

Upgrade from DIY liquid system saves time & money



QLD growers Ross and Mitch Faint have upgraded to Liquid Systems (SA) equipment, eliminating costly downtime caused by their self-built set-up.

Queensland growers Mitch Faint and his father Ross first attempted liquid injection of starter fertiliser and inoculant on their mixed enterprise farm three years ago.

The resourceful duo based at Clermont in Queensland's Central Highlands region, installed a self-built system on their 12-metre Boss Supa-Flex planter, but soon encountered issues with the set-up.

"We built the system ourselves and ran it from a 12-volt electric pump but were having all sorts of trouble with leaks in the lines," said Mitch. "It meant we were having a lot of down-time trying to maintain the system."

The issues led Mitch to research liquid injection systems online, where he discovered Liquid Systems (SA). "I like that Liquid Systems is an Australian company. And the fact that they specialise solely in liquid systems – putting the time, research and money into perfecting their equipment – that's what moved me to purchase their system," he said.

Mitch and Ross Faint, who crop 1200ha of cereal grain and 3200ha of buffel grass and bluegrass to feed 800 head of Charbray cross-bred cattle, purchased the Liquid Systems (SA) PR-1 module in November 2017 and noticed the difference in hardware quality immediately.

"All of the Liquid Systems hardware is really well built," said Mitch. "That's what stood out to me the most compared to what we were using before; everything from the custom fittings through to flow metering and the module controller unit. All the manifolds on the planter work really well too; it's all good hardware."

Who:	Ross and Mitch Faint
Where:	Clermont, Queensland
Property:	4500ha mixed enterprise farm, which crops wheat, chickpeas, sorghum and mungbeans
Equipment:	Liquid Systems (SA) PR-1 module with six single manifolds, 50/50 Shut Off Stacker Kit
Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• System set-up completed easily by the grower• Half-day time saving when switching between row spacings for different crops• Spot-on accuracy delivers liquid where the plant needs it and avoids any product wastage.

Mitch found set-up a straight forward process and didn't require any support from the Adelaide-based Liquid Systems (SA) technical team. "The installation was great. Liquid Systems provide very clear instructions, so it's really easy for anyone to assemble," he said. "I think one of the biggest benefits from choosing this system is how simple and easy it is to use."

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Having used a liquid injection system for three years, the Faints were equipped with the extra equipment required at seeding, including a small, single axle body truck fitted with a 3000L tank and a 3000L tank mounted on their airseeder. The Faints purchase 1000L shuttles with starter fertiliser from a local agent, which is poured into the body truck's tank with a fork lift and mixed using a small Honda motor.

“It’s been on point with holding the rate, which means we’re not overusing any of the products and we’re also getting the liquid to the plant where it needs it.”

They inject 15L/ha of liquid starter fertiliser across all of their crops, including their summer crops of sorghum and mungbeans and winter crops of wheat and chickpeas. They also add inoculant and Loveland’s Foundation Liquid Manure product to their chickpea mix.

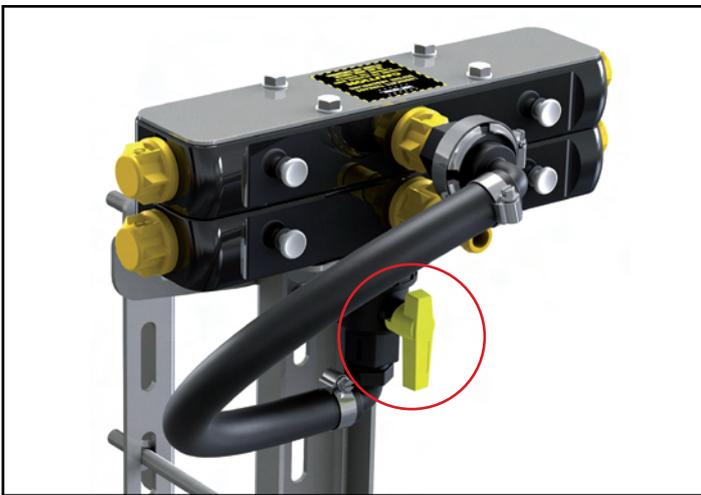
In summer, their planter spacings change from wide to narrow rows to cater for the crop differences between mungbeans and sorghum. Mungbeans are planted at 500mm and sorghum at 1500mm spacings. Previously, reconfiguring their self-built system for the different row spacings was a half-day job. With the Liquid Systems (SA) equipment, it’s a process that takes minutes thanks to the 50/50 Shut Off Stacker kit, which allows them to turn a tap and shut off a series of outlets across their seeder bar.

“Having the flexibility to easily adjust the system for every crop we

grow here was a crucial part of our decision to go with Liquid Systems,” said Mitch. “It means we can swap the planter from wide to narrow rows really easily.

“There’s definitely a huge time saving. Before it wasn’t a quick and easy job; we could muck around for up to half a day changing the lines on our old, home-made system. Now it takes a matter of minutes to change the row spacings by turning a tap on the manifolds. That’s worked really well for us.”

Accuracy is another feature that has impressed Mitch. “I’m very happy with the accuracy of the system,” said Mitch. “It’s been on point with holding the rate, which means we’re not overusing any of the products and we’re also getting the liquid to the plant where it needs it.”



Opposite page: Mitch Faint in cab using the Precision Ag integrated Trimble Controller. **Left:** The 50/50 Shut Off “Stacker” Manifolds enable Mitch to switch from 500mm to 1500mm spacings in seconds, a simple switch of the yellow lever turns off the top manifold, allowing the bottom manifold to operate in 1500mm spacings. **Right:** Six 50/50 Shut Off “Stacker” manifolds are mounted on the bar, with 24 terminal outlets each using line meters. **Below:** PR-1 Pump & Control Module (76L/min) has been mounted in front of the liquid cart.

