

Bruce Hunt from Bordertown South Australia, comments on his initial requirements for a new seeding system and the results achieved by the final choice.

Setting up a new seeding system

After a lot of research including crop inspections, field days, demos and a lot of talking to dealers/manufacturers and farmers, we decided that the Excel single disc on a single row with 24 units spaced at 375 mm towed off three point linkage would be a good replacement for our 28 run trash seeder.

With our season completed on below average rain (no spring rain) yields have been near average and quality good. Seed and fertiliser rates were reduced by 20–30 per cent.

Deep ripped sand over clay (extremely soft) caused no problems while planting barley and canola.

Heavy clay loam with stubble was a breeze planting peas, beans, lentils, canola, wheat and barley even immediately after 15 mm of rain.

All crops on stony ground had better seed placement than ever before. No areas required post seeding rolling.

Our tractors coped well planting 10

hectares per hour using 15 litres of diesel per hour.

Excel mounted the 1500 litre tank on the custom designed and built bar. We now inject liquid trace elements and nitrogen ahead of seed.

With a three lap headland we can plant up and back on consecutive runs. The machine has three point linkage manoeuvrability and can plant while turning, the single axle 4800 litre bin is on the same two meter track as tractor and bar.

With the 375 mm row spacing soil disturbance and throw are close to zero. Stubble is undisturbed and requires no preparation between harvest and planting.

The wide spacing on a single row cost approximately 50 per cent of a two-row trailing unit on closer rows. The savings flow on through fuel seed and fertiliser.

The flexibility of being able to plant either before or after knock down sprays has increased the opportunity of early planting and well timed knock down spraying post planting.

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Excel single disc on a single row planter.

Future in new staff positions

Les Gason's retirement after 52 years in the business has led to appointments to two new positions while he takes up the role of chairman.

Peter Piddington has joined the company as sales and marketing manager of the agricultural division. He has 30 years of experience in agricultural sales, much of it with broadacre machinery. He was most recently general manager of the grape harvesting division of PFG responsible for the sales of Gregoire and Vinestar equipment.

Previous appointments included a long stint with Massey Ferguson where he was New South Wales state manager.

"Sales this financial year have been excellent with an increase of 29 per cent over last year," Les Gason says. "That's across all our divisions – broadacre farm machinery, wood and gas heaters, and contract work for other manufacturers.

"The company is in an excellent position and Peter will help it grow to a new level."

Day to day running of the business will be the responsibility of newly appointed CEO, Terry Pye. He has had extensive experience in running and developing companies in Australia, New Zealand and the US.

Les said that as chairman he would still be closely involved but not in a hands on role. "We've always had a strong team. These new appointments will bring in fresh ideas and further strengthen the business." ■



Gason's new CEO, Terry Pye, on the left, and Les Gason, on the right, flank the agricultural division's new sales and marketing manager, Peter Piddington at the Wimmera Mallee Field Days.

INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

- To maintain or improve yields while improving the soil and net return;
- The ability to cope with a wide range of soil types (stone, soft sand and clay);
- The ability to use our existing 150hp FWA tractor;
- Fuel efficiency (litres per hectare);
- Planting efficiency (hectares per hour) to reduce labour and improve timing;
- The ability to include a liquid fertiliser system;
- The ability to work in small paddocks with minimum headlands;
- Reduce wheel tracks;
- Compact with the ability to work around curves and to plant around our many trees;
- Minimise soil disturbance;
- Achieve 100 per cent stubble retention every year; and,
- Set up a system at minimum cost without compromising quality or effect.