

# Family farm finds favour in closed effluent system

Paul Knight runs his family farm in Whakatane like clockwork, everything has its place and purpose and is thought through.

So when it came to sorting out his effluent storage solutions, Paul did his research.

"When you invest in something which is going to stick around for a while you want to make sure you invest in the future, not the past.

"With the environment being discussed and debated everywhere you look, you start thinking. For me that was: 'Nutrients are valuable so there's no point flushing them away'. 'Secondly, greenhouse gasses; open ponds produce methane and up to 60 per cent of N is just gone like that.'"

Paul says it did not take long to find TechniPharm and their Ecobag closed nutrient capture system could meet his requirements. "After some checking with the regional council about design parameters and our close proximity to a waterway, it was confirmed all was okay to proceed.

"We ordered the system in February and by end of May we had the Ecobag installed, groundwork was done by A&R Rust contracting."

TechniPharm CEO Harmen Heesen says the groundworks were done to a millimetre correct to plan. "Not often do we see such a nice job."

Installation was done by the TechniPharm team and Paul and his family. "The weather was fantastic during install and everyone chipped in to complete the job," says Harmen.

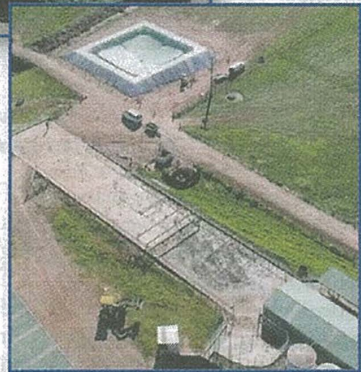
"On the final inspection early-September the system was three-quarters full and looking just great."

Paul's system is simple and easy. Effluent from the dairy goes to the existing sump where the existing pump can either be diverted to direct irrigation to pasture – as was common in the past – or direct to the Ecobag. Stored and stirred on a regular basis, the effluent can be 'drained' back to the sump where the same pump then pumps it to pasture.

The Ecobag stored effluent has no smell, no crusting and no rainwater is collected. The system is available from 500 cube to 15,000 cube. TechniPharm is soon installing an 8000 cube system in Southland – "without a doubt it will be the largest closed effluent system in New Zealand".



Groundwork and installation of the Ecobag underway.



The Knight family's Whakatane dairy shed from above, with the Ecobag nearby.

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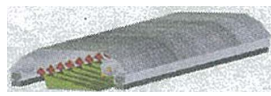
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