New Italian vineyard equipment excites vine industry

A NEW range of vineyard management equipment launched at recent field and demonstration days in Victoria that include the Euro Class 21 range of power harrows and also Cabe rotary mowers, have created more than the usual amount interest from growers.

The products, distributed in Australia by Melbourne-based LJR Machinery Sales, are the result of a collaboration agreement between the original Cabe (pronounced cabbie) manufacturing company and Euroclass 21.

Leading the charge of new LJR products at the field days was the Euro Class SL380 power harrow and the Cabe range of variable rotary mowers.

Euroclass 21 offers a range of Power Harrows from one metre to 6m. It was the heavy-duty frame and gear lines of the units that found wide appeal with growers along with the easy way of fitting and removing the tynes from the crank drive shaft.

The easy removal of the bearing caps if necessary by jack bolts and the unit's spring-loaded stone sideguards also drew many favourable comments from growers.

There are three model ranges that LJR Machinery Sales is offering of Cabe vineyard rotary mowers.

Described as new generation mowers, the DEV units come with five different cutting widths from 1.1m to 2.7m, all are equipped with a hydraulic side-shift capability between 200 millimetres and 300mm.

According to LJR Machinery Sales principal Laurie Russell, there is a DEV model to suit all row widths.

"With cutting heights ranging from zero to 500mm, these two rotor mowers can also be setup as mulching units in between the vine rows," he said.

The second model in the Cabe range is the vineyard rotary mower the TP9 units are available in nine sizes from 1.4m to 3.8m and all feature variable cutting widths.

These units, which can be fitted with single or double sided adjustable under vine cutters, each have four rotors with eight cutting blades, require tractor power ratings from 22kw to 60kw depending on the model.

The flagship DER/N units are also equipped with two direct drive rotors each with four cutting blades.

Also designed to carry out mid-row mulching work, these machines which are three-point linkage, semi tractor-mounted also feature hydraulic offset working adjustments up to 2.6m or 3.2m.

An added advantage of the DER/N units is they can be equipped with electric over hydraulic controlled sensors that cater for under-vine slasher attachments which allow operators to mow around vine trunks, upright sprinkler pipes and trellis posts while at the same time cutting and mulching the inter-rows.

Mr Russell said his company was also the national distributor of the Italian made range of VBC vineyard equipment which included vine trimmers and pruners, leaf removers and rake sweepers.

"We are pleased with the grower acceptance of all this equipment and particularly the company's single and double-sided shoot remover units," he said.

"These single and double sided attachments are available with hydraulically adjusted working heights from 40cm to 60cm together with side movement, inclination and optional topper adjustment, all joystick controlled from the tractor cabin.

"With unit weights ranging from 110kg for single-sided models through to 220kg for double-sided types, these hydraulically driven units have a power requirement ranging from 28kw through to 37kw dependant on the model."

Melbourne-based LJR Machine Sales was founded in 1971 when Laurie Russell set up a business to import and sell US-made Alamo Mott safety bail mowers and Hustler outf-ront, ride-on mowers.

Mr Russell began manufacturing the units in Melbourne in the late 1970s with the introduction of the first lever steer Hustler mowers.

In the mid-1980s manufacturing rights were sold to another company and Laurie Russell turned his interest towards importing Italian-made vineyard equipment.

"We started importing a range of Cabe mowers, under-vine slashers and mulchers in 1984 and later added the VBC range of pruning, green trimming and leaf removers to our range of specialised vineyard management equipment," Mr Russell said.

He said the Euroclass 21 organisation was started by Mr Luciano Erbelli the owner of the Emy Elenfer company which started manufacturing power harrow products 36 years ago and is today a European market leader with export sales around the world.

"Although a relatively small company in world terms, it is one of handful of companies where everything including all components, are manufactured in house."

Details: Euroclass 21 and VBC vineyard equipment contact LJR Machinery Sales on 03 9357 5205