

# Fahr better

Words and images by Mark Fouhy



The all-new Deutz-Fahr 5 Series range of tractors has hit our shores. The team at Power Farming promised us some great new features, so we couldn't wait to see for ourselves just what was on offer and how it performed.



Testing time: Helping with feeding out over the dry spell in the Waikato

Last month we brought you the results from the 2014 Top Tractor Shoot Out, where we tested, compared, and judged six high-end farm tractors. Deutz-Fahr was in on the action, with its Agrotion K420 proving a top-rating competitor.

However, had the Shoot Out been just a week later, Power Farming would have submitted the all-new 5 Series 5120. The new 5 Series has now been in New Zealand for a couple of months and has already seen a fair bit of the country, visiting Field Days in Northland, Southland, and a whole lot of places in between. I was keen to check it out so I caught up with Mark Daniel, tractor training manager from Power Farming, at Sharemilker, James King's property near Eureka.

Like a lot of Waikato farms, James's place was suffering from lack of rain but thankfully, given a good early spring in 2013, James has been able to put down a good stack of silage, and with some maize carried over from the previous season he was able to keep his herd fed and happy. This provided an excellent opportunity to both test out the new Deutz-Fahr 5120 and give James a hand to feed some maize and grass silage to his 400+ herd of dairy cows.

## Engine

To make things nice and simple for you, the digits of the 5120 stand for '5' Series and '120' horsepower. The 5 Series range of Deutz-Fahr tractors are fitted with 3.6L common rail Deutz-Fahr engines, designed to give maximum power through 1200-1900rpm, where most tractor engines operate for a range of farm jobs. With the power available at lower revs you can make full use of the two economy PTO speeds, saving you fuel and offering quieter engine noise levels.

These engines are Tier 4i compliant, still offering the dust extractor system on the air filter used on previous models. Deutz Fahr engines meet emission levels by using exhaust gas recirculation and a DOC filter, which is similar to the catalytic convertor fitted to the cars you and I drive. It lasts the life of the vehicle and requires no maintenance. This system doesn't require extra energy or additional fluids to run.

This new range of tractors also has a new radiator cooling package. I have to admit, I did like the old Deutz-Fahr system, but the slide-out

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Deutz-Fahr 5 Series 5120	
Engine	Deutz TCD 3.6L, four-cylinder, Tier 4i, common rail diesel
Max rated power	118hp/83kW at 2200rpm
Transmission	60F/60R – five speeds/ four ranges, three-speed powershift (40kph); Stop & Go function
Cab suspension	Mechanical (spring and dampener)
Max lift on linkage	6600kg
Hydraulic remotes	Rear: Four remote valves, double acting with float, standard
Hydraulic capacity	60L/min plus separate 40L/min power steering pump
PTO	Four-speed, 540/540E/1000/1000rpm
Dimensions	4270mm (L), 2288mm (W)
Wheelbase	2440mm
Weight	4970kg
Max loaded weight	8500kg (40kph)
Fuel tank	165L
Oil change interval	500hr or annually
Warranty	24mth/2000hr warranty

screen and main radiator system on the new series does work well.

The variable rate fan is another fuel-saving feature offering more or less cooling as required.

## Transmission

I am going to cut straight to my favourite function on the transmission — the new 'stop and go' feature. Selected with the push of a button, you can now simply put your foot on the brakes to stop the tractor, similar to an IVT transmission, but with a manual gearbox. My basic understanding of the system is that there is a solenoid connected to the brake pedal that activates the clutch, similar to what



With the new Stop & Go feature, the 5 Series is an excellent option for loader work



Loaded up and ready to feed

“An impressive 6600kg of lift is available at the hook arms, with the twin lift rams fitted as standard...”

you have on the gear stick to change gears. It seems like a very simple system. While testing the tractor I found it ideal loading silage into the wagon. We were feeding the maize into heaps to save wastage, which was also incredibly easy. A four-range, five-speed gearbox is offered on the new 5 Series. First gear position has been moved over to the left and down, leaving second and third in the middle as they are going to get used the most, I would assume.

Although Deutz-Fahr has stuck with the three-powershift system, gear changes are still smooth. The only problem I did have was when changing the gear it took you to the same powershift in the next gear, so it could be a higher gear than you wanted. You can get around this with quick manual movement (up or down) of the powershift as you change gear. James currently has a smaller ROPS tractor with a dry clutch for doing his feeding out, and other jobs, around the farm. The new Deutz has a wet clutch, with power shuttle located on the

left hand of the steering column — ideal for loader work, even better with the stop and go. The shuttle also has five settings to alter clutch take-up, from smooth through to faster and more aggressive.

**Hydraulics**

Another new steering function has been added to make headland turns and repetitive loads easier for the operator. This is in the form of a dual pump system selectable with the push of a button on the dash. This almost halves the number of turns required. For safety it is automatically disabled at speeds over 20kph.

An impressive 6600kg of lift is available at the hook arms, with the twin lift rams fitted as standard on tractors in the 5 Series brought into New Zealand. Four rear mechanical service valves are fitted, which should be ample for most operators — two on single lever operation, and the others on a cross gate-type setup. Connection is push/pull, with

oil bottles to catch any spillage. Deutz-Fahr has made the maximum hydraulic flow rate available at a low 1600rpm, providing further fuel savings. This feature also works very well for the loader-type work we were doing during the test.

**PTO**

A more convenient and easier-to-operate PTO button is the main improvement in this department. With four speeds and stop/start controls on both rear fenders, the Deutz-Fahr ticks all the boxes here.

