Corrigan Sowman – Q&A – Farmer Panel

What are your top 3 considerations when investing in tech?

Be clear on the problem I am trying to solve

Ensure that if making the investment, we are ready to put the time into implementing it into our routines and training the team

That company is reputable, recommended by other farmers and won’t disappear tomorrow

Do you see any risks to be aware of in dependence on Tech?

I guess the main one is if relying on the tech without a suitable Plan B should something break down then you are vulnerable. We always have a plan B.

As an early adopter if things fail that are outside of your control how do you manage the financial impact?

It comes down to you comfort with risk. We adopt early when its lower cost and impact versus something cow collars or Halter where we waited until it was proven by farmers around us and we were confident in their business model.

Where do you see the greatest gains on farm coming in the tech space?

Reducing waste in our systems, whether that be nutrients, pasture not eaten, or animals loss of productivity – mostly this comes down to people being able to make better decisions through having time and information

How have you educated yourselves about new tech?

Where do you find your information?

Read, follow other farmers online or at events

Do you see any challenges through reliance on tech and loosing connection e.g stockmanship etc?

I feel like this comes down to seeing technology as a way to enhance people to be better farmers, not replace them. This is about having good training in your business, approaching tech use like its another hammer, motorbike or good pair of boots….., its just another tool to make you more successful in the role and hopefully make farming more fun!

What are the drivers behind which tech to invest in?

Good old business plans, budgets and SWOT analysis. Start with the things that can add to your bottom line and that you will enjoy using.

What has been your biggest lesson learnt?

Someone has to be the champion of using the tech to start with

What payback do you expect with your investment? Eg halter?

I see it as two fold, partly its productivity or reducing costs in some areas, like time sitting behind cows or putting up fences, and partly through more revenue through eating more grass and better quality control. But don’t loose cite of the intangible benefits like more sleep, more flexibility in a farm roster, or more family time when those are priorities for you.

If you had to choose one tech innovation to implement on farm what would it be?

Good financial software and analysis

What are the easy wins wit tech on farm?

Good on farm recording to make compliance easier like using Resolution.