

Kazakhstan all set for Plains planters

By SAM NORRIS

ZERO-TILL planters designed and made on the Liverpool Plains are bound for four Kazakhstan farms that collectively grow about 200,000 hectares of wheat a year.

The former Soviet nation is one of the world's largest wheat-producing countries, contributing 5.49 per cent to world stocks, compared to Turkey at 2.14pc, Australia at 9.43pc, and the US at 23.06pc, according to US Department of Agriculture figures for the past five years.

Three Kazakh farms – each growing 30,000ha of wheat a year – were represented among a delegation of farmers and advisors who toured northern NSW last week.

On tour with Zero Till International Consulting, the delegates inspected the Spring Ridge Engineering factory and a demonstration of the Rogrow planter by Nuffield scholar, Stuart Barden, "Lamont", Gildandra.

Last Thursday, nearing the end of a week-long tour, they filed off the bus and eagerly through the front door of the workshop, where the translator



Spring Ridge Engineering director, Chris Holland (second from left), with agronomist, Zhassylan Dautov; interpreter, Madina Brimzhanova, and Karasu company director, Serik Kazhiyev, with machines bound of Kazakhstan.

relayed information on the 12m Rogrow Zero-Till Master Tow unit, of coulter and tyne design on 40cm spacings suspended on a parallelogram.

Their fingers eagerly worked over the catches on air seeder boxes and associated linkages pausing intermittently for tourist snaps.

Spring Ridge Engineering director, Chris Holland, said the machines were well-suited to Kazakhstan, which had black self-cracking soils much like the Liverpool Plains.

The only difference, he said, was the climate with summer sowing moisture entirely derived from the snow melt with virtually no in-crop rain.

Traditionally they use chisel plough and sweep set to 200mm centres and seed rates of 130kg a hectare.



The Spring Ridge Engineering team packs the Rogrow tyne planter for shipping to Kazakhstan.