We had cup removers on the old rotary too but it's the time management factor in the Centrus which has improved and made the difference we were looking for."



"The outside of the new parlour may look familiar, but inside is where the differences with the new modern milking system become apparent. "It's a lot more open compared to our old rotary sheds and there's more light coming in. There's also more room to manoeuvre which makes it easy for the sharemilkers and staff when they're working."

Before deciding on a new milking system Allister had looked at several other rotary manufacturers, but it was Waikato Milking Systems composite deck on the Centrus system that really appealed. "There isn't anyone else making decks using composite materials that are much lighter and longer lasting, everything seems to be concrete these days. I went to see a few other Centrus platforms working and they still looked brand new after two or three years". Allister adds "The composite deck operates much more quietly than the steel deck on the old

rotary, providing a calm environment for everyone to work in". While the Simson farm has the capacity to run 650 dairy cows they have set peak milking at 540 cows as they're also self-contained with having all of their young stock on-farm. "That takes a bit of pressure off the farm system and the 60-bail Centrus performs well milking that number of cows at peak, with room to go further if needed. It's a really good space to work in now, it's easier to move around the rotary. The cows look happy and we hope the Centrus will last even longer than the original rotary," says Allister.

Feedback from Allister's sharemilkers, Dean and Jess, confirms that their milking time has reduced considerably "through very good cow-flow and the easy operation of the new milking system".

Thanks to some key automation onboard the

Centrus system, only one person is required for milking. This automation includes the ECR-Plus (electronic cup removers), the SmartSPRAY system (automatic teat spray) and BailMate (for cow retention). "We had cup removers on the old rotary too but it's the time management factor in the Centrus which has improved and made the difference we were looking for" says Allister. The unique Bail Marshal system on the Centrus will allow more automation features to be added later when needed.

During the build of the new Centrus system, which started in 2020, milking continued out of the old shed to avoid disruption to the business. The project was originally scheduled for completion within 8 months, however the Covid-19 pandemic forced delays and the parlour was completed in 2021.





#125,6





**Rotary Platform Refit** 

40 Bails

**700 Cows** 

Commissioned 2019

**New Stall Work** 

**SmartSPRAY** 

**ECR Plus** 

**Cow Restraints** 

Rubber mats fitted to original deck

SYSTEM PROJECT MANAGER AND SALES:



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A smarter way to spray more accurately and reliably.

With teat health being paramount in ensuring the best possible milk quality and health care for their cows, the SmartSPRAY automatic teat spray system was at the top of Totman Dairies' list of key technologies when they decided to upgrade and refit their old milking plant in the Waikato.

Prior to upgrading to their new Waikato Milking Systems 40-point rotary milking system in 2019, Totman Dairies had been using an older style automated teat spray system at the plant's exit point - where the cows were sprayed as they

After undertaking research on teat spray application, Business Manager Aaron Olesen and his team decided on an in-bail system where the spray could be applied directly a few seconds after the cups were removed. "That's the optimum time to spray, when the teat canal is still open," says Aaron.

The Waikato Milking Systems SmartSPRAY system is designed specifically for this type of application in rotary dairies, and replaces the need for manual teat spraying and teat dipping before and after milking.

"Cows didn't even notice the difference the first time because the spray is released in such a fine mist."

Other than refilling the spray tank every three days, which is easily accessible on the outside of Aaron's rotary platform, "There is little operator input required to maintain the SmartSPRAY system," he says.

There was also no effort required to transition the 700-cow herd to the new SmartSPRAY system,

"I don't even think the cows noticed the difference when they went on to the rotary for the first time because the spray is released in a very fine mist."

Since installing SmartSPRAY Aaron says the system has performed "without fault, and is very reliable," and he has noticed an overall improvement in his herd's teat health condition, "because the spray is applied accurately and

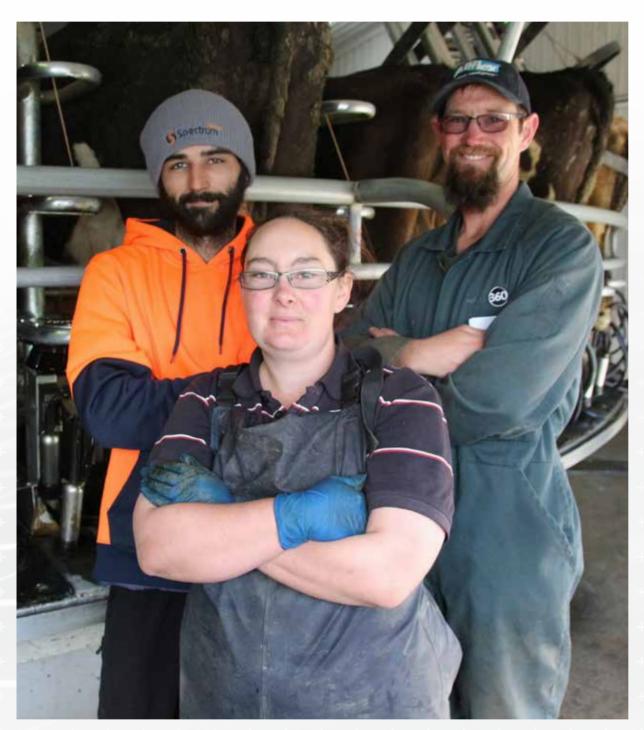
correctly at morning and afternoon milking times, without fault."

The adjustability of the SmartSPRAY system to ensure the best possible application of the spray was also a big bonus for the farm. This means the operator can "get the timing right," says Aaron in terms of setting the spray to activate a few seconds after the cups are removed, clear of the cow.

For Aaron the main advantage of the SmartSPRAY system has been its reliability and proven performance in teat health condition. "It's just given me peace of mind that the cows are going to be properly sprayed every day and every night. It's a job that gets done without even having to think about it."

Totman Dairies also added other automation

Totman Dairies also added other automation features to their new rotary milking system during the refit by their dealers Qubik







Putaruru and Moa Rotary Platforms - which have all performed up to Aaron's expectations. This included installing ECR Plus (electronic cup removers) which were also fully adjustable and able to be removed from the cows at a time specified by the operator. ECR Plus also controls the SmartSPRAY system and the automatic cow restraints.

The Milk Recovery System on the rotary uses compressed air to force residual milk into the vat, which is saving about 80 litres per milking time. The Vacuum Pump on the rotary also ensured there was next to no vacuum loss during milking which was critical for the cup removers to perform properly.

