** 14th July 2021**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Case IH growth in Central Otago tracks local surge**

As Central Otago grows, Case IH grows with it.

Until eight years ago Case IH’s Central Otago customers were serviced from Milton in South Otago. “We had branches through Otago and Southland, but we decided it was time to really commit ourselves to this area. Central Otago’s a really diverse area and our range reflects that,” Agricentre South sales manager Richard Clapperton said.

The Cromwell branch caters to everything from viticulture and cherries to dairying, sheep, beef, and dedicated cropping, including carrot seed production.

Last September Agricentre South moved into a new branch facility in Cromwell, on Old Saleyard Road in the town’s industrial area. Among upcoming events, the branch is excitedly waiting on a late-2021 delivery of the feature-packed Case IH Quantum.

Agricentre South’s Cromwell branch activity spreads far and wide, right into Ranfurly and the wider Maniototo, and it’s only growing as irrigation comes on stream throughout the region. “With the growth in horticulture and viticulture there’s been strong demand for the Farmall Bs, and you’ve got Maxxums for the dairy, sheep and beef and Pumas for the bigger cultivation guys. It’s a one-stop shop really,” Clapperton said.

The Quantum F specialty tractor is the branch’s biggest-selling vineyard tractor because of its versatility and narrow width. Quantum V with a minimum width of 1,069mm was suited to operation in the narrowest spaced vineyards while the Quantum F provided more operator space and a wider vehicle (1,398mm) for orchard use. The Quantum N gave more stability when width was less critical. All three models were available in either cab or rops form. A low cab height and optional folding safety frame version enables operation to continue under polytunnels and protection nets. Cromwell also stocks vineyard and orchard sprayers, among other gear.

Salesman Jack Elder said while there was a tendency to view vineyard and horticulture machines as a ‘lifestyle’ vehicle, they were just a mini version of the 150-plus horsepower tractor that a pastoral farmer would use. In response to demand for those Case IH units, the dealership has picked up franchise rights for Clemens vineyard and horticulture equipment.

Elder started his ag career as a farmer in northern Southland before selling a property some years ago. After a stint away from farming in Dunedin, he headed to Cromwell with the idea of semi-retirement, or some other work.

Soon after Jack moved to the area eight years ago, Clapperton asked him to join his team. For the first few months of 2014, Elder worked from home and parked up the Case IH range in a paddock across the road, near his home. He soon increased the client base and the dealership opened a small branch and established a workshop with a service technician.

As the customer base grew, a larger building was required for the four mechanics and an office administrator/parts co-ordinator.

“The dealership is on the main road, so we get a good frontage, free advertising, and we’re getting positive feedback and support from new and existing customers. And obviously being based in Cromwell, viticulture and horticulture are going gangbusters around here,” Elder said.

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**Images:**

1. Cromwell team.jpg
Caption: *The Agricentre South Cromwell Team (from left): Sam Frame (service manager), Gypsy Bisschops (parts), Jack Elder (sales), Matt Gordon (service tech), Daniel Rouxel (service tech), Absent – Olly Fotheringham-Hill (apprentice tech)*