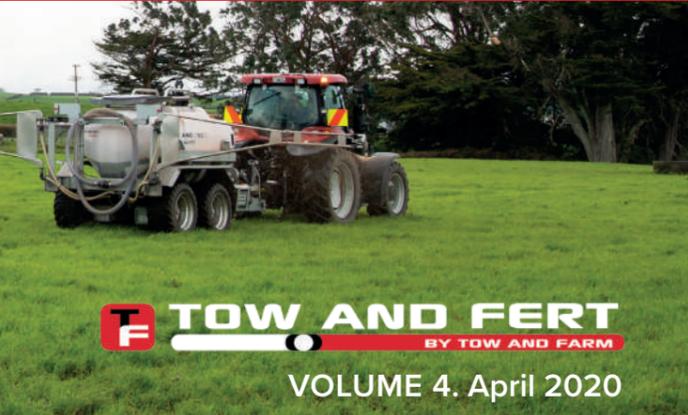


THE Tow and Fert TIMES



TOW AND FERT
BY TOW AND FARM

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SEE INSIDE FOR | DID YOU KNOW? FACTS ABOUT FERTILISER | WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE TOW AND FERT'S FERTILISER OPTIONS: YES THERE IS A CHOICE | TOW AND FERT SERVICE PROFILE: MEET DAVE REID

CERTAINTY IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

People all over the world need high quality food. Our strength remains in our primary industries.

Just as things were looking good for the Dairy industry in 2020, Covid-19 or Coronavirus, began to escalate the world over. What does this mean for Australia's dairy farmers, our local industry and food supply in general?

Online news sites, television coverage, social media, printed media, the C word is everywhere. There is no avoiding the discussions and statistics and for all of us this is the first time something of this nature and scope has borne down upon us.

It's in our nature to take uncertainty with feelings of fear and anxiety and as much as we try to control these feelings, the constant barrage of media, and our discussions around it, can simply cause those feelings to escalate. As the world grapples with the impact of this virus the economic outlook creates as much, if not more, anxiety. We begin to ask ourselves how we will be personally impacted? What will the future look like and how will my business cope?

No one has a crystal ball, but what are the potential impacts for the Australian Dairy Industry?

Fonterra. A New Hope. Strategy, Earnings and Dividends.

The uncertainty in the present marketplace has masked the very positive results of Fonterra's half year earnings, announced on March 18th, 2020.

For too long Fonterra has failed to deliver on its promises and potential. Farmers and shareholders are sceptical of the co-op's ability to turn its fortunes around. When Miles Hurrell was confirmed in the CEO role in March last year, there was equal scepticism as there was positivity about his ability to set the company on the path to profit.

Both the board and senior management of the company acknowledged there was a need for the company to dramatically change direction rather than tinkering around the edges. John Monaghan, Fonterra Chairman, said at the time of Hurrell's appointment that the company would be "looking at fundamental change." This change included a review of the company asset portfolio, its partnerships and a change in strategy.

"Back to Basics" was the new strategy. A common term used by many people and businesses alike to say something, whilst not saying much. But for Fonterra it has clearly meant something.

Back in September last year Hurrell said "The strategy of the past was to go down the volume path." Referring to the milk volume-based strategy of the previous CEO - a low value, quantity-based strategy. He went on to tell Radio New Zealand reporter, Corin Dann, that the strategy was to focus on the goodness of what dairy farmers produce here, to add value to the milk produced and to take it to the world.

“Clearly, with this new vision for the co-op there is a renewed focus on value added products and additives.”

Hurrell pointed out at the time that scarcity creates value and Australian milk has always had a premium value attached to it for its quality. Our competitive advantage here has always been our grass-fed milk, the fat and protein content and quality of the final product delivered to market; be it milk powder, cheese, or additive based products for markets such as the infant formula market.

One year in, this new strategy has clearly started to gain traction and more importantly, results. Fonterra's normalised earnings for the first 6 months of this financial year were up \$272 million on last year, to \$584 million.

“Hurrell said “Our food service business has definitely been our standout performer in the first half, as we've grown our sales to bakeries and coffee and tea houses across Greater China and Asia.”