Aaron also switched over to lightweight shells for milking which had dramatically reduced cup slippage. "This is just a small rotary, only 40 bails, but it is certainly efficient and reliable thanks to the automation technology we added in 2019."

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**Centrus Composite Rotary** 

WAIKATO, NEW ZEALAND

800 Cows

50 Bails

Commissioned 2019

**Fixed Rollers** 

Ultimate ECRs

Cow Restraints

Bail Marshal

Dali Flatsilai

Universal Ladder

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## Future proofing a 94 year old farm, while retaining the existing infrastructure

Originally converted from sheep and beef in the late 80s, the Glenn family originally started with a Herringbone milking system for their 400 cows. As they added more land over time, and their herd size grew - they replaced their Herringbone with a 50 bail concrete rotary parlour in the early 2000s.

While the concrete rotary had "milked a lot of cows" during its time in service, it was obvious an upgrade was needed to future-proof their third-generation 94 year-old dairy farm, and to avoid a failure.

After researching the options their biggest decision was whether to put in a lighter platform, or a heavier concrete platform again. And because their existing shed and infrastructure was still sound, they didn't want to pull it all down and start from scratch.



The decision was made to engage Waikato Milking Systems, and their dealer Moa Rotary Platforms. A plan was developed to suit their farm - incorporating the Centrus Composite rotary platform, a structurally superior alternative to concrete that is lighter, more durable and easy to clean.

The old concrete platform was cut into ten segments, each weighing 2.5 tonnes, and removed for demolition by crane through a section of the roof that was later replaced. The old rollers were



then removed, and the new fixed rollers and I-Beam to run the new platform on were installed - then the new subframes and deck were installed and the new bail work fitted.

Milking automation technology options were added to modernise the parlour, with SmartECRs to control the automatic cup removers, while the BailGate Control operates the bail straps to retain the cow on the platform.

The entire upgrade was completed

in five weeks during winter, and in time for the start of 2019 - 2020 season.

The rubber mats on the Centrus platform have resulted in a quieter milking environment, and improved comfort for the cows. A decision was also made to increase the height of the new platform, which enhanced the milking ergonomics considerably - and provided a much-improved working environment that their four full-time staff enjoy working in.

While the parlour only has cup removers on the platform at present, all Waikato Milking Systems milking parlour's use the unique "Plug 'n' Play feature which allows the operator to add milking automaton and dairy management technology to suit their operation when required.

"We were fortunate that the Waikato Milking Systems 50-bail rotary was able to be manufactured to the same size as our old platform, it just fitted into place, in our shed"







CENTER#15





OTOROHANGA, NEW ZEALAN

Supa4 In-Line System 32 Aside **380 Cows** Commissioned 2017

**Ultimate Cup Removers** 

SmartDRIVE VSD

**Double Bank Plate Cooler** 

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



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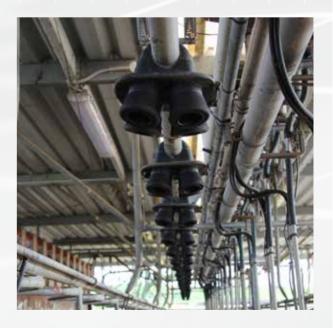
Minimising labour, for a futureproofed, more efficient operation.

Vernon and Theresa Corbett were sharemilking in Matamata when the option to lease 80 hectares next door to the family drystock farm in Otorohanga became available.

"We already owned 24 hectares which I'd been leasing off my family so the opportunity to lease an 80 hectare dairy farm with a 10 year option to purchase was the opportunity we'd been waiting for," Vernon says. The family made the move 'back home' in 2007 Vernon recalling the farm's 18-yearold, 21-aside herringbone shed had grown up with over the years. "It started life as a 16-aside with room for 21 bails. We were milking 186 cows when we came here and planned to gradually increase numbers to the 380 cows we'll milk in 2018/2019.

"We decided, right from the start, to utilise the length of the pit and add cups to make it 21-aside and, as I'd be milking on my own and drenching and applying teat spray, we'd add cup removers. I've been milking in herringbones with cup removers

for 15 years and wouldn't milk without them." Throughout the years herd numbers increased from 180 to 260 and it was at this point that Vernon employed an assistant.



"I'd milk the first herd and the worker would bring in the second herd and milk while I did other

things. "We then added in-shed feeding so we didn't have to drench and that worked even better; it became a one man shed from that point on. "At the end of 10 years we exercised our right of purchase and bought the farm. Achieving our goal of milking 380 cows in a 21-aside was always going to a stretch; it needed to be around 32-aside to minimise rows and milking efficiency and so we compared the financial and operational benefits of a new build, with extending and retrofitting the existing shed."

"I'd used their gear and it's awesome - clever, well designed and tough. It's value for money - we got everything we wanted, at a good price and it's really efficient and easy to use."

The Corbetts looked at new sites but decided financially, it was better to extend the current pit from 21-aside to 32. There were 8 to 10 weeks to rip the old shed apart, extend the pit, build new yards and install the new technology before calving started. Vernon explained why he selected Waikato Milking Systems technology. "I'd used their gear and it's awesome - clever, well designed and tough. It's value for money - we got everything we wanted, at a good price and it's really efficient and easy to use." He said the equipment had





performed up to expectations after the first season in the new shed.

"Rebuilding this shed was purely financial, we looked at other spots around the farm but we already had 21 bails here so it was easier and made financial sense to extend what we had. "Our ultimate goal was a shed which was efficient,

minimises labour input and works well, and that's what we've achieved. "Back-up service has been brilliant. A few teething problems, as you always do with a new fitout, but they were resolved on the spot and since then we haven't needed to get anyone out."

"We are really happy with the shed."



CENTER#15



INGLEWOOD, TARANAKI

**NEW ZEALAND** 

40 aside Herringbone

**360 Cows** 

Commissioned 2022

CowTRAQ™ Collars

Sort Gate 2500

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



**BEN FREDERICKSON** 

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Taking the question mark out of mating, and reducing labour costs.

With labour being one of LeAnne Blakelock and Ian Powell's largest costs, they started modelling a CowTRAQ™ Collars and Sort Gate 2500 system as a solution to increase their efficiencies and reduce labour costs.

The couple are milking 360 cows on their 169ha farm in Inglewood in Taranaki, and are lower order sharemilkers in a farm equity partnership with LeAnne's parents. With an existing Waikato Milking Systems 40 aside herringbone milking system having already been in place for five years when they bought the farm 10 years ago, "we added an end-to-end CowTRAQ $^{\text{TM}}$  Collars and Sort Gate 2500 system" in August 2022 says LeAnne.

