



Servicing the Waikato and Bay of Plenty farming communities, Wilson Sand's new Cat Trucks CT630 bulk tipper unit



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Cat in the SANDPIT

There's a new Cat prowling the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region at the hands of fourth generation farmer Ryan Wilson. Craig Silby caught up with Ryan and his father, Murray Wilson, to learn why they chose the big Cat Trucks CT630, and what they think of it.

Wilson Sand is a specific type of pit sand, used for all manner of applications, such as building foundations, farm races and driveways etc. It comes from Matamata in the heart of Waikato's dairy farming country. Murray explains, "We've been farming this land for over 100 years and I wanted to get out of the cowshed. We milk around 550 cows but we've also got this pit sand resource right here on the farm. We used to have a third party contractor mining it for us but, since farming's become really difficult to rely on, we decided to take back management of the quarries and control the distribution ourselves."

The move back into quarrying required tip trucks, and they purchased an 8x4 Isuzu 450hp flatdeck tipper with steel drop sides. This met their needs well and was also quite useful on the farm. However, the demand for pit sand soon



Fourth generation Waikato farmer Ryan Wilson proudly drives the new Cat CT630



The Cat Trucks interior is a comfortable and easy place to spend each shift, visibility is excellent

expanded the fleet to include another unit – this time a 460hp Isuzu 6x4 with Mills Tui alloy bin and four-axle alloy bulk trailer. The Wilsons soon discovered that, by being farmers themselves, they better understood the needs of other farmers and their reputation for quality service was spreading across the district. However, they needed to find loads to come home with, as the trucks were delivering farther and wider around the district, so they needed to be more productive.

Around 15 years ago, through their farm management relationship with Source NZ and Intelact, Murray trialled palm kernel for stock feed. This met with great success and they became pioneers of what has since become a stock feed staple here in New Zealand. It's become so prevalent that distributing palm kernel now represents a large part of the Wilson Sand transport fleet task. Around four or five years ago another Isuzu, a 400hp 6x4, and an International 7600 6x4 joined the fleet. The International provided their first taste of lightweight American bonneted trucks, and although not as reliable as they were used to, it's proven a great success in the fleet.

By this stage the Wilson Sand transport fleet was becoming a bit more than a side project for Murray and the farm, it had become a stand-alone operation in its own right. Servicing the pit sand quarries and ever growing list of outside clients was becoming a full time operation, and required yet another truck and trailer. Enter the Cat Trucks CT630.

Murray explains "We're a small family business and the older trucks have done, and continue to do, a great job for us. We like their simplicity and the fact that they're generally very reliable and easy to fix. When we went looking for a new truck and trailer unit we decided that, because it could be trekking over the steep Kaimai ranges several times a day, we needed a bit more grunt. We looked long and hard at what some of the big fleet operators were using and narrowed our choice down to either a DAF or a Cat. Ryan, my son, was going to drive the new truck and

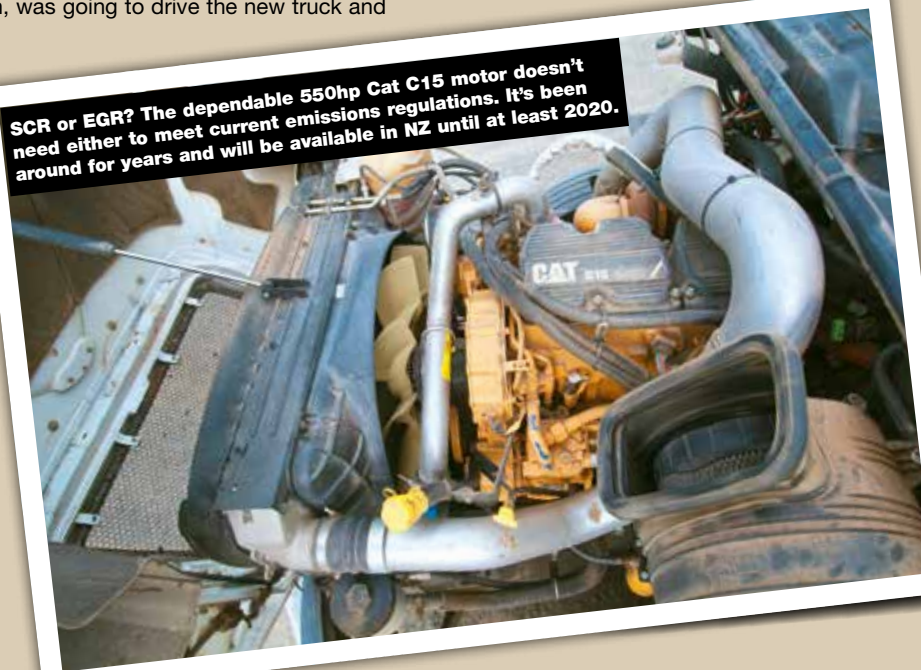
he preferred the look and feel of the Cat, and at the end of the day it was priced right, so we ordered it.

