

MEDIA RELEASE

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Monduran Orchards rely on Farmall B fleet

Orchardist Jim Mullett and his family have tried three tractor brands in their Queensland business, Monduran Orchards — and decided they can't go past the compact Case IH Farmall B.

“Every little thing about them ticks the box, like no other tractor has done beforehand. We have 14 Farmall B's now and are looking to increase the fleet. We also have a Farmall C on order for the more narrow rows.”

The Mulletts farm 1,214 hectares at Gin Gin, some 370km north-west of Brisbane. The property, “Monduran Station”, is now also home to the sixth generation — Jim's son Alastair's children.

One of Queensland's largest producers of early-market citrus and one of Australia's biggest producers of red grapefruit, the enterprise grows seedless lemons, limes and grapefruit, as well as Imperial, Murcott and Taylor-Lee mandarins.

Jim, chairman of the Bundaberg Health Services Foundation, and founder and patron of the Monduran Aero Club, says the move to Case IH happened over time.

“Most orchardists buy small tractors second-hand to pull trailers and bins for picking. But increasing buying competition from hobby farmers means you're buying 50-year-old tractors for \$10,000. For not much more, you can buy a brand new Farmall B, and it's economically sensible to buy new.

“We've tried other tractor brands, and while we found them good, the maintenance is too much — particularly with plastic parts. We found the expense of replacing them was (a) not cheap, and (b) we had to do it regularly.

“So when we went back and looked at all the brands, we were most impressed with Case IH. With their steel bonnets, they're built to last. The tractors came with canopies and three remotes and four-wheel drive — everything that we wanted for a price you couldn't better anywhere. They're not much more than a lesser-quality import and yet you've got a very reliable tractor.”

Peter Elias, Product Manager – Tractors for Case IH says ease of operation is often a factor in orchardists, viticulturists and small-block farmers choosing these reliable tractors whose efficiency leads to increased production.

Jim concurs: “We find they're so easy and their systems are very light to use. We have to keep the fruit in pristine condition, so it's very good to be able to drop them into low range.

“And they're an adaptable and strong, tractor — we've even designed lemon-picking aids to big trailers that fit on behind our Farmall B's, and we use them to apply herbicide at very low rates under our trees to keep the rows clean.”

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PRESS RELEASE

“We just can’t fault the Farmall B, to be honest. They’re very sound, and the simple fact is by sticking to the one brand, any maintenance is easy. We’ve had no maintenance issues, yet we’ve got other tractors with 10,000 hours that just have their third front-end rebuild.”

Jim recounts what “would have been a catastrophe in another brand”.

“A large limb came out of a 70-foot tree and fell onto a tractor roof and bonnet. It didn’t even bend the bonnet down to the engine! If that had been plastic top or bonnet, it would have broken much of the engine. But we continued using it, and got it repaired when the season finished. That’s the strength of the Farmall B. Our staff, many of whom have been with us for 20 years, just cannot get over how good they are to operate and how versatile they are. My farm manager recently said to me, ‘These act like tractors that are worth twice the amount we’re paying.’”

Jim says with season-peak staff at 170 — and growing — Monduran Orchards is looking to build its Farmall B fleet to 30, to accommodate 90 pickers.

“We’re blessed in Bundaberg that the McDonald Murphy Case IH dealership in is the best tractor dealership I’ve ever dealt with. We cannot stress strongly enough how they’ve looked after us with old-fashioned service. We can’t afford downtime, and they keep spares on the shelf all the time, which minimises it at any stage. They have approached rebuilding our business in a real partnership-type way with us.”

Jim says Monduran Orchards has moved away from tradition with its marketing.

“We’ve gone into the 21st century and that attitude is really why we went for the Case IH Farmall B: we believe you’re not meant to spend half your life repairing old tractors. It’s our belief that the Farmall B is an exception to the saying, ‘you only get what you pay for’ — you get a hell of a lot more than you pay for with these. We’re super pleased.”

For more information see your local Case IH dealer or visit www.caseih.com.

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Drawing on more than 170 years of heritage and experience in the agriculture industry, Case IH provides a powerful range of tractors, combines and balers supported by a global network of highly professional dealers dedicated to providing our customers with the superior support required to be productive in the 21st century. More information on Case IH products and services can be found online at www.caseih.com.

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