



SILVER FERN FARMS

Two years after Silver Fern Farms' Te Aroha beef processing operation was destroyed by fire in December 2010, a state of the art facility is up and running in its place.

Silver Fern Farms' new Te Aroha plant is a hot boned beef processing operation designed for best practice processing of manufacturing cows, bulls, steers and heifers from farmer suppliers across the Waikato region.

It joins a network of 23 Silver Fern Farms processing facilities employing over 7,000 staff throughout the country.

Te Aroha will employ up to 380 staff when operating at full capacity with two shifts in peak season with an annual capacity of 125,000 cattle.

At the plant's official opening in December last year Silver Fern Farms Chief Executive, Keith Cooper said the new design reflected the company's focus on plant economics and best practice processing and the investment was testament to the co-operative's strong confidence in the sector.

The plant was designed in consultation with internationally recognised experts in process layout and ergonomics. It is compliant to NZ, EU, USDA, China and Halal standards for the Middle East, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Architects Stiles and Hooker, a Hamilton based firm, brought considerable local and international knowledge to the project that was spearheaded by Architect Glenn McHardie and Engineer Iain Brown.

Roofco, Auckland, was contracted to install the roofing and cladding for the project. The majority of the roofing and cladding utilises the same profile, highly successful and multifunctional Multirib® supplied by Roofing Industries. The sheer size of the project produced many variables during construction that required a high degree of flexibility in support and deliveries in a rather remote rural location.

Site safety was of absolute importance during the build and Dave Dunford, Roofco, says, "Multirib® is an excellent product to work with. The sectional strength and ease of installation, due to its design, brings a sense of security to roofing fixers working at height. The continuity of using the same profile for both roof, wall and feature claddings provides value in both aesthetics and economies."

The new plant incorporates the latest meat processing technologies; including sophisticated traceability and yield measurement systems.

Provision has been made for future installation of technologies including robotic bagging.

Eco-efficiency and sustainability were top-of-mind considerations.

the rear of the plant, away from neighbours. Every effort has been made to reduce noise coming from the plant, even to the point that refrigeration equipment, undamaged by the fire, was relocated.

Health and safety was a major focus for the company when developing the specifications for the new facility. Process areas have been

In tough times, the company's significant capital spend also has provided positive spin-offs to the local economy as a result of the number of contractors throughout the region engaged during the course of construction.

Mr Cooper said the co-operative's loyal farmer-suppliers in the area were particularly supportive of the company through the re-build.

designed to minimise workstation hazards. A suite of solutions to minimise lifting, turning and carrying were factored into the design. The boning room has European-designed workstations intended to maximize productivity by minimizing operator fatigue and discomfort. At trim stations adjustable work heights, reach to meat and easy access to work positions make for a safer and more comfortable work environment for staff.

As a result, the new plant uses significantly less electricity and water per head and discharges less effluent per animal processed, setting new benchmarks in line with global customer requirements.

Mr Cooper said the rebuild gave the company an opportunity to review the environmental footprint of the operation. "Our focus is improving environmental efficiency while reducing costs through better use of resources and reduction of waste."

The plant has also been orientated to ensure noisy areas and truck movements are at the centre or

Separate viewing areas let people observe the slaughter and boning processes without interfering with workers on the floor. The plant layout also factors in separation between pedestrian and heavy vehicle movement areas to provide a safer environment for people.

Throughout the rebuilding process, Silver Fern Farms endeavoured to provide alternative options for staff whose livelihoods were affected by the fire, to the extent of making positions available at other company plants in the North Island and providing accommodation supplements in the early stages.

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Roofing Industries
Roofing Profile: Multirib® .55
Pacific White ZRX
Cladding Profile: Multirib® .55
Metallic Silver ZRX
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