"We've had a great run from the Mills Tui gear on our last unit, so we went to them again for the bin and trailer. They've been great to deal with, especially since we had some pretty specific needs and wants, some of which they weren't that familiar with. One of these things was the two-way tail gates with automatic grain locks and full sliding covers. This was fairly straight forward to engineer, but the covers have been a bit of a challenge to get right."

Being a small rural operator means that the trucks and trailers need to be fairly versatile, this inevitably brings conflicts and compromise. Choosing the optimal bin height and length took a fair bit of thinking, which was also applied to the truck. The exhaust stacks were trimmed to a particular height and now they have straight pipes with rain flaps on top. You certainly get reminded they're there, tap-tap tapping away 'ting, ting, ting', when the big Cat C15 ACERT 550hp motor is sitting there idling.

The Wilson's spent a fair bit of time with Goughs working through the spec options to get the truck they needed. They chose to run 18-speed Road Ranger transmissions across the fleet, purely because they've found them to be reliable and relatively easy to have repaired or replaced if required. Traction is often an issue when going on and off farms, therefore the driveline spec that the Wilson's chose for the CT630 is about as tried and tested as they come. The list includes; Cat C15 550hp motor,

SCR or EGR? The dependable 550hp Cat C15 motor doesn't need either to meet current emissions regulations. It's been around for years and will be available in NZ until at least 2020.



Tipping off lime at a farm in the Waikato, one of the many and varied tasks the Wilson Sand Cat CT630 bulk tipper was designed and built for



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18-speed Road Ranger, and 46,000lb Meritor diffs which are sitting underneath Hendrickson Primaax air suspension. Having said that, they've included a beefy wire tow-rope and alloy bumper with heavy-duty tow eye, just in case.

Ryan loves driving the new Cat truck and says "One of the things that really surprised me was the engine braking, it really works well. We've got magnetic retarders in a couple of our other trucks and found them to be pretty good, but this thing really holds back. Early on, the truck didn't feel that powerful and we were getting a bit of grief from some other trucks going up the Kaimai's. Goughs found and resolved some issues on the dyno and since then it's been great. I'm really happy with it, and stoked with the service from Goughs, they're good guys to deal with."

Murray Kernohan, national truck manager Gough Cat explains "The Cat C15 motor has been around for years now and it's totally proven. There's nothing that it does or might do that we don't know about, or know how

to fix. We've got guys out there getting over one and a half million k's without touching the engine." Kernohan also says "We're the only ones that can offer an ADR 80/03 or Euro5 equivalent motor that doesn't need EGR or SCR to achieve that, and we'll have it available until at least 2020. Guys that want proven reliability and performance, and that have experienced the renowned Gough Cat nationwide backup and service, know that Cat motors are the only way to go and, if you want a Cat motor, the only place you'll find one is in a Cat truck."

The Wilson Sand Cat CT630 truck is a good honest worker, it's specified well to do the variety of tasks required, and the drivers love driving it. The true test is whether or not they'd buy another one. I asked the Wilsons this and they both agreed that they're really happy with their choice, and depending on the work to be done, they could be definitely looking at another Cat Truck in the near future. With a new screening and washing plant on its way, making the quarries more productive, the need for more trucks is a certainty. ■

Brief specs

MAKE	Caterpillar
MODEL	CT630
FRONT AXLE	Meritor MFS 14-143A
ENGINE	Cat C15 ACERT
TYPE	6-cyl, in-line, turbo and after-cooled
POWER	Rated at 550-hp@1800RPM and 1850-ft/lb torque
EMISSION	ADR 80/03 Emission
CLUTCH	Eaton Fuller EP1552
TRANSMISSION	Eaton Fuller RTLO-20918B 18 speed
REAR AXLES	Arvin Meritor RT-46-160

Kiwi ingenuity led to a clever and simple modification to the motor for the cover on the trailer, now it can be hand cranked if hooked to a truck without a power feed



The 6x4 and 4-axle trailer is still proving to be one of the most useful bulk tipper combinations. The new 9-axle units are often too big and costly to be justified.