As sharemilkers who were paying for it themselves, they chose CowTRAQ™ Collars because they "wanted a straightforward system with a one-off cost, and no ongoing monthly subscriptions."



With 24/7 heat and health monitoring for every cow, CowTRAQ™ Collars have allowed LeAnne and Ian to make more informed data-driven decisions to lower the labour intensity required during their mating season, and reduce their staff from three to two. "Because we've previously needed three staff in the shed over mating season, we've tended to carry that extra labour over the rest of the year that wasn't fully utilised, so we already had inefficiencies in our labour systems," says LeAnne.

### "CowTRAQ™ Collars have taken the question mark out of mating"

Due to the topography of the farm and connectivity issues, the couple couldn't use WIFI or satellite feeders around the farm, so the CowTRAQ<sup>TM</sup> Collars and TraqHQ<sup>TM</sup> software provided the perfect solution. "We are in a cell, WIFI and data dead-zone," says LeAnne, "so the system copes beautifully with that as the collars store around 10 days of data, so when the cows come to the shed we collect the data - and we bring the cows in every day anyway."

CowTRAQ<sup>TM</sup> Collars have "Taken the question mark out of mating. Previously my husband used to have to do it all himself, and he never felt comfortable relying on staff to do it. Tail paint can be so subjective, and it's just so much less labour intensive now," says LeAnne. "Now lan can do more off-farm activities, and spend more time cycling and enjoying his hobbies."

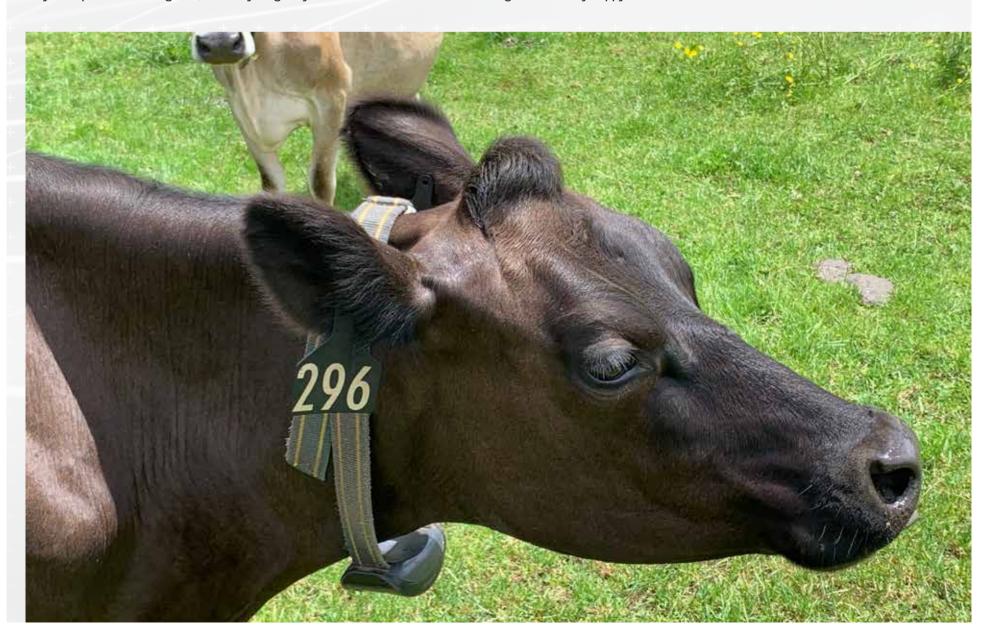
One of the other appeals of the CowTRAQ<sup>TM</sup>
Collars for LeAnne was that they don't require a
counterweight. "They are really lightweight, weighing
only a couple of hundred grams, and they sit gently



on the cow's neck. They don't have to sit tight and touch the cow to record data - so there's no need to adjust the collar." LeAnne and Ian put the collars on themselves and linked up the data on a spreadsheet, saying "It required no technical expertise and we did it slowly over a couple of weeks - it was a choice we made rather than doing it all at once. It was very straightforward."

Since installing the CowTRAQ<sup>™</sup> Collars, "They have reinforced our decision-making. We are really happy

with our submission rates since leaving the collars to make the decisions. Our results are up with our best over the years." One of the other bonuses for LeAnne and lan's farm is they can tell if a cow is missing. "It sounds silly, but with our rolling to steep land with lots of trees and bushes, cows can go missing. Now if we know a cow is missing at milking time we can go to the paddock and look for her right away - whereas previously we wouldn't have known."



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INGLEWOOD, TARANAKI NEW ZEALAND

40 aside Herringbone

360 Cows

Commissioned 2022

CowTRAQ™ Collars

Sort Gate 2500

REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:



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### Keeping their cows sorted, while reducing their workload

LeAnne and Ian's CowTRAQ<sup>™</sup> Collars connect seamlessly with their Sort Gate 2500 system via a sensor on the gate controller that identifies each animal as it approaches.

The Sort Gate 2500's three-way sorting directs each animal to the left, right or straight ahead depending on what instructions have been preloaded or updated before milking. Utilising a pneumatic system that opens and closes quietly to promote good cow flow, the gate ensures a calm environment for the animals to be sorted. To ensure easy access for maintenance, the control and communication equipment is located safely above the gate.

The area where the couple wanted the sort gate was very restricted for space, "We didn't have a lot of room and larger gates wouldn't have fitted," says LeAnne. "It was an awkward site for power as well. There was a lot of head scratching, but between Waikato Milking Systems and our dealer Moa Milking and Pumping in Taranaki, we had a lot of support to

find a solution to fit it in the area we had."

The Sort Gate 2500 has a low profile "and doesn't have all the backing bars. It's nice and open, the cows don't hesitate and they walk straight through which has kept our cow flow going," says LeAnne.

The sort gate has reduced the couple's workload and labour costs and "it works hand-in-hand with the CowTRAQ<sup>TM</sup> Collars. We draft the cows ourselves to suit our requirements and it all just happens." Drafting out a list of cows has become "really really simple" for LeAnne and lan, "Draft for any purpose and they'll be standing there at the end of milking."

LeAnne says that their cows now flow nicely without "having to open gates ands move things around. It's a lot calmer for the cows, and relaxed people make for relaxed animal handling - which makes for better everything."

