

New Holland BigBaler 1290 HD lifts productivity for NSW contractor

The BigBaler 1290 HD has helped Schofield's Hay & Silage average around 65 bales an hour, while pushing straw bale weights up to 500 kg, to keep pace with a big season and growing customer demand.

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Central West NSW contractor Brian Schofield needed to move more hay and straw with "all our jobs ready on the same day" and the work getting bigger every year.

In October 2025 he stepped up to a New Holland BigBaler 1290 High Density so he could get more done per day without adding another machine.

"Our previous baler was a fantastic machine but I was either going to have to run two balers, or we go into one big HD," Brian said.

Based in Forbes, Schofield's Hay & Silage is a family-run business, with Brian working alongside wife Jessica and their daughters to service dairies, beef and sheep producers and corporate hay customers across central west New South Wales.

Since putting the 1290 HD to work, Brian has run over 12,000 bales through the machine.

"It's been a pretty big season, we've finished straw and we've averaged around 65 bales an hour, with peaks in the 80s and 90s," he said.

"We were struggling to average about 450 kg with our previous baler, with the 1290 HD we're now getting a more consistent 480-500 kg per bale, giving us more tonnes per hour through the paddock.

"I reckon we're at the equivalent of 1.5 balers now, which we're happy with, because we're only one tractor and one driver," Brian said.

Brian highlighted the Loop Master knotters on the BigBaler 1290 HD as another major advantage.

"The knotters have been fantastic, probably the most reliable knotter I've had, it helps keep the 1290 HD working when the window is open and every bale counts."

On the tractor front, Brian has paired his BigBaler 1290 High Density with a New Holland T7.340 HD.

“The AEH team at the Forbes Machinery Centre demoed this tractor and baler combination for us the year before and we fell in love with it then.

“The 1290 HD and T7 are just the perfect match and are built to work together, they deliver the output we need when we have to get more done in a shorter period of time,” he said.

Brian said AEH’s support has been fantastic, with someone always only ever a phone call away, no matter the day of the week or time of day.

“It’s very hard to catch up once delays hit, so having AEH willing to stick the hard yards to solve tricky problems mid-season helps to keep things moving through a big season.”

CNH Product Manager Hay & Forage, Sune Nielsen, said the New Holland tractor and large baler combination unlocked additional technology benefits for farmers like Brian.

“FieldOps gives operators clear, visible baling data on their phone or PC, including bale weight, moisture, location and a range of other baler outputs,” Sune said.

“Advanced filters let users set ranges, for example, high-moisture bales can be flagged on the field map, showing exactly where they were made.

“We’re continually enhancing the FieldOps platform with new features to meet and exceed the needs of farmers and contractors into the future.

“The 1290 HD is also about reducing running costs as much as increasing output, that’s why we designed this baler to provide higher bale counts with low cost of ownership.

“Low maintenance and ease of servicing are built into the design, with smoother start-up and less wear and tear from the SmartShift two-speed gearbox, and hydraulic active suspension at the rear so the baler can be lifted and lowered for servicing.”

For more information on the BigBaler 1290 High Density and T7.340 HD, reach out to your local New Holland dealer.

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