Not only have earnings increased, debt has been reduced by 22%. On the downside and as a direct result of the current situation with Covid-19, Fonterra decided against a dividend pay-out to shareholders. Whilst this will disappoint some people, it was a prudent and sensible move based on the volatility of current market conditions.

“We are now a very different co-op to this time last year – we're staying focused on what we know we're good at and what makes a difference to our farmer owners, unit holders, employees and communities.”

Hurrell added “I'm pleased with the progress we've made so far against our four priorities for 2020. These are to hit our financial targets, reduce our environmental footprint and build a great team. By achieving these, we will take strides towards our long-term goals of “Healthy People, Healthy Environment and Healthy Business.”

And whilst this is all great news set against a Coronavirus free world, what is clear is that the focus, attitudes, and culture of Fonterra appear to have changed for the better. What this means for the immediate future in the current environment is that Fonterra has a leadership team with their hands firmly on the tiller of the ship, leading and directing the company through rough waters.

Milk. A Staple Food Source. Exports.

We all need food. Milk and the products produced from it form a large portion of the world's staple diet. For that reason, dairy farming, and other primary industries like it, are well placed to bounce back from the effects of the Coronavirus situation fairly quickly. Historically when crisis hit, food demand remained strong for obvious reasons. Prices may drop back, and volume may reduce but the fact remains that people need food in order to carry on with life.



Initially, as China began to shut its borders and citizens and residents were locked down, dairy demand fell. However, by the time this article was written, China was beginning to open its borders again and demand in China for dairy had jumped 43% from the previous auction, to sit only 20% below where they were prior to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Rabobank, in its latest report, reminded the dairy industry that the sector was already at risk in 2020 with an expected downturn in demand due to a slowing global economy. With the Covid 19 outbreak this demand is now expected to drop further. However, on the positive side, as China began to resume normal life and lockdowns subsided demand was beginning to pick up again.

David Nation of Dairy Australia commented;

“We are all dealing with a situation that none of us have dealt with in our lifetimes and it is hard to understand how Covid 19 will impact families, businesses and the wider dairy industry. What we do know is that the Australian Government has labelled Dairy as CRITICAL to the Australian Community in events of this nature”.

This is where the dairy market can have some security. Whilst, prices may drop and business may become more difficult for farmers, we still need milk and the products that are made from it. It is staple of a nutritious diet.

Government: A Support Package.

The speed with which the coronavirus has escalated is unprecedented in modern times. The spread has been rapid. Responses from effected countries have been mixed with the likes of Italy, Spain and the USA seemingly sitting on their hands. For us here in Australia, our government has moved in the middle of the

pack. Over in New Zealand a complete nationwide shut down for 4 weeks is now underway. New Zealanders are only allowed to have physical contact with those they live with and the chief message has been “Stay home, Save lives”.



Here in Australia our government has opened the chequebook, or thrown the eftpos card around, with benefits being doubled, a \$4.8 billion dollar stimulus package for those who are now out of work due to the virus and and \$3.2 billion in tax changes to help small businesses ride through the tsunami that is Covid 19. However, on the isolation and lockdown front, we have been slower to move, with clear consideration given to the wider impacts of any shut down of the economy.

When asked about an Australian lock down Prime Minister Scott Morrison said;

“Be careful what you wish for on something like that. Be very careful. Because that would need to be sustained for a very long time and that could have a very significant and even more onerous impact on life in Australia”.

One thing is clear: The Government is prepared to do what is needed to beat this pandemic and whatever your preferred colour of politics, the situation required decisive and immediate action on a massive level.

David Nation, Managing Director of Dairy Australia said;

“We are working with governments at all levels to ensure that whatever decisions are made the entire dairy supply chain is well supported. The Dairy industry is well placed to mount a suitable response to Covid 19. Dairy Australia is working with Australian Dairy Farmers, the Australian Dairy Products Federation and the entire supply chain”.

...story continued on page 2

See inside for:



**PRODUCTIVE.
ENVIRONMENTALLY
RESPONSIBLE. PROFITABLE.
A RECIPE FOR THE FUTURE
OF AGRICULTURE.**

As more and more focus is being put on our ever-growing reliance on synthetic fertilisers, new methods of application and management are offering farmers more and better options for nutrition management.