Before installing the Sort Gate 2500 the couple had

been hesitant. "We had heard stories of gates holding things up and cows not going through, but this hasn't been our experience at all," says LeAnne. They had also been concerned that with the small amount of space they had available that a 90 degree turn through the gate could cause lameness, and that it wouldn't be a smooth process. However "lameness has actually decreased for our cows," says LeAnne.

LeAnne and Ian are "really impressed" with how their cows have adapted to the new sort gate. "It's working beautifully and the cows love it."

For the couple the CowTRAQ<sup>TM</sup> Collars and Sort Gate 2500 system have provided a complete all-in-one solution. They wanted to ensure data integrity by integrating a complete Waikato Milking Systems package with their milking system, so the combination made it "a really easy choice."

Waikato Milking Systems were also able to provide a finance package so they could spread

the cost over time, and pay for it with the "savings they were making on labour."

"For us it was a complete one-stop shop and solution, we didn't need to separate the sort gate and collars. We've got the basic systems we were looking for, and it's working brilliantly," says LeAnne.

"Draft for any purpose and they'll be standing there at the end of milking."





**VAIKATO** 



MIKE TILLEMANS PUTARURU, NEW ZEALAND

> Supa4 In-Line Milking System 40-aside 400 Cows

> > Commissioned 2022

Hurricane Slug Wash System

SwingARMs

AutoWASH

Swing Down Cluster Washers

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



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### More efficient milking, and less time in the shed

Having grown up on a dairy farm in the Waikato and "not wanting to become a dairy farmer," Michael Tillemans became a qualified Trade Mechanic before taking up farming again in 1997 - after realising that "farming didn't look too bad after all."

In 2018 Michael purchased a 134ha dairy farm three kilometres north of Tokoroa, and after several years decided he needed to upgrade the existing 26-aside milking system. With the old system "the time spent in the shed, and cow flow was a shocker," says Michael - and he wanted his staff to be able to spend less time in the cow shed so they "could be more productive elsewhere on the farm."

Michael also wanted it to be easier to hire replacement staff when required. "I just wanted to be able to build a 40-aside milking shed with a swing-over, where one person would be able to milk 400 cows by themselves."

Michael decided to install a Waikato Milking Systems

premium quality mid mounted Supa4 inline milking system that would be capable of high throughput, with less labour and minimum effort.

The simplicity of the Supa4's design ensures ease-ofuse for operators, especially when changing modes - and it also includes a state-of-the-art electronic

"Milking is more efficient and we have better cow flow. The Swing Arms have meant better cup alignment, and there's plenty of room to walk around the pit"

pulsation system for fast and uninterrupted milking. The system features a premium quality 100mm milk pipeline that provides a stable milking vacuum at all times, and totally eliminates milk line flooding.

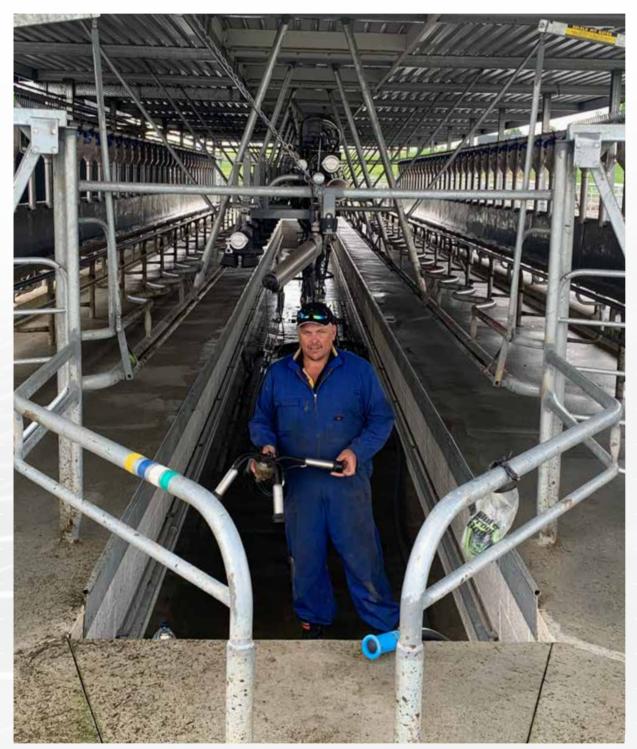
CENTER#15 CENTER#15 WAIKATOMILKING.COM

Since installing the new Supa4 inline system, the labour required at milking time on Michael's farm has been reduced. "Milking is more efficient and we have better cow flow. The Swing Arms have meant better cup alignment, and there's plenty of room to walk around the pit," says Michael.

Michael also says that because his old milking system didn't have Automatic Cup Removers, "we have better udder health now due to the Swing

Arm ACRs that were installed" on his new milking system.

The Supa4 In-line system also features the Hurricane Slug Wash System that ensures the 100mm milk line is maintained at the highest hygiene levels to take full advantage of the totally enclosed wash system. "The slug wash puts a big slug down the milking line to make sure it's cleaned out properly. And with the AutoWASH



function you just push a button and walk away," says Michael. The system also features Swing Down Cluster Washers that can be lowered to reduce the effort required for cup positioning and cleaning.

Qubik Putaruru installed and commissioned

Michael's new Supa4 inline milking system in May 2022 with Michael saying "While they had a fair bit on at the time, they did 12 hour days to get it done and dusted on time."





Michael would "definitely recommend" the Supa4 system to farmers wanting to increase their milking efficiency and reduce their labour. "I just like Waikato Milking Systems professionalism, and they're easy to work with."



20 aside Herringbone

MANAWATU, NEW ZEALAND

**220 Cows** 

Comissioned 2021

WalkoverSPRAYER

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



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Intelligent teat sprayer hits its target every time.

To ensure his Manawatu dairy farm is performing at an optimum level, adopting new technology is paramount for Matthew Jones.

After taking over the family farm from his parents a few years ago, Matthew is milking 220 cows through a 24-aside Herringbone, on a 140 hectare property near the Pohangina Valley. Having worked on the farm since leaving high school, Matthew saw an opportunity when his parents retired to make incremental changes to reduce labour and increase efficiencies by introducing automation technology.

The most recent addition to the farm is a Waikato Milking Systems WalkoverSPRAYER which replaced the dairy plant's old teat sprayer in December 2021. "The old sprayer was outdated and I could see it was missing cows. That really prompted me to make a change." says Matthew.

