



*Smart, Safe and Secure*

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SEBCO'S TOP HIGHLIGHTS

# Sebco celebrates 10 years of excellence

Award-winning Ashburton business Sebco celebrates 10 years in business this month.

The business, established by Ed and Leah Harrison, sells self-contained plastic fuel storage systems and the Sebco product range covers diesel stations, blue stations and waste oil recovery units. Their systems are market leaders, ensuring fuel is kept clean and pure for today's hi-tech farm machines and trucks; the double-tank (bunded) systems also keep spills from contaminating the environment.

The fuel storage equipment has won innovation awards over the years and is popular with all types of farming and industry all over New Zealand.

Sebco products can be found on farms, contractors yards, vineyards, skifields, wharves and various types of industry and trucking companies.

Ed says he and Leah are a great team – Ed runs the sales and production while Leah looks after the financial,

business compliance and marketing. They are hands-on business owners working with production team members Stephen Campbell and Craig Barnes.

The Ashburton company has built a reputation for quality, with more than 2000 tanks

installed on farms and industries around New Zealand, as well as in Australia and as a far afield as Uruguay.

Sebco celebrated its 10-year milestone at the South Island Agricultural Field Days over the weekend, the event where it all began in 2007.



To find out more about Sebco, check out April's edition of Guardian Farming.



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# Change in act, changed our act



Sebco founders, Ed and Leah Harrison are proud to be part of Mid Canterbury's agribusiness scene. PHOTOS LINDA CLARKE 20317-LC-015

Ed Harrison had been selling farm machinery for 18 years when a casual conversation with a farmer friend in 2005 alerted him to changes in the Dangerous Goods Act affecting the bulk storage of fuel.

New environmental rules meant tanks over a certain size needed to be contained and banded to prevent spills causing damage.

At that point, most farmers kept their fuel in steel tanks on the farm, but many of these were rusting and rotting and prone to condensation that contaminated the diesel.

Ed realised there was a business opportunity to provide compliant tanks that protected fuel, so he set about researching a solution. He found that the Europeans had been storing diesel for home heating in plastic tanks for 60 years, so the idea of engineering a plastic tank that could also withstand New Zealand's climatic conditions was born.

The tanks would need to cope with extreme cold, harsh UV radiation, wind and earthquakes.

The market was not only for farmers, but other agricultural businesses, contractors, trucking companies and lifestylers needing to safely

**Ed realised there was a business opportunity to provide compliant tanks that protected fuel**

store fuel.

An early hurdle was creating a code of practice or standard that would allow the legal use of plastic tanks. It was a process that had to comply with strict rules set out by the Environmental Protection Authority.

Ed said Sebco owed some of its success to the support of Ashburton-based RX Plastics, which was owned by Hank Murney at the time.

"Hank allowed us to use his lab and quality manager Nigel Hislop to help get the whole thing started. It took us two years to write a suitable code of practice before we could get it into the marketplace."

*continued over page*

## Celebrating 10 years of business.

**Congratulations to Ed, Leah and the Sebco Team on this 10 year anniversary. Awesome effort. From the team at RXP.**



from page 3

Together, they chemically engineered a plastic that would not be eroded by diesel and moulded a prototype tank within a tank, which Ed took to the 2007 South Island Agricultural Field Days.

He sold six units at the field days, farmer interest was so high visitors wore out the grass around the storage systems over the three days of the agricultural event.

Sebco also won an innovation award, sparking more inquiries.

"I thought, we are on the right track."

Leah said many late nights over many years were spent developing ideas, in the early years Ed was holding down a full time job selling farm machinery.

The operation ran successfully from a small site for six years, which they eventually outgrew. Three years ago Sebco moved to the new Ashburton Business Park where they were one of the original businesses. The company is now enjoying a purpose-built office and workshop complex that suits its needs perfectly.

Ed says keeping the Sebco plant spick and span is part of business philosophy. Tanks and bunds arrive from RX Plastics' Tinwald or Hamilton plants and are assembled and fitted out in



Leah and Ed Harrison and their production team family Craig Barnes and Stephen Campbell.