**KEEPING YOUR TOW AND
FERT GOING: A FOCUS ON
SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE.**

If you own a Tow and Fert then you will know Dave Reid, the Tow and Fert Service Manager.

Call us to book a
FREE DEMONSTRATION
1300 630 279

FERTILISER SUPPLIERS

TAKING THE MYSTERY OUT OF BIOLOGICALS WITH SCIENCE

Demand for a “softer approach” to growing pastures and crops is increasing at a rapid rate. With this demand, a huge range of products have come from suppliers of fertilisers.

These products might be advertised as seaweed or fish extracts, humates, beneficial microbes, bio-char or almost anything that can claim to be organically certified. Unfortunately, this has meant a lot of products of questionable value are offered for sale with no effective regulation to prevent farmers spending good money for poor return on investment. When choosing a biological fertiliser to use with your Tow and Fert machine, there are three primary things to consider.

- 1 IS IT AGRONOMICALLY VALUABLE?**
- 2 IS IT ECONOMICALLY VALUABLE?**
- 3 IS IT JUST A SALE PITCH?**

1. Agronomic Value

Agronomic value is best understood if a product comes with independent, replicated trial data repeated over at least 2 to 3 years. The responsibility is on the company selling a product to prove it actually works, not the farmer to buy it and hope they get a result. On farm trials are OK but rarely stack up to scientific scrutiny. If conducting your own trials, it is best to research what makes a good trial to avoid getting a false positive or negative. A poorly run on farm trial can waste money or miss a big opportunity. The person selling a product should be able to describe the best way to assess their product on your farm and in your situation.

2. Economic Value

Economic value needs to be based on the potential return on investment. There are many products out there that have a good scientific backing, but if they are hundreds or even thousands of dollars a hectare then they simply may not be viable. Alternatively, if a product is very cheap but is ineffective, the investment is wasted.

3. The Sales Pitch

Sales pitches are easy to invent. If a product has agronomic and economic value, then the sales pitch is self-evident. If you are considering a product that cannot show agronomic or economic value, you may have fallen victim to the invented sales pitch.

Biological Fertiliser

In Europe, the market for biological products is heavily regulated. In Australia and New Zealand, the buyer must rely on reputable companies that can back what they sell. Australian made and owned Seasol has been making seaweed extracts for over 40 years. The company has invested in excess of \$10million in research and development proving efficacy in a range of horticulture and agriculture situations. Based on their three main liquid products made from sustainably sourced kelp, fish and humate, Seasol PastureMasta is perfect for application through the Tow and Fert. The kelp extract boosts leaf quality and root systems, whilst the fish and humate lift soil biology activity and improve CEC. Increased numbers of earth worms are often observed after using PastureMasta.

Seasol is available in over a thousand outlets in Australia and New Zealand in containers from 5L to 1000L.

Article supplied by Seasol

www.seasol.com.au/commercial-users



Seasol provides farm nutrition products to feed your farm that are compatible with the full range of Tow and Fert Machines.



Seasol is a manufacturer of organic liquid seaweed and environmentally friendly fertilisers in the retail and commercial sectors. Seasol is proud to be associated with some of the biggest farms and commercial growers in Australia.

Cover story continued...

This may well be just the beginning of Government support for the economy and more may still be needed. What is positive and to be applauded is that our bureaucracies are not sitting on their hands and waiting. They are acting on the best advice, observations, knowledge, science and foresight they can draw on and all of this bodes well for the future of our countries ability to deal with the pandemic and subsequent fall out.

In conclusion:

As circumstances surrounding the Coronavirus continue to unfold there is much for us in the dairy industry to be positive about. Things are heading in the right direction. Fonterra would appear to be being led by perhaps its most competent leadership since its inception. The co-op's strategy of focusing on New Zealand milk and value-added products appears to be working, even though only in its early days, it has paid down debt and increased its earnings.

Milk remains a valued commodity in the food chain all around the world meaning that milk products will continue to be eaten and sought after in people's diets.

On the ground at home, our government has acted quickly and decisively to both stem the spread of the virus and the impact of the economic slowdown. We will probably enter a recession. But like all things, that too will end and we, Australian dairy farmers, will be well placed to come out of the impacts of Covid-19 in better shape than most. Times will get tough, but we have been through tough times before and we will get through these ones as well.

