

DUAL-PURPOSE GILTRAP SPREADER APPLIES FERTILISER AND VERMICAST

WHEN TAUPO BROTHERS RHYS AND SAM PRITCHARD NEEDED A NEW SPREADER FOR THEIR CONTRACTING BUSINESS TO APPLY BOTH CHEMICAL FERTILISER AT NORMAL RATES AND WORM CASTINGS AT VERY HIGH RATES, THEY APPROACHED GILTRAP ENGINEERING.

The solution they came up with is a modified version of Giltrap's 12-tonne spreader with a reversible spinner that allows it to spread at bigger volumes in narrower bands.

Pritchard Contracting offers a full range of contracting services. Their major client is the Taupo District Council, which owns 400 ha that it uses to grow grass and lucerne irrigated with treated human effluent.

Each year Rhys and Sam take off 15,000 bales of grass silage and 5000 bales of lucerne from these irrigated blocks.

"One of the council blocks has a worm block run by Mynoki, and part of our contract is to spread 200 tonne of vermicast from it

on about 100 ha of lucerne. That means it has to go on at a rate of 20 tonne per ha, which is a lot," Rhys says.

The council uses vermicast as a soil conditioner to build up humus on some of its marginal land that is bony and has a lot of pumice.

"Vermicast tends to be spread with fert trucks rather than muck spreaders, but if you spread two dressings at a rate of 10 tonne/ha it costs a lot to get it on the ground.

"Last year we used a couple of hire trailers to do the job. One was a side slinger which only had an 8-tonne capacity. Together they could achieve the 20-tonne/ha rate, but it took a while.



"After that, we went to National Fielddays and we approached all of the fert spreader guys. We wanted one machine that could handle the vermicast but also spread super and other fertilisers at 100-160 kg/ha.

"To be honest, Giltrap Engineering was the only one who really took us seriously. They came up with a plan, and after several months we had the spreader in time for this year's season."

PRITCHARD CONTRACTING'S GILTRAP SPREADER HAS A REVERSIBLE SPINNER SO IT CAN APPLY VERMICAST AT HIGH RATES IN NARROW BANDS.

Rhys says the spreader has been "awesome". It has efficiently spread fertiliser over nearly 4000 ha in its first full season.

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SAM PRITCHARD WITH THE 12-TONNE GILTRAP SPREADER, WHICH HAS HUNGRY BOARDS SO IT CAN CARRY LARGE LOADS OF VERMICAST.

“We dress the irrigated grass paddocks after every second cut. The lucerne paddocks are in buffer zones that are not irrigated and we dress them after every cut.”

Rhys had only spread vermicast for a single day when NZ Rural Contractor & Large Scale Farmer magazine spoke with him. He says it worked exactly as Giltrap Engineering said it would.

“It spread the worm castings out nice and evenly across 15m. It took about 10 minutes to empty the full load. This year the vermicast was a bit lighter compared to last year, so we could only get about 12.5 tonne in the machine.”

Giltrap Engineering sales manager Eric Crosby says Pritchard Contracting’s machine is a standard 12-tonne Giltrap with 440-mm ‘hungry board’ extensions that add 4m³ to its capacity. It also has a special spinner with double fins that go both ways.

“Our 12-tonne spreader is specified to carry 15 tonne of lime. Vermicast is lighter than lime but, with the extensions, the spreader can fit a 15-tonne load of it,” Eric says.

“When the reversible spinner spins in the opposite direction, it sends the product straight

out the back without the same spread width as normal. That allows it to get rid of the vermicast quicker without bogging down the spinner.”

The hungry boards are made of the same 3-mm stainless steel as the main body of the spreader. They can be removed if necessary.

Eric says Giltrap fertiliser spreaders can also handle compost or chicken litter. A number of them are at work emptying out chicken sheds.

Pritchard Contracting’s spreader came with all the standard features that Giltrap spreaders have, such as roll over cover, ladder, big tyres and Farmscan controller.

Eric says Giltrap spreaders deliver an accurate spread pattern, thanks to their precision rate control. Hydraulic belt drives are electronically controlled from the tractor cab and give consistent, repeatable spread settings. **RC**

