

MACHINERY & PRODUCTS

No 'thrashing' for this milk

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OEO ON the coastal road mid-way between Manaia and Opunake, south Taranaki is an area prone to summer dries.

John and Carole Lynskey's farm is right on the coast – flat like a bowling green, says John, and home to 1820 cross-bred cows milking on 550ha (eff.).

The farm is run as five smaller self-contained units: 4 x 350 cows and one x 420 cows. The four smaller herds are milked through a 60 bail rotary shed and the 420 cows are milked through a 36 bail rotary.

"One of the herds is known as the Oeo All Blacks; all the cows are jet black and it has attracted New Zealand and worldwide interest with frequent visitors," Lynskey says.

The larger dairy shed is centrally located for the four herds which eases management at milking time. It has automatic cup removers and a Corkill Dairy Systems Vari-vac. They use LIC Protrack technology linked to their Minda herd records and for recording other data and features such as automatic drafting.

"The smaller herds work well and are beneficial in removing stress to all stock, especially the younger animals."

The enterprise is managed by five herd managers supervised by John and Carole's son Simon. John describes himself as "the ayatollah/gopher".

There is a runoff for young stock and harvesting some supplements, with a small amount of PKE and Prolig fed in the sheds.

"We are essentially an all grass system but due to three dry autumns we are trying some summer cropping this year."

Lynskey says he has always had a problem with frothing of milk in the receiving can.

"I wasn't certain whether it was a grass or a breed problem. The impellor pump we once had would be

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Michelle Raven, herd manager on the Lynskey farm.

going flat-out or stop and I believed it was doing a lot of damage to the milk."

Towards the end of a local drought in 2009 he approached Corkill Dairy Systems and installed one of their recently developed lobe pumps. Immediately he noticed a reduction in froth and an improvement in milk flow from the receiving can.

"With the float control and the lobe pump the can was a steady third full and there was an even flow which gave better cooling; the milk was not being thrashed around and the pump just purrs as it speeds up and down."

Lynskey says he finds it hard to quantify the changes to the milk constitution because of starting in drought conditions and his breeding to a cross-bred herd so fat and protein levels were rising anyhow.

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