Stay Strong.

CONTACT THE TOW AND FERT TEAM ON

1300 630 279

TO ARRANGE A FREE DEMONSTRATION.

OR ARRANGE A FREE VIRTUAL DEMONSTRATION VIA REALTIME VIDEO

**CONTACT NEIL PARKER,
TOW AND FERT MANAGER, AUSTRALIA**

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WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TOWANDFERT/

IS THIS THE RECIPE FOR THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE?

Productive. Environmentally Responsible. Profitable.

These three concepts are central goals for most businesses across the world and are especially true for Agriculture businesses. In fact, for those of us who see our roles as stewards of the land, there is also a deep drive to leave it in a better condition for our descendants.



Globally, farmers are facing legislation changes in the environmental space. Agricultural businesses must take steps to minimise their environmental impact all whilst having to remain profitable and productive.

In recent years, we have seen a growing reliance on synthetic fertilisers as farmers and agricultural businesses try to keep up with the demands of growing markets and an increasing population base. This has led to greater environmental impacts and something has to change!

When we look at human nutrition and diet, it is well known that everything is needed in balance and moderation. We can't eat one meal a day which is full of Potassium and then tomorrow have one meal of only Iron etc. Our body requires a balanced source of all nutrients in moderation, day-to-day, year-on-year, in order to function in an efficient and healthy manner. Our farms operate in the same way.

Across the world there is continued pressure on farmers to change the way they feed their soil and animals. What we are witnessing is a change to a more balanced and considered approach to soil health and plant health, similar to how we look after our own bodies. What has surprised many is that when you get this right (feeding the soil and plant what they need, when they need it) it is directly noticeable in animal health and production, meaning healthier, happier animals with increased production.

With the growing focus on a 'regenerative' approach to nutrient management on the farm, farmers are looking for alternatives to the old ways of simply putting more and more of the same fertiliser on their pasture and expecting greater results.

How can Farmers feed soil and pasture the right nutrients at the right time?

Innovations in fertiliser application and use have occurred over the years. We can point to Ultra Fine Particle (UFP) application as an example of this. UFP fertiliser increases the efficiency of the fertilisers you are using, a win in many aspects of farming.

However, the application method of these UFP fertilisers has often meant that as farmers, we have not been able to maximise the timing of our applications. Often, we will be putting UFP Fert on once a year at the most appropriate time or adding Urea in granular form twice a year. Both of these methods mean that our farm, soil and plants are missing out on almost 60% of the potential nutrients available from these applications through runoff and leaching.

That is a massive loss of nutrients, dollars and growth potential for our pastures.

Our farms need different nutrients at different times of the year (just like the human body). The ability to provide our pastures with the nutrients in the right quantities at the right times, will be critical to farming in the future. Putting fertiliser on our pastures in a more considered way will:

- Reduce the amount we need to use.
- Target healthy growth all year round.
- Significantly reduce nutrient losses into the environment (due to lower application rates and applied more frequently).

Versatility the key to fertiliser application.

Being able to apply fertiliser and nutrients on demand requires specific knowledge, which most farmers have acquired, and a machine that has the flexibility to be able to apply what is needed, when it's needed.

The Tow and Fert is a machine that provides farmers with this flexibility. **The concept of foliar application, or slurry application, has been proven worldwide, and the Tow and Fert has quickly gained a reputation as a tool to allow flexibility and responsibility in applying fertiliser** in more efficient ways.

The science of foliar application is not new and has been proven many times over – Tow and Fert is the delivery mechanism. Foliar uptake of some nutrients and finely ground particulates of other nutrients offer a complete solution for all fertiliser requirements when the soil and pasture needs it - and that is key.



Tow and Fert users throughout the world are using their machines to apply specific brews to their farm when they need it.

If the soil or pasture in a particular paddock needs a specific element or mineral at a certain time of year, the Tow and Fert gives farmers the flexibility to apply a specific brew to a specific location on the farm.

