

Precision Ag

MAGAZINE OF JOHN AUSTIN LTD

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Welcome

Welcome to our first issue of PrecisionAg. Through the pages of PrecisionAg we will keep you regularly updated about exciting developments within John Austin Ltd and share with you the latest in technology and practices that are helping to give our agricultural contracting service the edge. It is our hope that you will find every issue to be of particular interest to you and your business.

Driven by Innovation - Looking back with John Austin

For the majority of people working off the land, agricultural production isn't just about making a living - it's a way of life that they are passionate about. As a teenager working for a local Te Awamutu / Otorohanga agricultural contractor, I knew I had a passion for farm machinery. At the age of 16, I drove my first 3120 John Deere tractor and confirmed my belief that for reliability, craftsmanship and performance investing in John Deere tractors would be one of the best decisions

I'd make. Needless to say,

I've been addicted ever since! When I was 18, I wrote to Deere and Company about the possibility of visiting.

To my delight they agreed and so I spent a life-changing week in Moline, Illinois, USA, not only learning about

farming & technology, but about integrity in business and good honest hard work. I continued to learn these values from Peter and Dorothy Hoar who I was working for at the time.

In 1980, I purchased their agricultural contracting business and so the business of John Austin Ltd began, literally with one combine and one tractor.

In 1991 Jackie and I were married. At this stage the business had grown considerably and, we purchased the neighbouring farm of 34 ha to add to our initial 5 hectares.



By the beginning of the 1992 -1993 cropping season John Austin Ltd was providing a full complement of services to our grain customers (establishment, management and harvesting services) as well as pasture and crop spraying, drilling of forage crops and pasture, and establishing maize crops for silage. **CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE...**

What's happening

If you haven't marked your calendar already, there are a couple of significant events fast approaching that are well worth taking note of.

This **February 14th** we would like to extend a special invitation to you to attend our **Open Day**.

Attendees won't be disappointed; there will be plenty of exciting developments to be discussed on the day.

The day will commence with morning tea at 10.30am followed by the formal announcement of significant changes within John Austin Ltd as we work towards providing a more accurate, accountable, and efficient service to our customers.

Over the years, we've prided ourselves in providing services to our customers that can make their agri-business work better. Now come and see for yourself how we're making our operation work better for you.



New technology gives us the

edge



As we head into the 2003 maize harvest, we're excited to announce the acquisition of new equipment to add more value to the wide range of agricultural contracting services we offer you.

Maize silage - Harvesting

John Austin Ltd now has two brand NEW 7500 PowerTech™ Precision Forage Harvesters to assist our customers with the coming maize silage harvest. These latest models from John Deere were launched in Europe last October (2002), and are the result of the extensive involvement we have had in the prototype testing and

development of this new range.

We are also excited to announce that these machines are both equipped with Green Star yield monitors to provide you with valuable individual paddock yield information.

These forage harvesters are the first in New Zealand to run yield monitors and introduce our silage growers to the advantages we experience through yield mapping with grain. We expect to capitalise on our research and development in precision farming with grain and believe there are many advantages to come in the future through yield monitoring and precision farming in silage and grain. The yield monitors will help with more precise feed planning and budgeting as you have accurate information on the quantity of maize, lucerne or grass silage harvested. An increased understanding of the within paddock yield will also lead to improved agronomic decisions and therefore animal nutrition.

We have purchased a Toltec mobile weigh bridge approved by the Ministry of Consumers Affairs to record the load

weights for the trading of maize silage (or other crops). John continues to be actively involved with the industry committee set up to determine a practical and representative system to determine the dry matter yield of traded maize silage crops. The code of practice being developed will establish sampling and testing procedures that become industry wide protocols.

Harvesting maize and cereals for grain

We have also purchased a second John Deere STS Combine, fitted with Green Star yield mapping. In addition to the combine we have imported a Geringhoff 8 row corn head, one of the first of these well respected European corn heads in New Zealand. The Geringhoff head provides greater stalk chopping, assisting the breakdown of stalk residue through the winter period to aid cultivation and the release of nutrients from the stubble for the coming crop.