After researching other products, Matthew

contacted his local dealer Bromley Dairy and Pumps to learn more about the WalkoverSPRAYER. Already familiar with the Waikato Milking Systems brand, Matthew was impressed with the sprayer's intelligent sensor technology and automated

"It's important we're looking after the animals properly and that our hygiene and milking quality standards are at the top".

features - and placed his order.

Bromley Dairy and Pumps removed the old sprayer and installed the WalkoverSPRAYER in the same position just outside the dairy plant's sort gate. "It was a simple installation. They didn't have to do any adjustments to the pipe work, it was mounted and connected" says Matthew.

To ensure the the new sprayer was detecting and spraying its targets perfectly, Matthew made fine-tuning adjustments himself as "It's hard for the installer to know how big the cows are so a little bit of local farm knowledge comes into play. With this sprayer, you can adjust the light beams to make sure it's reaching the cows' teats every time. It's a simple and easy system to use and adjust if needed".

When the sprayer was first installed he noticed that it was sitting quite high up and he was

worried the cows were going to stand on it - but those concerns were quickly alleviated with Matthew saying "The walkover unit is very strong and robust under the cows".

The WalkoverSPRAYER also features an automatic nozzle wash function to keep them clean, "It's quite cool, after every 10 cows it performs a small wash cycle and then a longer wash at the end of milking. It means if there's any effluent left on it, it's washed off and you

don't get any contaminants sprayed onto the cows" says Matthew.

Matthew says the WalkoverSPRAYER has performed up to his expectations. "I can see it's spraying every cow. That's really important to ensure we're looking after the animals properly, and that our hygiene and milking quality standards are at their highest".









**Orbit Concrete Rotary** 

TE AWAMUTU, NEW ZEALAND

**680 Cows** 

54 Bails

Commissioned 2017

**Electronic Milk Meter** 

**SmartECR** 

**SmartSPRAY** 

SmartD-TECT

**Cow Restraints** 

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### Using real-time milking information to make better management decisions

When Phil and Sharon Dench redeveloped their farm's milking plant from a 50-aside herringbone to a 50-point Orbit Concrete Rotary in 2019, Waikato Milking Systems Electronic Milk Meters were at the top of their list for new technology options to improve their herd's productivity.

Electronic Milk Meters have been designed to provide farmers with their cows' performance data, enabling them to make the best possible decisions for their animals and business - which aligns with Phil's philosophy that "extracting highly-accurate data from cows is just as important as extracting milk."

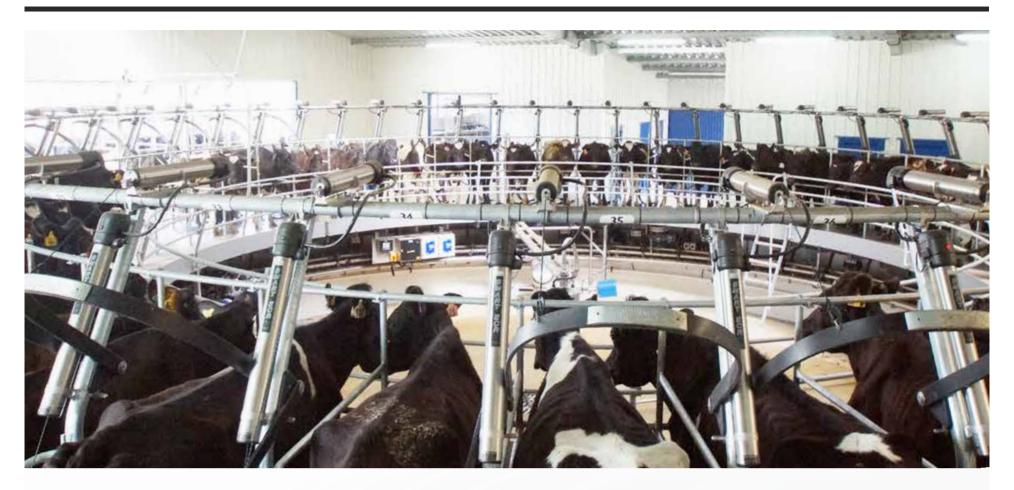
An Electronic Milk Meter is located at each bail, underneath the platform, and the information provided by each one helps Phil to determine which cows are the high milk producers, and which ones have constant low milk productions and should be considered for culling. The data can also show sudden drops in milk production so the



operator can investigate further to see what has caused the change.

The User Display on each bail interpret the data from the Electronic Milk Meter to provide the operator with real-time milking information on the performance of every cow, at every milking producing data on the milking duration, milk flow rate and volume to determine the overall yield. "We put the cups on and the milk meters do the rest of the work for us, to find out how many litres of milk are being produced from each cow" says Phil.

As a result the Electronic Milk Meters have allowed Phil to move away from herd testing, which had



previously been done four-to-six times a year with varying degrees of accuracy.

Phil's Electronic Milk Meters also assist him in making other important herd management decisions including feed regimes for each animal, breeding, and any possible veterinary intervention required to ensure his entire herd is performing to its optimum level. Phil says the data provided by the Electronic Milk Meters gives him "the upper hand on short and long-term management decisions."

As a big adopter of technology that can provide him with useful data and insights to improve his farm's performance, Phil also asked his dealer Qubik Te Awamutu to include SmartD-TECT on his new rotary system. SmartD-TECT automates his pre-milking stimulation and provides udder health

detection to monitor early teat health problems that may lead to higher somatic cell counts - which also eliminates another function normally carried out by herd testing. Any alerts triggered by the SmartD-TECT system also appear on the Electronic Milk Meter User Display.

The Waikato Milking Systems Electronic Milk Meters have "saved us a lot of time, but are also very simple to use and understand" says Phil. All of the data can be viewed on a monitor in the shed and be used to set sort gate options as the cows finish up milking - and the units were also designed to be "tool free" to make it easier for technicians to disassemble for maintenance.

Since installing Electronic Milk Meters, Phil says "The units have performed well since the plant was commissioned and they're now heading into their sixth milking season." "The more information and parameters I have, the more I can define what I need to do, and what I need to focus on to make better decisions."

Phil believes that milking data is becoming more and more relevant, saying "The more information and parameters I have, the more I can define what I need to do, and what I need to focus on to make better decisions."Don Chapman and Waikato Milking Systems. It made the process a whole lot easier."





