MEDIA RELEASE

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**Proper preparation always gives best case for winter sowing**

With winter sowing nearing the end, it’s timely to look back and see what makes planting a success.

Generally, thoughts turn to timing, the right varieties and the weather, but it’s also about making sure that when you strike a balance between those things, you can actually get out in the paddock when you want to start sowing, says Patrick McVeigh, National Aftersales Manager for Case IH.

“And that’s been particularly important this season with an above-average winter-spring rainfall tipped over much of Australia. Being able to take advantage of the rain when it comes is all about preparation. As part of farm planning, safety reviews and cost management, there is tangible value in having machinery prepared and running for the sowing season by having it serviced early and buying genuine parts.

“On the surface, it might seem that breakdown repair is cheaper because you only need to budget for the one-time expense of repair and parts. But that’s just not accurate. Breakdown-repair costs extend far beyond labour and materials: because breakdowns are never planned, they force work to stop for an undetermined period. This has a snow-ball impact on every step beyond sowing—including reduced income from reduced yields. It's no surprise then that the true cost of machinery breakdown is several times routine maintenance and servicing costs.”

Patrick says it's not only the downtime that costs farm businesses; if machinery begins to wear without detection, there can be issues with seeder boots, points and metering systems.

“Being the last bit that engages the ground, seeder boots and points are very important. Small as they are, even slightly worn points will have a big impact on seed beds and germination, so can be very costly re poor seed placement, and then, of course, germination. Soil types determine when they need changing, but your dealer will pick this up in a service.”

Good germination also depends upon accurate metering.

“Fertilisers and additives can be very corrosive to seeder-metering systems, so they also need to be checked over properly and serviced regularly. Rollers need to be in good order, with no leaks in hoses and so on.

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“These areas are so simple that people can forget them, but not servicing them properly can make it a season people wish they could forget.”

It’s also vital to use the right engine oil. Tractors less than 10 years old need a CI-4 15W/40 extra-high-performance diesel engine oil. Patrick says while there are cheaper oils, such as a CH-4, these are only suited to machines over 20 years old.

“People can be tempted to use these because they’re cheaper, but they won’t be doing even half the lubrication job they should be and are prematurely wearing your engine, rather than actually looking after your investment.

“Case IH dealers also offer the new AkcelA No1 engine oil. This is a CJ-4 that’s suitable to use where AkcelA No1 CI-4 is needed, which means farmers can use just one type of oil for all their machinery.”

Patrick says maintaining equipment regularly also ensures farmers get the most out of it. “Machinery that’s working more efficiently ultimately benefits its owners with a lower total cost of ownership and a stronger return on investment in the long run.”

Patrick says with sowing nearing completion in many parts of Australia, now is the time to book in for a service by Case IH’s highly specialised, factory-trained technicians. It’s always worth knowing that when rain comes, you’re ready to go.

“Always make sure you get your spraying and sowing equipment checked. Getting your local dealer to check and service your machinery means those things that can be easy to miss just won’t get missed because they know what to look for. Not only that, genuine parts meet strict engineering standards and are backed by a warranty.

“A service by your dealer’s team means they can address issues before they become expensive to fix.”

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