220317-LC-018

the purpose-built warehouse. The workshop is clean and orderly, something that always draws comment from customers.

The production team includes Stephen Campbell and Craig Barnes. Stephen is in production

and delivery and is in the process of taking a greater part in the sales role, a reflection of his eight years with the company, and his skills and knowledge.

Leah said Steve had grown

with the company and was an important part of the team.

Craig has been with Sebco since it moved to the business park three years ago, his role focuses on production and delivery. Craig is also a

key member of the team, he travels the country far and wide delivering product. His versatility and knowledge also sees him assisting at shows and field days, a very handy guy to have around.

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# Meeting the market needs

“Our whole business is based around making life easier for the end user of our products,” Ed says.

Sebco products are designed to take away hassle, be it in the form of compliance, cleanliness, ease of use, security and the like.

He said clean fuel was essential to many business operations; dirty diesel could cripple equipment and hold up time-sensitive jobs like harvesting.

It simply doesn't make economic sense to put fuel from a rusty old steel tank into a brand new tractor or harvester, and risk upsetting modern fuel-injection systems, he said.

“You just can't afford to keep your old rusted tank. I've heard of farmers with a \$30,000 bill after contaminated fuel was put in a tractor that had worked only 50 hours.”

Fuel contaminated by water because of condensation in the tank could also affect warranties on new vehicles, he said.

Farmers also wanted their fuel storage systems to be easy to use, safe from theft, environmentally friendly and not cost an arm and a leg.

It is business policy for

Stephen or Craig to personally deliver the units; at least once a month a delivery truck also heads to the North Island.

During this delivery process Sebco ensures the customer is fully informed and ready to use the product.

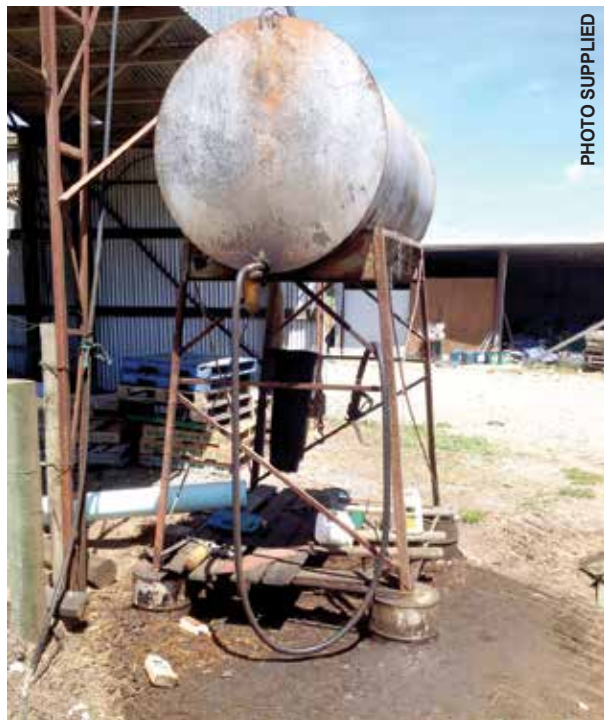


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Self-contained plastic fuel tanks made by Sebco are replacing rusty steel tanks on farms.

PHOTO LINDA CLARKE 220317-LC-013



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# Research and development vital

Sebco is constantly investing in research and development, be it in the form of developing new products or further developing their existing range.

Another part of the research and development programme covers analysis of existing tanks in use. Ed says deconstruction testing enables them to see how the different components are faring over time.

"We take the tanks out of the field, give the farmers a new tank, then test the plastic performance to see how the properties are working. It is part of our research and development, and our quality assurance. We are proud of our results coming from this testing, showing excellent performance."

The tanks come in a range of sizes, from 1300l to 4800l and the diesel-grade plastic – grey for diesel, blue for exhaust fluid and orange trim for waste oil.

"Our products have a huge range of options under each product line, ie different pumps, level indicators, fuel management systems and power sources," says Ed. "We are always looking at meeting our customers' needs, so custom made tanks are a common



Sebco storage systems are colour-coded for diesel, AdBlue and waste oil.

