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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Newmans Strive for Excellence with New Machines**

At Waipaoa on the Gisborne Plains there’s a ghostly old meat works– a hulking symbol of agricultural enterprise from another age. Built in 1915 for the Poverty Bay Farmers Meat Co. Ltd, the imposing Waipaoa freezing works was abandoned within a generation, cast aside in favour of other plants.

Neighbour Tom Newman sometimes wonders at what may have been for the multi-storeyed concrete hulk, but rather than chiding the founders, you get the feeling he respects them for giving it a go.

Tom grew up among innovators, most notably relations who founded the Newmans transport line on the South Island’s West Coast. As a farmer chest-high in agribusiness, from maize, mandarin and lemons to lamb fattening, his family shares that enterprising spirit.

He and his wife Amanda bought a poultry farm in 2018 on neighbouring land. Considering egg industry trends benefiting bigger players, Tom expects it won’t be long before the family will be cropping all of that 40ha block, including the current shed space.

Amanda completed a Diploma of Agribusiness Management two years ago and works behind the scenes managing the finances, compliance, and HR across the two companies.

The Newmans like to keep their eyes open to opportunities. A few years ago, the family bought an orchard at nearby Te Karaka and set to work on making it more commercial. “It was a fruit salad orchard, really, with every conceivable type of fruit on it, so we just took the digger to it, bulldozed it and left the apples behind,” Tom says. Those apples are the high-value Envy and Royal Gala varieties, so as a lease proposition it’s a good side-line.

Back on their home base along Lavenham Road, the Newmans crop all their flats, including a nearby block which used to be in grapes, and then put everything back into grass. A lagoon paddock acts as an outlet for the Waipaoa when it threatens to burst. Years ago, the family agreed to a ponding area which takes river spill. A floodgate shuts the over-flow on the Newmans’ property.

When it roars, the Waipaoa is “chocker” with sediment up-country, Tom says. Despite years of erosion control through planting, even trees come down the river.

Helped during the holidays by sons George, 17, and Charlie, 15, Tom and Amanda farm 500ha on the Gisborne flats. Tom is the third generation of the Newman family to farm in the area since his grandfather bought property on Lavenham Rd, Waipaoa, in 1937.

Tom’s sheds are lined with so many Case IH machines that he would almost qualify as an unofficial brand ambassador, but as a trained diesel mechanic and lifetime machinery-lover, he’s also discerning.

The Newmans’ Case IH range grew over decades to include an International 1420 combine, a 2166 and a 6088 and more recently a 7150 combine and a 44408 folding corn head.

Cropping is one of the Newmans’ main revenue-generators, which includes seed maize supplied to Pioneer, supported by a Case IH fleet including a Magnum 245 and 340 Rowtrac, a Magnum 380, a Maxxum 110, Quantum 105 and a CX90. Tom uses the 245 for ploughing and the two big tractors to power harrow the flats, and then follows with a planter.

The maize harvest normally starts towards the end of February and finishes by early June. Crop stubble is ploughed in after the combine has been through and the paddock is then cultivated using discs and power harrows prior to planting in early October. Tom applies 300 kg/ha of Crop 20 (20:10:10) as a starter fertiliser and side-dresses with 300 kg urea/ha

“Gisborne’s really lucky because it’s got all the maize seed production for New Zealand here. So, we grow some of the seed for Pioneer, for silage and grain maize in Gisborne, then exported around the world,” he says.

All the main tractors use RTK auto-steer systems with 25mm accuracy. In fact, when it comes to this technology, the whole Gisborne region runs off a base station installed by Trimble.

Tom used the CX90 to establish his citrus orchards but uses the little red Case IH, quads and trailers to harvest his mandarins and lemons.

Tom tends to think of preferred crop and machinery as a single consideration: the best tractor or trailer for a particular purpose. He’s a self-reliant type, opting to own and operate his own gear rather than use contractors, so he’s grateful for those machinery service relationships. Like the machines in his sheds, it’s peace of mind to know that “it’s always on hand”.

This winter Tom took delivery of a new 380CVT from his Case IH dealership Stevenson & Taylor in Waipukurau. He says the multi-purpose Case IH fleet suits the farm, which has evolved quickly since 2016 when he and Amanda bought out Tom’s parents, Bill and Lee.

Sheep which once grazed the flats now spend most of their time on low hills. Stock are still important, but like on most of today’s Gisborne plain, they’re supplementary to the arable portfolio.

The tractors under cover now are a far cry from the machines that Bill’s father started with in the late 1960s. After initially running a Nuffield built by Morris (a gambit to qualify the family for the purchase of a new, imported Morris car) Tom’s father did his maize cropping with a two-row harvester on a Farmall 504. In the tradition of a Case IH family, the Newmans still have that machine, alongside other heritage tractors awaiting a “tidy-up” restoration.

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**Images:**

1. 380CVT.jpg
*Caption: A Case IH Magnum 380 CVT arrives at Tom Newman's farm on the Gisborne Plains.*
2. TomNewmanCVT380.jpg
*Caption: Tom Newman takes delivery of his Case IH Magnum 380 CVT*
3. Tom Newman with Dave Beattie.jpg
*Caption: Tom Newman with Stevenson and Taylor sales consultant, Dave Beattie*
4. 340, 380 and 245 side by side.jpg
*Caption: The Newman’s Case IH Magnum 340, 380 and 245*