

Case Study: Debbie and Stu Bland, Reefton, New Zealand

Debbie and Stu Bland Dairy farm 14km from Reefton. The farm purchased their first RDS Weighlog 100 loader scale in 2011 to accurately measure their supplementary feed. Approximately 200 ton of maize silage is grown on the farm annually.

“After originally fitting the RDS Weighlog 100 scales we were surprised to find how much we were over feeding our cows” says Stu. “Previously we had manually weighed a tractor bucket of maize with a 20L bucket and bobby calf scales, we found out that our calculations were well out”

“With the recording we did after the Weighlog 100 was fitted we were pleased to find that the scales had paid for themselves by the time we had fed the first 100 tonne of maize silage.”

Stu and Debbie found that they were able to accurately measure actual maize yields and therefore their actual feed costs were calculated. All the Palm Kernel that is fed out and other bought in feed such as hay and straw is weighed to ensure they have received what they paid for with their overall system now ensuring their cows are fed to plan.

In May 2014, Stu and Debbie upgraded their WL100 to the new generation Weighlog a10.

“Overall the Weighlog a10 is very easy to use with a lot more features than the Weighlog 100 which gives a lot more useful information to help with management decisions” says Stu.

“The Weighlog a10 has a well laid out touch screen with the ability to record load data information like feed type, mob to be fed, target weight needed which is very useful when it comes time to manage and record feed and fertiliser inputs. There is also a feed mix option working with feed blending ratios”.

“I have found the ability to have several mobs of stock and feed types pre-programmed into the WL a10 and taking a running total of each mob and feed fed to that mob very useful. The data capture and ease of downloading this to compare feed budgeted vs actual product fed has been hugely beneficial” says Stu.

“Our staff and relief milkers can load accurately if we have to be away. It’s comforting to know feeding levels are consistent at all times”

The loader scales were fitted by Pat Dougherty, owner of RDS Systems Ltd. Pat has been fitting RDS scales for over ten years now, with product directly imported from RDS Technology in England.

RDS Technology has had 45 successful years manufacturing Agricultural and Industrial weighing and control systems. RDS products are well known and respected and are used on a wide range of equipment sold by farm machinery dealers nationwide.

RDS TECHNOLOGY LTD

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Pat dairy farmed for 25 years prior to forming RDS Systems Ltd.

“We calculated out our supplementary feed like a lot of farmers, by estimating. Big quantities were fed on a daily basis at times and we always wondered as to the actual feeding levels to the stock” said Pat.

On being introduced to the RDS loader scales Pat could see the immediate benefits, particularly for those on a tight budget financially or with ever dwindling feed reserves in drought times or with wet Springs.

Pat says I wouldn't have minded a dollar for every time our team has heard – “Should have fitted them years ago”, “use them every day”, “best thing we ever did”, reinforcing the cost saving benefits of having loader scales fitted.

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