

# Quieter herd, finer milk

**TONY HOPKINSON**

**THE HOUGHTON** farm at Ngarua has been home to Neil and Shirley for 40 years and "everything you see we put here," says Neil.

The farm is 137ha including a 16ha reserve bordering the Waitoa River. The reserve is mainly totara, some of which they have milled for their own use. They also

have a 11ha run-off which is used to grow maize and provide some grazing for young stock. A further 6ha of maize is grown on the home property as part of a re-grassing plan. All maize when harvested is stacked and stored at the home farm.

The milking platform is run as two separate milking units managed by one contract milker, milking a total of 500 Jersey cows.

There are two dairy sheds, each with its own feed pad, and cows have their own separate grazing areas. "The system works

well, with two smaller herds, and there is little change-over of grazing areas."

Houghton supplies the Tatua Dairy Company and employs Kerry Ryan as a fertiliser advisor.

He harvests 130 bales of silage and buys some in as needed.

The maize on the feed pads is supplemented by PKE and other minerals to satisfy seasonal needs.

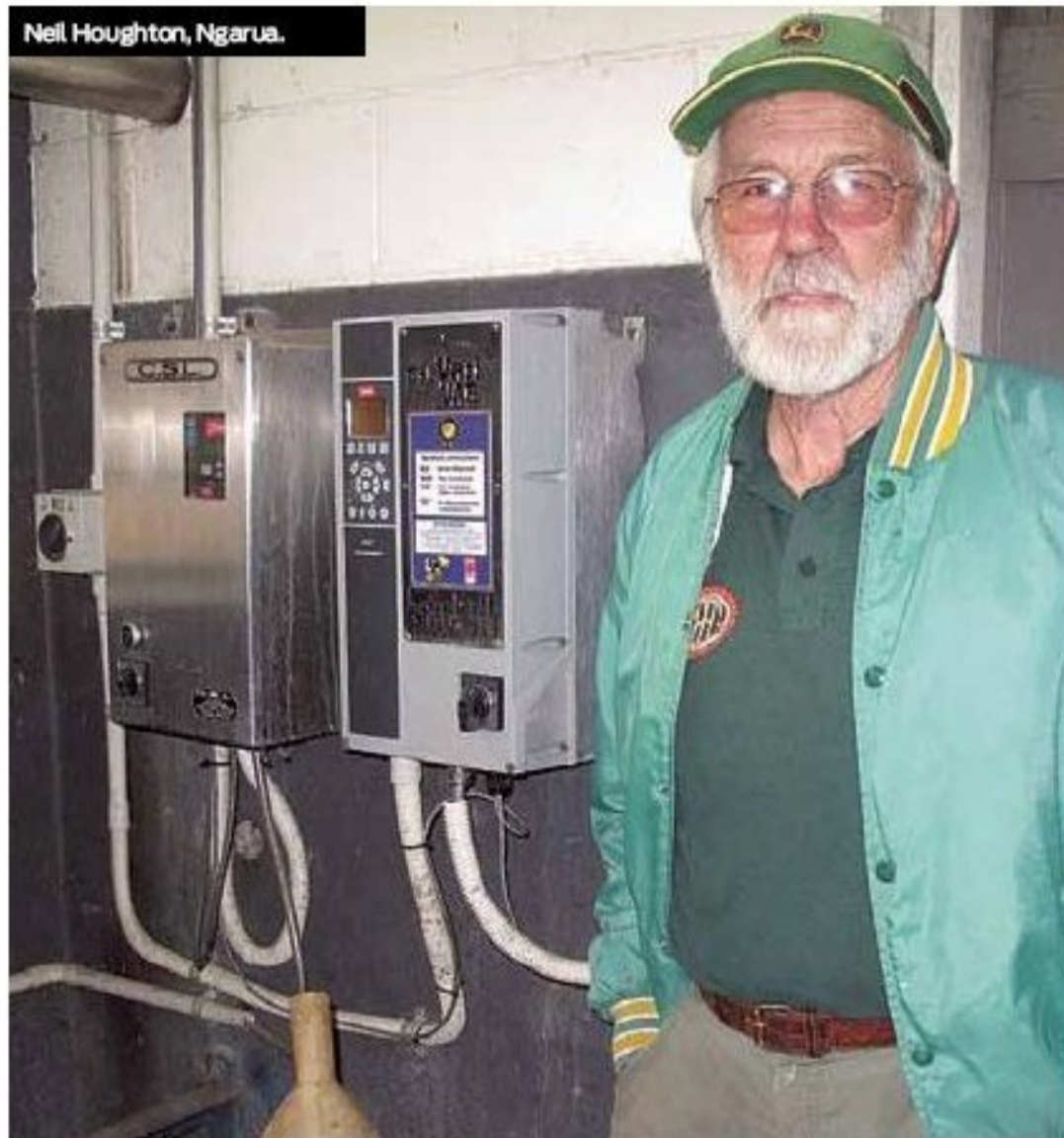
Three seasons ago he installed in both sheds a Corkill Dairy Systems Varivac milking system. The Varivac regulates the

vacuum pump speed to reduce electricity costs and remove stress from cows. It is said to help reduce somatic cell count.

At the same time Houghton also installed a CSL Milk Flow milk pump controller. This is controlled from a probe in the receiving can and gives more even milk flow through the four-headed diaphragm milk pumps to reduce damage to the milk.

"The Varivac is gentle on the cows and is a lot quieter. The cows are happier and this improves

Neil Houghton, Ngarua.



cow flow, and the combination with the milk pump

controller means we are reducing the damage that

can happen to the milk." Tel. 0800 10 7008



The Varivac regulates the vacuum pump speed.