

DEER LOVE WHAT EUROMIX DELIVERS

PALMERSTON NORTH – (11 August 2009) – Foveran Deer Park in Hakataramea is one of the largest stud deer farms in the country. It carries 3000 deer on 8000 acres. The farm is owned by the Robertson Family Trust and for the last 20 years Barry Gard has been its manager.

Barry says deer are interesting animals to work with. "Being a large concern means we get to do exciting things. We have the biggest embryo transplanting operation in the country, and possibly in the world. Donor hinds are induced to produce multiple embryos, which are then put into commercial hinds. They average 4.5 embryos per deer," he says.

Barry and his team are trying to get the best out of their stud animals. They were feeding out with a silage wagon but six years ago bought a Kuhn Euromix II 1460 mixer wagon. "We have some of the best genetics in the country, and when you have the best genetics you need to feed them."

The Euromix is a 14 cubic metre wagon with two horizontal augers armed with knives running along the bottom, and electronic scales in-built, so you know exactly how much you're putting in. Delivery is via a side door, onto a conveyer belt. Barry's version has only one conveyer belt but they could install another if they wished to feed from the other side door as well. It takes about four tonne when it's full but, depending on the moisture content of the feed, it is capable of carrying loads up to six tonne.

It's loaded from the top and Foveran Deer Park use a mixture of brews depending on the deer's requirements. They make their own silage, both maize and lucerne, and mix that together to get a higher energy level than can be achieved with grass silage. Sometimes they add trace elements or molasses or barley.

Barry says the initial reason he chose the Euromix was that it was one of the largest he could find at the time, and he wanted to use the side delivery to feed into troughs. The deer liked the feed so much, however, that they gave up on troughs and fed straight onto the ground. "I think there's something about the feed being chopped that appeals to them more than if it were just dumped out of the silage wagon onto the ground. Even if it's straight silage, they seem to clean it up better."

From the electronic scales Barry and his crew know the weight of the brew and can programme it for the correct amount per mob. If they want say 700kg for a particular mob, an alarm will sound when they reach it. The driver can stop the flow and set the alarm for the next mob. Generally they feed about 800 deer from one load. Deer are still given hay, but that's done separately and it is always available.

Foveran works on a 100-day winter, which is usually from mid May to mid August. The Euromix works half a day, every day in winter. It's six-years-old and they've never had to do anything to it, other than change the blades and the oil in the gearboxes. "We've had the occasional blockage," Barry says, "but that's been due to the way it was loaded."

They pull it with a 175hp or 200hp tractor. They have used a 135hp tractor so all that muscle isn't vital, but they prefer the bigger tractor on the steeper country. It's easy to operate and has its own computer in the cab. It is within the width of the tractor so there are no problems when moving on the road.

"We can see the difference from using a silage wagon: the deer clean the feed up better. It's also saved us time. Before if we wanted to feed out grain we'd have to do that separately. Now we can do it all in one process," Barry concludes.

Images:

1. [Euromix Foveran1.jpg](#)
2. [Euromix Foveran3.jpg](#)

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