**Serviceability**

Serviceability is very good on the 5120, particularly thanks to its clear sight glass for hydraulic oil at the rear. As well as that, the engine-oil dipstick and filler is around the right-hand side of the tractor, but can be checked without lifting the bonnet. As I've mentioned previously, the radiator system is all new, with an easy to clean large filter screen. I just don't



The 5 Series engines offer high oil flow at low RPM – a fuel-saving feature of the Deutz

like the little bit of panel that needs to be removed to get it out. The one-piece bonnet provides good access to check the radiator fluid level. The 500-hour service intervals are also good, minimising downtime and allowing you to get on with the job.

**Cab/comfort/styling**

The 5 Series Deutz-Fahr range has been designed by Giugiaro, in Turin, Italy. The look of the tractor was seen in the Deutz-Fahr 7 Series and 6 Series released last year. The tractor has a stylish and aggressive look, along with a new E-class cab. The six-pillar cab is comfortable with plenty of glass and great visibility. I like the overhang Deutz-Fahr has around the top of its cabs, which incorporate cab filters and help keep the sun off the operator while keeping the cab cooler.

Improvements inside the cab aren't limited to just new styling, but are as much about design and placement of the different controls to make operation of the new Deutz-Fahr easier. Having recently tested the Agrotion (the predecessor to the 5 Series), the stand-out features for me are the new location for the PTO switch; the new truck-like park brake system with positive action in braked/unbraked positions; the hand throttle, which has now been incorporated into the side console near PTO/linkage; and loader controls no longer tucked down below the seat.

The lighting package also looks pretty impressive, although we didn't get to test this out, it should keep the night from invading your days' work. For me personally, I am not a fan of the extra decorative LED lights in the front and rear, which may possibly be useful if travelling along the road in fog. The small lights to illuminate the steps in the dark, however, could be quite useful. Controls for all the lights can be found grouped together on the right-hand door pillar.

Power Farming is bringing in all its 5 Series tractors with mechanical suspension, which is a nice extra to have on a tractor within this horsepower range. As well as this, you get a comfortable air seat and an adequate passenger seat which will soften the blows caused by the dry, hard ruts still scarring the land after last winter and placing strain on both the tractor and the operator.



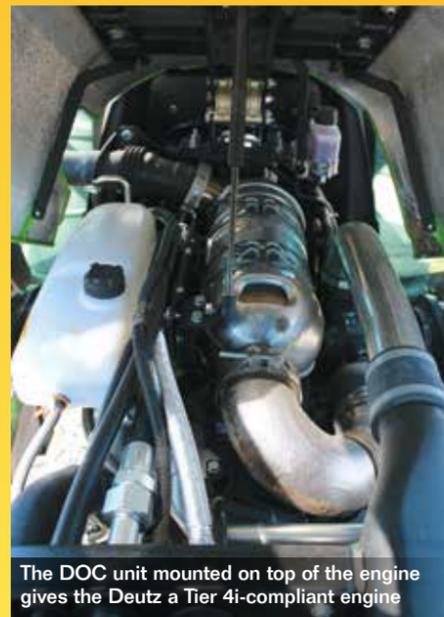
Excellent visibility is still a key feature on the new Deutz series



New radiator slide-out design for easy cleaning



Solid well-appointed rear end, twin lift rams, four rear remotes, four-speed PTO, with fender linkage and PTO controls



The DOC unit mounted on top of the engine gives the Deutz a Tier 4i-compliant engine



Revised cab layout, more operator-friendly

The air conditioning unit has 10 vents located throughout the cab to keep you cool on even the hottest summer day, and with winter only just around the corner, they're sure to keep you warm when the chill arrives.

Furthermore, as well as the standard Deutz-Fahr coolerbox for your lunch, they have now incorporated a mobilephone holder into the panel on right-hand side of the cab — something we'll no doubt see more of in modern-day tractors.

**Loader**

Mark had got the guys back at Power Farming to kit up the 5120 with a Trima X56 loader and Pearson silage grab for our test. The loader control was well placed, making the most of the armrest to alleviate unnecessary reaching for the controls. With the third service valves for the grabs we made quick work of loading James's McIntosh silage wagon.

Visibility proved to be very good. Although not directly related to the tractor, it's interesting to note that ALO, manufacturer of Trima loaders, has produced a new loader coupling that keeps the pressure even on both sides of the hydraulic rams. This allows much greater control of the loader, with loads able to be raised or lowered with accuracy.

**Verdict**

The new Deutz-Fahr 5 Series has proven to be a very good package, combining updated modern styling with some excellent new features and functions, including my favourite — the stop and go function — which I think farmers will quickly appreciate once operating the Deutz-Fahr. The 100hp-130hp bracket has fast become a popular area of the market in terms of tractor sales in New Zealand, so it's great to see Deutz-Fahr producing something of this spec for this range.

Like a true dairy farmer and businessman, James asked me whether the new 5 Series Deutz would make him more money. My initial answer was no, but then you have to spend money to make money and the efficiencies this type of tractor will offer farmers for those everyday jobs, like feeding out, will allow them more time to focus on other, more important aspects of your business, potentially making you more money. I came away from this test decidedly impressed with the new 5 Series, and can't help but wonder how it would have stacked up next to the other contestants in the Top Tractor Shoot Out — I'm guessing it would have given them a good run for their money. ■



- Transmission 'stop and go' impressive for tractor in this class and price range
- Mechanical cab suspension standard
- 55-degree steering angle with dual steering pump function for great manoeuvrability
- New truck-like park brake, positive lock on or off position
- Cab layout including PTO, hand throttle, and park brake.
- Lots of works lights



- Changing gears – you automatically move into the same powershift as the previous gear
- When accessing the radiators you have to remove a small, awkward panel from the side of the tractor which is fiddly and could eventually be lost
- Small LED lights have no real purpose