In New Zealand, we know that all our soils, from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South Island, are different. In fact, soil on any given paddock on a farm can vary widely. A Tow and Fert Machine enables farmers to target their farm or even paddock with specific nutrients. Whatever the system you run on your farm, there is way that you can take advantage of the versatility the Tow and Fert affords users.

DID YOU KNOW

#01

UP TO 85% OF NITROGEN APPLIED TO THE FARM IN SOLID FORM IS NOT USED BY THE PLANT

That's a massive number! There are not many businesses that would allow something to be 85% inefficient. Think about that for a minute. If you are enjoying a beer at the end of a hard day would you take 3-4 sips and then leave the rest in the bottle to be thrown away? Your answer is probably "no". Well that is what is happening with our use of Nitrogen. And where is the rest of that N going? Into the environment, through leaching and runoff or into the air.*

*depending on your soil type, soil compaction and farm system the rate of inefficiency ranges between 65% and 85%.

All the "dust" behind the truck (pictured right) is the fertiliser you want on the pasture not lost into the atmosphere as shown here.



#02

FOLIAR APPLICATION OF NITROGEN INCREASES UPTAKE BY THE PLANT

Just as plants die from the foliar application of Glyphosate, the foliar application of Nitrogen increases the efficiency of N added into your farming system. You can reverse the inefficiency and have up to 80% of your Nitrogen application used by the plant. Apply less N fertiliser, increase the response rate, grow more and healthier grass whilst significantly reducing the amount of N fertiliser lost into the environment. It is a win-win, whichever way you look at it.



Think of that beer you didn't finish above? Foliar application of N means you will finish that beer with very little left over or spilt. Talk about getting your money's worth!

A WORLDWIDE SUCCESS

In New Zealand it's easy for us to think that we, as farmers, are targeted as the dark lords of the environment: we produce food for the world at the expense of our beautiful environment. However, we are not alone. All over the world, farmers in agriculture and horticulture are being forced to change their ways through a mixture of regulation and bad publicity.

Metalform in Dannevirke, New Zealand, who designed and manufacture the Tow and Fert, are now shipping to all parts of the globe. There are thousands of machines being used in New Zealand, Australia, Chile, England, Ireland, Wales and Japan. Interestingly our machines are not only being used in the Dairy sector, but also in the Sheep and Beef industry, Macadamia industry, Sugar industry and even the Kiwifruit industry.

And often the good news is forgotten amongst the bad news. The good news is that improving what we do so the environment does not suffer actually improves our businesses, increases profitability and gives us more time and flexibility in our daily lives.

Tow and Fert clients around the world are ambassadors for the change in applying fertiliser in a more sustainable and efficient way. Application through a Tow and Fert ticks the boxes for environmental responsibility, maintaining or increasing production and keeping businesses profitable.

At Metalform, our company and product philosophy is to not think we know it all, but to be willing to support the change and listen to farmers along the way for continuous improvement.

Join the global change today and begin by talking to someone with a Tow and Fert.

Tow and Fert machines are now spread through out the world. Our machines have made their way to **Australia, Japan, England, Ireland** and **Wales** as well as **New Zealand** of course. We expect that soon our reach will extend into the USA and deeper into Europe, as countries focus on the environmental limitations required to maintain sustainable farming.

From country to country we have noted that these limitations, or in some cases regulations, vary. In Wales for example, users of fertiliser have been given only 18 months to comply with tough new standards, whereas, here in NZ time is being taken to consult and learn before regulations are set in stone.

One thing, however, is crystal clear. Limitations are necessary and they are coming whether we like it or not. The time for change is now.



Two Tow and Fert Multi 1000's packed and ready to go overseas to their new homes.



KEEPING YOUR TOW AND FERT GOING: A FOCUS ON SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE.



If you own a Tow and Fert then you will know Dave Reid, the Tow and Fert Service Manager. If you don't own one yet then you might be interested to know that Tow and Fert have a specialised service programme throughout New Zealand for their Tow and Fert owners, run by Dave. We sat down with Dave to chat about his role and the importance of the regular service programme that Tow and Fert provides for its customers.

Q: You started your career building Tow and Fert in the factory, what was the service side of the business like at that time?

A: Before I started the repair or servicing side, it was something I viewed as a huge opportunity for Tow and Fert to grow to support their clients. We didn't initially have a structured plan in place for servicing and I wanted to help to change this.