CENTER#15





TARANAKI, NEW ZEALAND

**Orbit Composite Rotary** 

54 Bails

**570 Cows** 

Commissioned 2021

**ECR Plus** 

SmartD-TECT

**SmartSPRAY** 

**SmartWASH** 

Waikato 320 Standard Cluster

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



**BEN FREDERICKSON** 

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### The smart, labour-saving way to identify cell count cows

When North Taranaki farmer Andrew Slater decided to upgrade his cow shed from a 35-aside Herringbone to a 54 bail Orbit Concrete Rotary milking system, it was a case of "all or nothing". With milking time taking three hours in the old shed for two staff to milk 15 rows "It was pretty tough going, especially at spring time" says Andrew.

The 180 hectare family farm "Chislehurst" is located near Bell Block on the outskirts of New Plymouth, with 570 cows.

Before deciding on the best milking and automation systems for his farm, the former Taranaki provincial rugby captain spent 12 months conducting extensive research including talking to other farmers, as well as visiting numerous milking sheds and the Waikato Milking Systems factory. Andrew says "It's a big investment so you need to make sure you are aligning yourself with the right plant, and the right company."

Andrew had a clear plan in his mind in terms of the functionality he wanted from a new rotary milking system, and the key automation technology that



would reduce labour - and singled out SmartD-TECT as the most important component for his specific requirements. SmartD-TECT provides pre-milking stimulation for faster milk let-down and automates

udder health detection in the form of testing individual quarters for conductivity discrepancies, "I was looking for technology options, rather than manual labour, to help identify cell count cows." says Andrew.

Andrew's research concluded that SmartD-TECT was the best option for his farm, and it continuously performs up to his expectations. "It identifies a variation in conductivity between quarters and will definitely find cell count cows, but it also identifies other animals that are subclinical or are singled out for some other reason."

All cows identified by SmartD-TECT are retained for the operator to check, release or detain for further treatment or inspection. "There are other systems around to specifically detect mastitis but they are very expensive to run whereas SmartD-TECT has a virtually zero cost to run" says Andrew.

To further reduce labour on his new rotary system, Andrew wanted to include other key milking automation technology. So he opted for the ECR Plus range of Electronic Cup Removers, which features the Bail Marshal that allows 'Plugand-Play' capabilities for SmartD-TECT - and other milk monitoring technology such as Electronic Milk Meters and Yield Indicators.

"There are other systems around to specifically detect mastitis but they are very expensive to run whereas SmartD-TECT has a virtually zero cost to run".

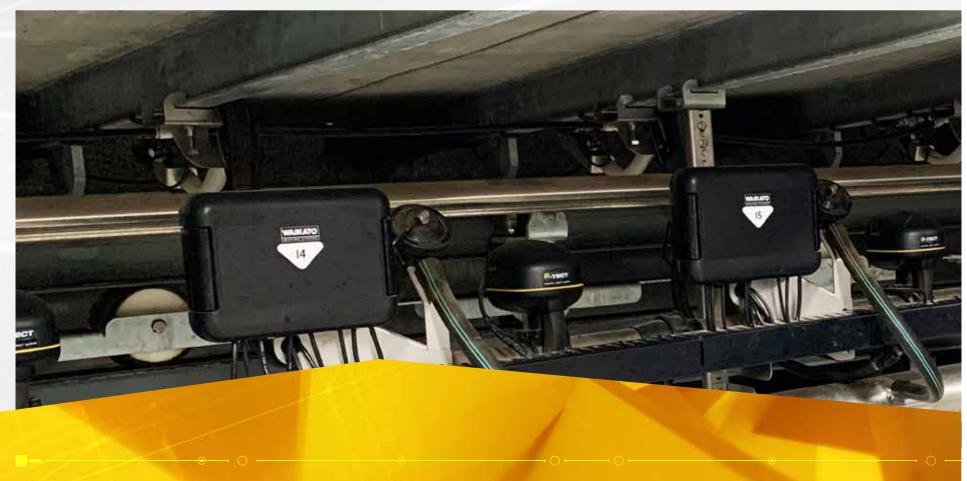
Andrew also included SmartSPRAY for automatic teat spray, and SmartWASH for automatic plant washing. "It's all about labour-saving and I wanted to make it a one-man shed. To do that you need all of those automation options working together,

and my view is that you go all in or nothing at all" says Andrew.

Commissioned by Waikato Milking Systems dealer Moa Milking and Pumping ahead of the 2021-2022 season, Andrew says the Orbit Rotary System, SmartD-TECT and additional automation technology has significantly reduced the labour demand and milking time on his farm.

The farm now has only one person milking, while another brings the second herd in and continues with other farm work. "During spring we have two people in the shed for the colostrum cows but once we get past spring the second person is handy to help with the wash up" says Andrew.







EDENDALE, NEW ZEALAND

Orbit Concrete Rotary 800 Cows Commissioned 2022 ECR Plus

SmartPULS

Cow Restraints

Multi Roller

REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:



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Reducing their milking time and labour shortage pressures

In 2022, Jason and Leanne Erb decided it was time to redevelop the milking plant

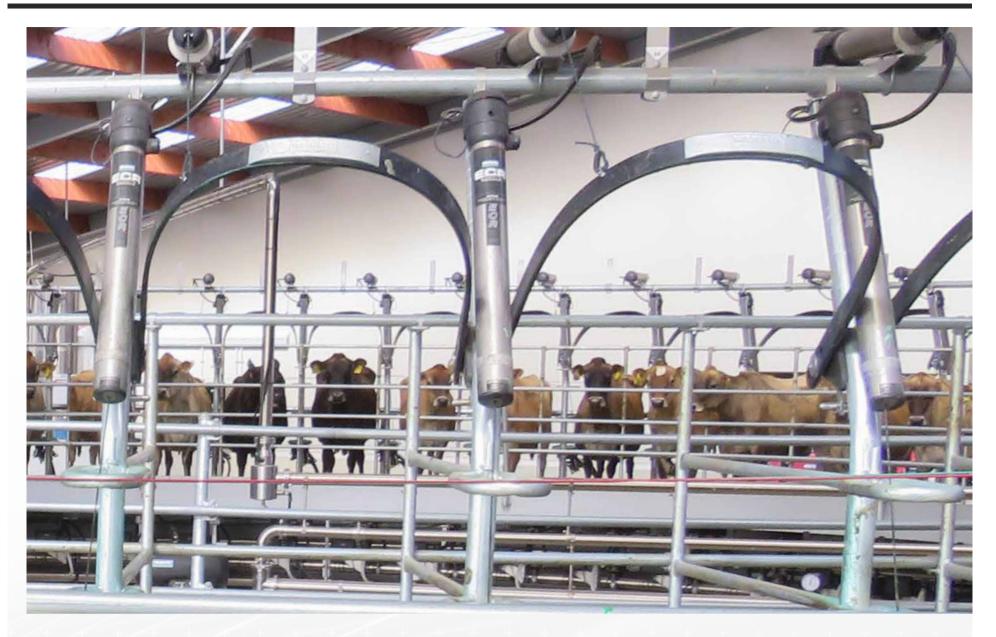
In 2022, Jason and Leanne Erb decided it was time to redevelop the milking plant on their Jersey Girl dairy farm near Winton in Southland. With 800 cows on their 365 hectare self contained farm, their old rotary had no automation technology aside from the Waikato Milking Systems automatic cup removers they installed when they moved back to the family farm a few years ago. The automatic cup removers have been a critical component for accurate and effective milking, and "to eliminate one job at milking time," says Leanne.

