

## CASE STUDY | OPTIWEIGH

*Remotely weighing cattle to improve livestock health and farming profitability*

**6x**

cost savings

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**15x**

more data vs.  
previous provider

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**2x**

potential market  
expansion

### OVERVIEW

Australian AgTech company [Optiweigh](#) sells a unique cattle weighing system that provides farmers with accurate and frequent livestock health data. Because most of Australia's cattle farming takes place in remote regions with poor-to-nonexistent cellular coverage, Optiweigh needed a connectivity solution that reliably allows their weighing units to transmit data, at an affordable price.

After trying several connectivity methods that didn't meet their needs, Optiweigh found Swarm. Swarm's global coverage, low cost, and ease of use made it the perfect solution to keep Optiweigh's products connected in off-the-grid fields. Since incorporating Swarm's connectivity solution into their products, Optiweigh spends 6x less on satellite data, enabling them to lower their own prices and access new markets.

**"With Swarm, we can get satellite coverage without charging more than we do for cell."**

*Bill Mitchell, Optiweigh CEO*

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### IMPROVING ANIMAL HEALTH AND FARMING OUTCOMES

The weight of each cow in a herd is critical information for farmers to know. It helps them monitor livestock health and improve the efficiency of their operations. Traditional weighing methods require farmers to take cattle out of their pastures and into special weighing paddocks. This creates stress for the cattle and takes a tremendous amount of time away from other critical tasks the farmer could be doing.



Bill Mitchell, CEO of Optiweigh

Optiweigh's unique in-field weighing system means that farmers can get accurate weights multiple times per day, with no additional effort or stress to the animals. This allows farmers to gather more data on their herds, make decisions quickly, and catch problems early.

### STRUGGLING TO FIND THE RIGHT CONNECTIVITY SOLUTION

Optiweigh tried many connectivity methods before landing on Swarm. They started with mesh networks, but the coverage wasn't good enough. Optiweigh units could only be deployed within 10km of the gateways, which was insufficient for the majority of Optiweigh customers who have farms spanning hundreds or thousands of kilometers.

Optiweigh attempted to use cellular networks, but ran into problems with dead zones, which limited where existing customers could place their Optiweigh units. It also meant that Optiweigh could not sell to farmers whose entire ranches were outside of cell coverage.

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Optiweigh tried using a legacy satellite provider, but the expense quickly became a major issue. To cover the cost, Optiweigh had to increase the price of their own unit by \$1000 and almost triple their data subscription pricing. In an industry already operating on razor-thin margins, this was a price increase many farmers couldn't justify.

"Customers were starting to say 'I can't afford this,'" says Bill Mitchell, CEO of Optiweigh. "We started losing people." Even paying what they were, the legacy satellite solution didn't provide nearly the data volume that Optiweigh needed to transmit from multiple units. Purchasing more data, however, was unaffordable.



### SWARM: AFFORDABLE, GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY

One of Optiweigh's primary requirements for a connectivity solution was that it work everywhere, allowing their customers to deploy Optiweigh units in remote, unconnected areas. Swarm's network of 120 satellites in orbit offers 100% global coverage, meaning Optiweigh units can transmit the data they collect anywhere, even in cellular dead zones. "The ability to tell our customers that they can use an Optiweigh unit anywhere in the world and it will transmit is gold for us," explains Bill.

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Just as importantly, Swarm's low-cost hardware and data service mean that Optiweigh no longer has to raise the price of their own products and services. "With Swarm, for the first time, we can get satellite coverage without charging more than we do for cell," says Bill. "We've had customers who wouldn't pay legacy satellite prices come back to us now that we're using Swarm."

Swarm also provides the data volume that Optiweigh needs: 144kB/month, compared to the legacy provider's 10kB/month. This means that farmers can transmit more weight readings to get a more accurate picture of their herd's health.



Optiweigh's cattle weighing system sending data via the Swarm satellite network.

*"Swarm is a clear step up for us."*

*Bill Mitchell, Optiweigh CEO*

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES, NEW MARKETS

With many farms and ranches located outside of terrestrial-based coverage, Optiweigh previously struggled to support customers in extremely remote areas. Now, they can sell to these farmers without issue. "There are a lot of farmers in Australia and elsewhere who want to use Optiweigh but don't have cell coverage on their farms, so they assume that Optiweigh isn't an option for them because they certainly can't afford satellite," says Bill. "We believe that in most parts of Australia, using Swarm will more than double the size of our potential market!"