



# PROJECT PROFILE



## Crossroad Farm

For Bryan and Annette Beeston, Crossroad Farm is their third dairy conversion in just 6 years and they already have the fourth planned for the coming season. With such progressive development you would have to say the Beestons have a passion for dairy farming and you only need to spend a little time speaking with them to know this is true.

Crossroads is their pedigree farm, a first year conversion of 308 hectares. The milking platform is 275 hectares effective with 13 hectares in pines and 7 hectares which Bryan calls the 'pond'. In actual fact the 'pond' is used to feed the massive central pivot irrigator on the property. They also have two large 'Rotorainers' which are travelling irrigators used to service the balance of the farm.

Targeted production in the first year was 605kg of milk solids per cow, or 2180kg of milk solids per hectare. With 1000 cows on the property the total production volume is impressive but not as impressive as it could have been due to a plague of grass grub that hit the farm. "It reduced our effective milking platform to about 240 hectares" says Bryan.

This time around the Beestons chose to build a 70 iFLOW Rotary with iCONVEYER Milking system. "The first conversion was a 50 basic rotary due to money being tight, the second was a 54 and we invested more in automation this time round" says Bryan.



### Farm Stats

**Farm Owner:** Padlea Dairies Ltd

**Size:** 308 hectares

**Location:** Geraldine, Canterbury, South Island, New Zealand

**Number of Cows:** 1000

**Farming Type:** Partial Mixed Ration

**System Design referred to in this Profile**

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| • iFLOW          |  5.2    |
| • iCONVEYER      |  6.2    |
| • INTELSCAN PLUS |  7.3.13 |
| • iDATAFLOW      |  7.2.12 |

"With the 70 we chose INTELSCAN PLUS with smart pulsation and milk meters so I could see the production of each cow. I was not convinced with full ACRs so we opted not to put these in initially." Soon after milking started Bryan visited a few parlours with ACRs installed and returned home to have them put in straight away. "I could see that they worked well and were reliable."

In fact the upgrade plan did not stop here, with INTELSCAN PLUS installed the option to upgrade to iDATAFLOW, a fully computerised management system, was always in the back of their minds. Bryan says "the increased payout and other industry factors such as the price of cows and a tight labour market has made this technology a good investment. We are also focused on the future in our farming operation. Having iDATAFLOW will allow us to feed cows to yield and boost our production at the right cost. We won't be feeding low performing cows. We can automatically sort cows and make life easier, monitor individual milk production of our cows and make better decisions."



Crossroads is milking all year round with a 9 week calving period in the spring and a 6 week period in Autumn. All cows are artificially inseminated, the Beestons do not use bulls or induce cows. They have the luxury of carrying some of the empties through with milking 365 days a year. They are excited about installing the Activity Collars for automatic heat detection. "This technology will help our mating program" says Bryan. Cows that are on-heat are automatically alerted using iDATAFLOW, those that are not cycling before the synchronised mating period starts are flagged for attention. Cows with conceiving difficulties are alerted in the system.

The Beestons have a lower order sharemilker contract on the property, this happens to be their daughter and partner. They have 4 other staff and 2 part timers that assist with the calf rearing and relief milking. The girls in the family happen to be very computer literate so the iDATAFLOW Herd Management system will get a real work out as Bryan says they are very accurate at record keeping and you need to be running a pedigree farm.



Bryan says they wanted to make the parlour a good working environment. They have invested in a large building with plenty of natural light, good access around the rotary and an underpass that allows the operators to travel under the bridge from cups on to cups off quickly. They can also travel into the centre using the same access tunnel. "In the scope of things, it's well worth the investment" says Bryan.