When the couple decided to upgrade their 50-bail rotary built in 1998, they chose a 70-bail Orbit Concrete Rotary Milking System and were able to reuse the existing automatic cup removers - and add 20 more. All of the cup removers on their new Orbit rotary system are now controlled by an ECR Plus system to maximise their milking automation and efficiency.



The ECR Plus system provides the operator with control over deciding on the best time to activate the cup removers to prevent the cows from being over-milked, and to protect their teat health. "We've been experimenting a bit and have altered the settings to suit our cows. We have Jerseys and they milk out a bit quicker than your big Friesians," Leanne says. "So we have adjusted the timing to suit our own preferences and it's working well."

Leanne's father-in-law was also looking to install cup removers on another milking shed nearby, "and we convinced him to use Waikato cup removers instead. We just think it's a stand-out product.



We love our cup removers, it saves us time and definitely improves our efficiency."

While "cup removers were at the top of the list when it came to planning the new rotary", the ECR Plus system also allowed the couple to add other automation functions to suit their farm's individual requirements.

To modernise their milking plant further Jason and Leanne decided to include SmartD-TECT to automate their pre-milking stimulation and udder health monitoring, and SmartSPRAY for automated teat spraying. They also installed SmartWASH, a programmable automated wash system for their milking machine.

The SmartD-TECT system performs a health analysis of each quarter of the udder - with the process creating a natural let-down response and automating pre-milking stimulation without operator intervention. "The SmartD-TECT system will hopefully eliminate the need to manually strip the cows at milking time to look for signs of mastitis," says Leanne.

In the past their farm had never had good results using teat spray, but SmartSPRAY has proven to be a worthwhile new addition. "I think the difference is the consistency of having the cows sprayed after the cups are removed, instead of waiting to spray them when they've gone around to the end of the platform. Somatic cell counts have gone down now and the teats are in good condition," says Leanne.

"James said it was time to replace the property's tired 50-bail milking system. They were working hard to put 1200 cows through a 50-bail so it was time to go bigger, to a 70-bail rotary, to make it more efficient." Installing the SmartWASH system was also a "new thing" for their farm, but "it didn't take staff long to learn how to operate it, and it eliminated another job that was previously done manually."

The Jersey Girl dairy farm's new Orbit Rotary Milking System and the suite of milking automation options they have installed has decreased the milking time in their shed, and alleviated the pressure with the current labour shortages.

The family are strong advocates for Waikato Milking Systems equipment and technology, and have enjoyed a long-time relationship with their Southland dealer Progressive Rural Trade Services who installed their new Orbit rotary and automation systems.

James has returned to the property a few times since the Orbit was commissioned in late July to see how it was operating. "The cows are getting on really well and seemed very happy during the first two weeks with no issues."



WAITAKI RIVER, NEW ZEALAND

**RUEBEN ALLEN** 

54 bail Rotary

1600 Cows

Commissioned 2022

Cow Restraints

ECR-S

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:** 



#### **GARRY BALLANTYNE**Regional Manager Sales & Sei

Upper South Island,

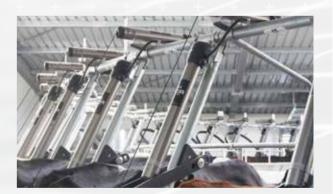
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### A simpler electronic cup remover system, with less maintenance

Since upgrading his previous electronic cup removers to a Waikato Milking Systems ECR-S system, Reuben Allan has simplified his milking system and reduced his maintenance costs on his 1,500ha farm on the north bank of the Waitaki River near Kurow.

Reuben's farm is "slightly different than your average farm, with lots of rolling hills. It was previously dry land that we've irrigated and developed a lot over the past ten years." The farm is fully self-contained and milking 1,600 cows utilising "16 hour milking" intervals - performing three milkings every two days, rather than twice a day.

Before upgrading to the new ECR-S system the farm had been using another brand of cup removers, "but maintenance was very expensive and complicated, and I had had enough of that," says Reuben. He was attracted to the ECR-S system because it was "very simple, but very



capable," while being easy to maintain, easy to fix, and easy to service.

Another key factor for Reuben was that Waikato Milking Systems have "a bloody good reputation, and it's good to be dealing with a local company that is focused on New Zealand farming systems."

With six staff taking turns to milk a herd of 350-400 cows each, the ECR-S system means that one staff member can get the first herd in and start milking by themselves, with two staff cleaning up at the end. "I can get away with minimal staff, and it's easier on them. Because two staff don't have



to get up in the morning and milk the first herd, one gets to have a sleep-in," says Reuben.

The ECR-S system also has an auto-start feature that has been designed to make the milking process faster and easier for the operators. "You just lift the cup up and put it on the cow. The vacuum starts automatically and the cup comes off once she's milked out. That's basically it - it's simple as," says Reuben. The electronic cup remover system prevents cows from being overmilked or under-milked, improves efficiency and are "better for udder and teat health."

Reuben says electronic cup removers are "an absolute no-brainer for efficiency" and he's noticed since upgrading to the ECR-S system that it's also a lot simpler mechanically, saying "if you need to

get to a part of the system it's a lot easier to do."
The installation of the farm's ECR-S system
was a part of a complete rebuild of their dairy

"I was looking for a simpler system, with less maintenance and lower costs to maintain - and that's exactly what it is."

infrastructure at the time by their Waikato Milking Systems dealer Field Engineering Ltd, in Timaru.

Retaining only the original platform, "all the bails were ripped out and everything was built back up with Waikato Milking Systems equipment including the 54 bail rotary, cow restraints, milk line and the ECR-S system," says Reuben.