Q: Tell us how you came to work as the Tow and Fert Service Manager?

A: I did a trip for Tow and Fert as a couple of machines needed repairing. Whilst on the farm with these clients, I heard how they loved the machine and the build quality but struggled when things went wrong or parts had worn out because it was awhile before they could get it repaired. Things really developed from there and I saw an opportunity to improve.

Q: How has the service improved over the last 2-3 years?

A: The servicing side of the business has grown hugely. We realised that our clients would get the most out of their Tow and Fert if they kept up with maintenance, which is why I am now doing regular scheduled maintenance depending on the amount of use the machine is getting and tailored to the individual client. These regular services have hugely reduced downtime for our clients.

Q: What are the most common problems you come across? What generally causes these?

A: The most regular issues I come across would be seal failure that has been left and not attended too. This allows fertiliser product to contaminate bearings, leading to major repair costs.

Q: How can Tow and Fert users avoid these issues?

A: Regular maintenance, hands down, grease and oil has always been cheap (or in this case usually bearings and seals). The Tow and Fert machine works in one of the most corrosive environments possible on farm, that's why we build it to be as strong as possible. However, it still has wearing parts just like your windscreen wipers or the tyres on your car, and this means maintenance is required for it to keep working at its optimum capacity.

Q: How often are you servicing the machines?

A: This usually depends on the amount of use the machine is getting. I try to individualise this for each individual client, based on hectares sprayed, size of machine and also products being applied as this correlates to the wearing of surfaces. I understand how frustrating it is when weather conditions are right and then you can't get the product out due to a preventable failure.



Q: What do you see as the future for Tow and Fert?

A: One word HUGE. I have always said if I went back to farming this machine would be one of the first things I bought after my cows. The versatility of the machine and its capabilities are enormous. What other machine on farm is so versatile and can pay for itself so quickly? When used to its ability, the Tow and Fert is able to cut costs/usage on fertiliser and Nitrogen while improving stock health, growth, production and growing quality grass and crops to feed them. New Zealand has always been known for outstanding farmers producing high quality

products from the farm gate while protecting a clean and green environment. It is exciting being on farm with owners talking about how the machine has helped them achieve greater results. Some clients even say how their whole farming system is reliant on the machine now as the results have been so significant.



The Tow and Fert range LIQUID FOLIAR SPRAY MACHINES

THERE IS ONE FOR YOUR FARM



Multi 1000



Multi 1200



Multi 2800



Multi 4000

THE BENEFITS OF OWNING A
TOW AND FERT:

- Save on fertiliser costs
- Reduce nutrient loading
- Improve grass quality
- Improved soil health
- Better animal health
- Better milk productivity

DAIRY FARMERS ACROSS NEW ZEALAND ARE DISCOVERING THE BENEFITS OF APPLYING THEIR FERTILISER WITH A TOW AND FERT- HOW COULD YOUR FARM BENEFIT?



"This year I have saved \$18,000 and 36 tonne of Nitrogen because of my Tow and Fert."

Ian Maxwell, West Coast, South Island, Tow and Fert Multi 1000 owner.



"The quality of what we are growing here now, compared to what we used to, is just fantastic."

Ross McKenzie, Riverton, South Island, Tow and Fert Multi 4000 owner.



"We have cut our fertiliser bill in half in the first year and produced the same amount of grass."

Miah Smith, Atiamuri, North Island, Tow and Fert Multi 2800 owner.



"There are so many benefits to using a Tow and Fert, but time saving is for us, the biggest."

Mathew Zonderop, Matamata, North Island, Tow and Fert Multi 1200 owner.



"We have made a significant saving because we are not using the bulkys to apply our high analysis fertilisers."

Michael Parks, West Otago, South Island, Tow and Fert Multi 1200 owner.



"I recommend to those in environmentally sensitive catchments to seriously look at a Tow and Fert."

Alistair Neville, Reporoa, North Island, Tow and Fert Multi 800 owner.

The Tow and Fert **A MACHINE FOR ALL FARMS**



A one-pass solution.



Load solid Nitrogen and quickly dissolve in liquid.



There is one for all farm sizes.

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