A major highlight of the day will be our guest speaker in the afternoon: Mr Francis Childs, who has consistently won the title of highest producing maize grower in the US (recording yields of around three times the national average) and is a world record breaker for dry land corn production. Make sure you don't miss out on hearing his personal insights into maximising your maize yield. Pioneer is kindly sponsoring his visit to New Zealand.

The day will conclude with afternoon tea at 3pm, however; you are more than welcome to stay for a chat with the John Austin Ltd team and technical representatives from our major agricultural suppliers.

Lunch will also be provided. For catering purposes, it would be appreciated if you would contact John Austin Ltd to indicate your interest in attending. Please contact: (07) 872-0000.

The FAR (Foundation For Arable Research) MAIZE CONFERENCE will take place on February 12th and 13th, two days prior to our own Open Day. We're proud to be a sponsor of this bi-annual event for maize producers and personnel and will be hosting an afternoon field visit.

Francis Childs from the US will also be speaking at this conference.



An exciting new level of customer service

“We’re pleased to announce that John Austin is now ISO9001:2000 Registered!”

Our registration is independent verification that the business processes we adhere to meet the standards set out in the ISO9001:2000 documentation. For you as our customer, this demonstrates we have established formal protocols to repeatedly deliver the quality and efficiency you desire. It means you can rely on us to consistently deliver our products and services in a manner that matches the

professionalism you require from your agricultural contracting partner.

ISO9001:2000 is a world renowned standard to ensure the methodology and processes employed by a business are well designed, robust, relevant, and dependable. It provides an independent means to check that our processes are clearly defined, and will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure we meet and exceed your requirements in every

aspect of our business.

Additional benefits from our ISO accreditation will come from the continuous improvement and refinement of our procedures, using feedback from you, our customers. Customer satisfaction is the key function driving our business and we believe this registration will help us to continue delivering the value you require from us. 🌱

Customer Services Second to none

As mentioned in previous correspondence, John Austin Ltd is working towards making significant changes to improve the way that we communicate with you, our customers. For this reason, Malcolm Lind was recently appointed as our Sales and Customer Care Manager – a new position for John Austin Ltd in response to the changing needs of our customers and their businesses. Malcolm is no stranger to providing top quality customer care to the rural community and brings over 30 years experience in rural banking and general management.

John notes that, “Due to the everyday demands of our customers many farmers are not immediately available on site when our operators arrive to do a job. This calls for greater accountability and accuracy from our team when receiving customer enquiries to ensure our operators get the job done right the first time and every time. Our focused sales and customer care team, along with new Job Track Software will ensure this happens.” In addition to overseeing the implementation of our new “Job Track” Software, Malcolm is responsible for overseeing the ISO9001:2000 certification of John Austin Ltd. 🌱



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In addition, our lease land / agricultural cropping business was beginning to develop. We took the opportunity to purchase our first forage harvester and provide a full service to our growing maize silage customer base. This led to the harvesting of grass silage in the following spring (1994) and since then the combined maize silage, grass silage and grain components of our business have grown steadily.

Around the same time as we bought our first forage harvester, we began testing grain yield monitors in the combine, initially with AgLeader and then with John Deere. We became the first company in New Zealand to introduce GPS (Global Positioning System) based yield mapping technology to the New Zealand grain growing industry.

My enthusiasm for precision farming continually grows as we learn more about site specific farming, and the ways we can better manage our inputs of seed, fertiliser and

chemicals. Today, our Te Mawhai property continues as a major test site in the Southern Hemisphere for John Deere and we continue to be at the fore-front of developing and using precision farming in New Zealand. This research and development enables us to manage our resources better - improving the distribution of inputs and increasing yields while giving more accurate crop history and better documentation for our customers.

It's been my privilege over the years to have worked with a great team of very capable people who are also passionate about what they do. Today, our collective focus is no different than 23 years ago: to provide you the customer with the best equipment, best services and best agronomic practices. 🌱

John, his wife Jackie and, children Michael (7yrs), Daniel (5yrs) and Hannah (2yrs) live on a 39 ha property at Te Mawhai, just south of Te Awamutu, New Zealand. John also operates the business from here.