PHOTO SUPPLIED

occurrence around here."

The tanks are fitted out at Sebco's plant with pumping and monitoring equipment. Sebco ensures the best quality pumps and components are fitted to their tanks, quality is of the utmost importance to this company.

#### Two philosophies drive their business:

- If you are going to do something, do it right first time
- Can this product make someone's job easier?

With this in mind, all options available are meeting needs professionally and reliably.

Examples of these options is the fluid management systems that record how full the tank is, who is using the fuel and when, and for which vehicle. This software enables the distribution company to easily see which tanks need refilling; the most efficient delivery route can also be planned.

Ed said fluid management was an important part of the system and Sebco partnered with Loncel Technologies and Compac Industries to achieve high levels of monitoring and measuring.

"Fluid management can have different levels, from a basic

private person or contractor or farmer wanting to know no-one is flogging their fuel, to hi-tech telemetered systems."

Typically customers browse Sebco's website, which carries product details and specifications, then call the 0800 number to seek advice from Ed or Stephen.

"We can supply all the information and advice they need, from what type of tank is best suited for them to where it should be located."

Fuel tanks on farm must be at least 20 metres from a house and at least 6m away from combustible materials like hay

bales, fertilisers and chemicals.

Ed said while a relaxation of some parts of the HSNO Act meant some farmers were able to retain their steel tanks, a number were switching to the self-contained plastic systems because the fuel could be kept cleaner and there was less worry about spills contaminating the environment.

"The benefits are obvious. They are better for the environment, better for the machines that use the fuel and far easier to use without the hassle of slow filling."

While Sebco celebrates its 10th birthday, the cost of a new Sebco diesel station will start from \$5300 plus GST. Their birthday sale covers their range of products and goes through until the end of June. Wakanui farmer Eric Watson has been using Sebco diesel and waste oil storage systems for several years; the plastic storage system replaced two steel tanks.

"These are much better fuel storage, they are bunded and if something spills it is able to be collected."

He said he no longer worried about condensation contaminating fuel on his farm machines.



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# Sebco's top highlights

There have been a number of highlights for Ed and Leah over the past 10 years, including the shift to new premises and several innovation awards.

One highlight Ed says was when the business seized an opportunity to work with Fonterra when the milk giant began replacing its fleet of tankers with new Volvo trucks that had low emission controls.

The tankers have SCR Technology, meaning a cleansing fluid is injected into the vehicle's exhaust system which, by a chemical process, reduces harmful nitrous oxide emissions.

Ed said Fonterra needed compliant tanks to hold the exhaust fluid, known as AdBlue®.

"No-one in New Zealand had a product that could store it. We knew we had a product that could do that and I knew there was an opportunity to work with Fonterra and have our units in Australia and around New Zealand."

He said turning innovative ideas into reality was rewarding.

The Sebco diesel station won an innovation award at the South Island Agricultural Field Days, also the National Fielddays



**Leicester Wilson (right) with Ed standing beside one of the very first tanks we sold ten years ago, it's still going strong.**  
PHOTO SUPPLIED

award for innovation when it was launched in 2007, and scooped up three major prizes at the Plastics' Industry Design

Awards the following year. The company also made the National Business Review's list of most exciting agricultural

companies in 2008. Sebco also prides itself in its community involvement and the company sponsors sporting

competitions, including squash, rugby and rowing.

One individual it has helped recently is four-year-old Charlee McLachlan, who is heading to the US soon for life-changing surgery thanks to the generosity of people like Ed and Leah and a host of others.

Charlee's mum Anna is an Ashburton girl and has been fundraising for nine months to help raise some of the \$160,000 needed for the operation in St Louis Children's Hospital. Charlee suffers from cerebral palsy, which affects the left side of her brain and body – the surgery, a selective dorsal rhizotomy, will make it easier for her to do normal child things like run around or climb up to the table for dinner.

Leah said reading about Charlee inspired them to offer a Sebco fuel storage system, worth \$6000, to the family so they could auction it and take the proceeds.

Sebco was also a business sponsor of Ashburton's new EA Networks Sports Centre.

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