

Loyal to local machinery brand

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WHEN IT comes to favourite car brands, Kiwis tend to fall into the Holden or Ford camps.

In Paul Smith's case it's the latter, but when the subject turns to the farm machinery he prefers, it's a case of designed and manufactured on this side of the ditch by Otorohanga-based Giltrap Engineering.

Paul started his farming career as a general farm worker, progressing through equity partnerships for several years, then buying his current property in 2014/2015 in a partnership with a South Waikato veterinarian.

Located at Whakamaru, south of Tokoroa, the farm runs to 113ha (105ha effective) carrying 330 dairy cows, with another eighty or so followers currently being grazed at Piopio on the western side of the Waikato. A grass operation, cropping includes 15ha maize for silage production, with any excess



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growth of grass taken as baleage in chopped round bales.

It's easy to see that Paul has a bit of a thing going with the Giltrap brand with a machinery shed that includes a tip trailer, log splitter and the latest arrival, his fourth Giltrap feed wagon – a RF13 model. Replacing an existing RF13 with eight seasons under, or

more correctly, over its belts, the quality of the general construction and the care that Paul lavishes on his investments had the local salesman from Giltrap Agrizone (GAZ) in Taupo, doubting the machine's real age.

The latest addition, like its predecessor, offers thirteen cubic metres capacity with the bin carried on a double chas-

sis that in Paul's case includes the optional wireless weighing system.

Material is moved forwards using four floor chains, running over the 35mm thick tongue and grooved pine floor, to the beater system, that in this case uses an optional 1200mm wide chain and slat discharge conveyor. This was chosen over a belt conveyor fitted to

the old machine that Paul traded, as he felt that the belt set-up required more fine tuning during the season to maintain proper belt tracking.

Standard equipment on the RF 13 includes tandem axles, for ground contouring, reduced ground compaction and operator comfort, ladder access, mudguards/walkways for cleanliness and

safe operation, stainless steel side panels for corrosion and wear resistance and a centralised greasing system.

On the farm, the RF13 is used to feed the grass and maize silage, alongside the chopped baleage, handling all fodders with ease.

Paul comments, "I've always been a fan of the Giltrap products, given

that they are locally manufactured, very dependable with minimal maintenance costs and any advice only a phone call away. I also admit that I quite like the colour, which is great match to the Case IH tractors we run on the farm."

Interestingly, Paul says he would have been more than happy to keep his existing wagon for a few more seasons but was offered a demonstration by GAZ of a competitive brand feeder.

"Greig Singer from GAZ offered me a demo, that in reality, failed to impress me, but eventually we went through and exercise to swap like for like, that ended up with a changeover figure I would have been crazy not to accept and certainly confirmed the low cost of ownership of a Giltrap wagon. Would I buy another? Ask me that in eight or nine-years' time, but as they say, once you've gone purple, you'll never turn turtle, or once you buy from Otorohanga, you'll sleep peacefully for a lot longer."