"The installation process was good. We did the upgrade through the winter, and the pressure was on to have it completed on-time by calving. The installation was done to a high standard and the communication with Waikato Milking Systems and service has been really good." says Reuben.

The farm's new system was commissioned in July 2022 and Reuben would "definitely recommend the ECR-S system. I was looking for a simpler system, with less maintenance and lower costs to maintain - and that's exactly what it is."





**NEW ZEALAND** 

40 aside Herringbone **400 Cows** Commissioned 2021 **ECR-S** 

Swing down cluster wash system 320 Milking Clusters **G2 Cluster Washers SmartPULS** 

#### **REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:**



**BEN FREDERICKSON** 

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When the dairy plant on Craig Clarke's operation in South Taranaki was being redeveloped, he decided it was the ideal time to make changes so milking time would be more enjoyable for his staff,

while ensuring animal health remained paramount. Craig, a former Chiefs Super Rugby captain, is 50/50 sharemilking for farm owner Dennis Bourke, and takes care of 400 cows on the 150 hectare dairy in

Hawera.

and teat health.

The original 30-aside Herringbone had no cup removers, so when the owner decided to replace it with a new Waikato Milking Systems Supa4 40-aside inline milking system, Craig talked to other farmers for advice on Electronic Cup Removers. "With the extra length of the new Herringbone, I thought including cup removers in the new shed would take the pressure off staff" says Craig. "So instead of having three people in the shed at milking time, we would have the option of only using two people while still doing a very good job."



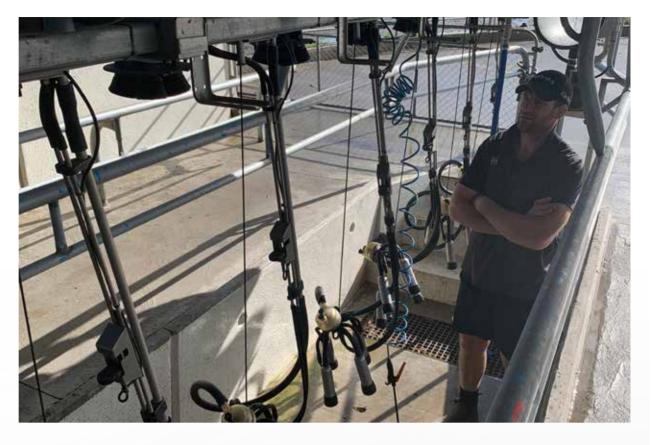
Having previously worked with Hunts Farm Services in Hawera for the supply and installation of other Waikato Milking Systems components, Craig engaged them to install ECR-S Electronic Cup Removers along with the new milking system - which was commissioned just before the beginning of the 2021-22 season.

After completing their first season in the new shed, Craig says "We're pretty happy with it all, and we're looking forward to our second season." The big bonus for Craig and his staff was during AB time,

"The cup removers make milking time a more pleasant environment and easier to attract staff, as well as looking after the teat health of the herd".

"Having the cup removers doing their thing at milking meant we had more time to focus on identifying cows in heat. We weren't under the pump all the time." The cup removers also ensured the cows weren't over-milked, "That's particularly important during the mating season when you're concentrating on other things. Now we don't have to worry because the cups will come off at the right time." says Craig. The new milking system and cup removers performs up to Craig's expectations. Milking time takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes in the morning during the peak of the season, and just under 2 hours in the afternoon - with two people in the pit. Normally they have one person getting the cows in, while a second person starts milking and has a row ready for the first person when they get into the pit.

"In a perfect world, we would have myself and two other full-time workers on-farm. Because we've got four children in our family, we like to be a little bit

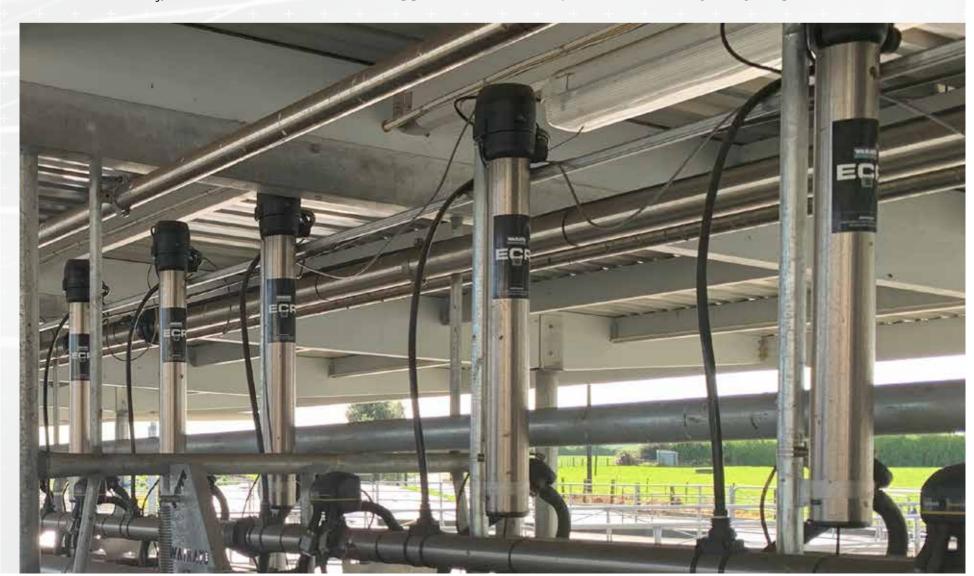


over-staffed to give us some flexibility. But we can get away with me and one other full-time staffer and another half-labour unit." says Craig.

Since installing the new milking system their milk production forecasts had been exceeded in the first season. "We increased our numbers since moving to the longer Herringbone but we still did better in terms of per cow production, on what we had budgeted." Craig's advice for farmers looking to redevelop or upgrade is to set your priorities at the outset. "The two big factors for us were finding a way to address the dairy industry's staff shortage, and ensuring good teat condition. The cup removers

make milking time a more pleasant environment and easier to attract staff, as well as looking after the teat health of the herd" says Craig.

The performance of the ECR-S units have also inspired him to include the Electronic Cup Removers in another 2022-23 project - a farm purchase they have made on the boundary of their sharemilking property with an existing 40-bail rotary. "We'll be putting in the same cup removers and putting in new Cow Restraints from Waikato Milking Systems as well. So it's an exciting time and we'll be very busy over the next year" says Craig.



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