

CASE STUDY



IMPROVING A BUSINESS WITH COLD, HARD FACTS



Pye Group

TYPE	Mixed Farming
LOCATION	Temuka, NZ
CROPS	Carrots, potatoes, grain, fodder beets, kale, grass, oats
SIZE	11,600 acres
DAIRY HERD SIZE	10,000

"Gut feeling will only take you so far. Farming intuition is a big part of the puzzle but these days data plays an increasingly important role."

Tony Gould
Operations Manager, Pye Group, NZ



Pye GROUP

CHALLENGE

The Pye Group is a large and diversified family agricultural operation that previously had no accurate visibility into the profitability and viability of individual fields. The business managers did not know whether or not certain crops or fields were profitable and neither did they know the exact cost involved in a specific application or operation.

SOLUTION

In 2018 the Pye Group decided to implement Agworld as a farm management platform across their operation. A corporate structure was set up where everyone from management in head office to farm managers and even machinery operators have access to all farm data that is critical to them.

RESULT

By having visibility into their operations down to field level, the Pye Group is now able to accurately analyse their results. The Pye Group has been able to improve their business performance by being more conscious of costs and profitability across their operation and adjusting the way they work wherever necessary.



A large and diversified farming business

When you talk about New Zealand based Pye Group, everything becomes large-scale. With over 4,700 hectares of farming land and 12,000 cows, a 10,000 head dairy herd + replacement stock, they have an extensive presence on the Canterbury Plains. Pye Group produces around 20,000 tonnes of juicing carrots annually, 13,500 tonnes of potatoes and 5,000 tonnes of grain & other small seeds. The rest of the land is used to grow a rotation of fodder beets, kale, grass and oats – all destined for dairy feed. Alongside their farms, Pye Group also owns a majority share of Central Feeds: an agricultural contracting and stock feed sales business. It takes over 120 full-time employees including seasonal staff and a lot of dedication from everyone involved to make sure every job gets done on time within the operation.



It was the size and complexity of the Pye Group that drove Operations Manager Tony Gould to start exploring the option of implementing a farm management platform. Tony explains: “Once we made the decision to implement Agworld, it took a fair bit of time to get adjusted and get it all going. Once you have a bit of history and information in there though and Agworld starts to auto-populate things, it just becomes a no-brainer. I told all the guys to just treat Agworld like their old docketbook and record everything. Everything that happens on

our farm now gets recorded as an actual in Agworld, which makes tracking operations, costs and other key details a lot easier for everyone involved."

Using real-time data in the field

Like many other farm businesses, the Pye Group did keep records before using Agworld, but not in a way that delivered quick and meaningful reports from their data for use across the business. Tony: "In previous years we only had an average yield to go off of and we just kind of guessed that our average yield covered our costs, but we had no detailed idea what these costs were exactly. Now, as soon as the last truck leaves the weighbridge, we run the report and know exactly where we stand."

"Another situation of the value that Agworld brings to an operation like ours is that it helps us with our compliance. This year, for the first time in a while, we actually grew grazing fodder beet on a couple of the dairy platforms. At one point the guys told me: 'oh yeah, we'll start feeding it today.' I decided to look it up in Agworld and was able to tell them on the spot: 'hang on, there's still three more days of withholding on it.' It's these kinds of compliance issues that can quite easily go unnoticed in a large operation like ours; Agworld makes sure that we mitigate the risk and cover all our bases."

Pye Group's Rakaia Farms manager Matt Hart adds to this: "With our potatoes, we can now see exactly what the difference in financial productivity per field is for different scenarios. On our own farm land with a six year rotation we are getting yields of 60-65t per hectare, while on virgin lease land we are getting 80-85t per hectare. Agworld shows us the difference in results per field plus, it helps provide the data as to why the difference occurred."

Basing decisions on facts

Being able to make the most profitable and sustainable decisions in regard to their cropping plan, is very important for the Pye Group. Tony Gould: "With our grain production, we cut the grain off low and then bale and sell the straw but, with doing this we are losing a lot of structure and carbon content in the soil. In Agworld we can clearly see the revenue gained from the wheat straw but also what the yield penalty in the years after was. By analysing this in detail, we can now decide to harvest our wheat nice and high and incorporate the stubble in the autumn. Without Agworld we wouldn't have such detailed info about the economics and we'd probably still be stuck in our old ways."

Matt Hart remarks: "We now also look at the cost of using equipment differently. This year, when planting wheat, one of our operators decided to do a few extra laps with the TopDown (cultivator) around the field to smoothen the edges. We put everything in Agworld, even these kinds of 'small' jobs, and we could then see that those two laps around the field with a TopDown and a 600HP tractor had cost us over \$1500. Would we do the same thing again, knowing the cost? Probably not! And that's what Agworld delivers to us: insight into what we're spending and where. And not only to our own internal accountant or the owners but also to me, right here in the field. For me in my job – that's very valuable."



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Matt Hart

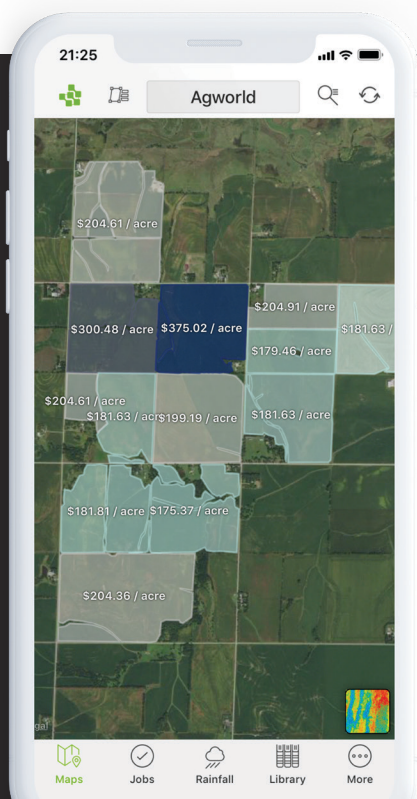
Rakaia Farms Manager,
Pye Group, Temuka, NZ



Pye GROUP



Tony concludes with: "Having all this knowledge available from data in Agworld really makes a difference in our decision-making process. Agworld is changing the way we at the Pye Group are thinking about our whole business as far as what we're growing, rotations and many other things. Gut feeling will only take you so far. Farming intuition is a big part of the puzzle but these days data plays an increasingly important role."



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- Un-paralleled insights into your operation.
- Empowers you to make more profitable decisions.

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