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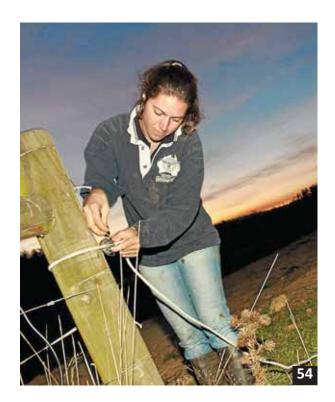
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#### **OUR COVER**

South Gippsland dairyfarmers Allison and Aaron Potter use the new Good Bulls App to consider potential sires to use over their herd.



Read story page 105.

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### No time like the present

HEARD a sad tale the other day. It started happily enough. A young man left school at 18 and returned to his family farm, encouraged by his father, who said to him that he believed if a young person put their heart and soul into a farm for 15 years they could start to share in the ownership of the assets.

So the young man worked hard, joined farm business discussion groups and learned what he could about the farm.

At 33, he spoke to his father about his initial proposal. His father told him to wait a few more years.

So the man, who in his 20s had married and had children, continued to work on the farm, taking minimal drawings to support his family that were not reflective of the management role he now had in the business. His wife worked off farm to help supplement the family's income.

Five years passed and the man again spoke to his father and was again told that the time was not right but something would be done after the man had worked on the farm for 25 years.

At 43, the man again raised the issue of taking on some of the assets of the farm business, which he now effectively ran. The father again wanted to defer the issue, but the man stood his ground and said it was now 25 years since he had started working on the farm, so something needed to be done.

So an agreement was drawn up for the gradual transfer of the farm assets to the son and his wife.

The solicitors were called in and prepared the appropriate documents. The man excitedly took them to his parents to sign. To his dismay, his father looked up at him when he placed the document in front of him and said he and his mother had decided they could not sign the document.

The man said nothing. He returned to his home on the farm, sat down and wrote a list of all the jobs that needed to be done around the farm in the next few weeks. He then instructed his wife to pack the family's bags, while he went back to his parents' house and left the list of jobs on the table.

The man and his family went on a holiday, ignoring calls from his parents. Eventually they responded and were told that his parents were now willing to put in place the succession plan upon which they had all agreed.

Fortunately this story had a relatively happy ending. The man successfully transformed the business so it became even more profitable and, perhaps more importantly, the relationships within the family remained intact.

But years later, the unhappiness created for the man and his family in how the farm succession was handled, still niggles at him.

For many farm families, the situation is much sadder than this. Time and time again, I have heard horrendous stories about families ripped apart by poorly managed farm succession.

In some cases, the generation that's so tightly held onto the reins has been forced to sell the farm to strangers and then spend a lonely retirement because they no longer have contact with their families.

Our columnist Kerry Ryan tackles this issue on page 103. Two standouts in the column for me are:

1. It's never too early to start planning around succession; and

2. Put the effort into sorting out the strategy for the succession plan before focusing on the structure.

There's no time like the present for succession planning.



Editor

Carlene Dowie





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### **ADF welcomes new directors**

- New business director and new independent director
- Significant experience in various agricultural roles
- points ✓ Bring unique perspective to the table

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USTRALIAN Dairy Farmers (ADF) is pleased to welcome new business director Terry Richardson and independent director Dr Dedee Woodside, alongside elected president, Simone Jolliffe to the ADF board following the ADF annual general meeting on November 26.

With significant experience in various agriculture roles, as well as through their diverse industry leadership and advocacy roles, both board members are exceedingly well qualified for their board position, each bringing a unique perspective to the table.

ADF interviewed each director to find out a bit more about them. We asked them what they believe the most important policy issues are for ADF to focus on in 2016.

#### **Terry Richardson**

As a native New Zealander, I have great appreciation for the vast geographical challenges that Australian dairyfarmers face. As a dairyfarmer, I know that it is difficult to prepare



Terry Richardson: the short-term and long-term goals of ADF are intrinsically linked.

6 The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016

and mitigate these challenges unless we are building sustainable business models. In order to achieve this, it is essential to be profitable. For these reasons I believe the short-term and long-term goals of ADF are intrinsically linked.

Our policy focus will always be set by what stands in the way of building a stronger future for our industry. This will mean the continued implementation of projects that propel us toward the industry's vision to become prosperous, trusted and world-renowned nutrition.

In order to help achieve this vision, ADF can develop its communication of the role policy plays in helping us be profitable. Price will always be on the front page, but policy is always bubbling away behind the scenes we often don't hear much about it. Yet without strong policies that address everything from competition issues to research and development funding, it is impossible for our industry to be profitable. For this reason, I am keen to work with ADF to continue to build our members' and non-members' understanding of how important policy is to what we do.

Through key achievements such as the pro-dairy China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA), we have seen how effective our industry is when united — we must continue this unity in order to see improved policy outcomes for our industry in future.

#### **Dr Dedee Woodside**

Dairy's central focus for 2016 appears to increasingly be on water, soils and energy — and the availability, quality and sustainability of these resources.

I am attracted to the idea that with such a buzz around environmental responsibility and impact at the moment, there is a real opportunity for the Australian dairy industry to make some headway on issues of concern to our farmers, producers and consumers. In particular, with the recent Paris Climate Summit and the Australian Government's commitment to energy targets we can highlight that this isn't an overnight process. Our indus-



Dr Dedee Woodside: industry needs strong thought and planning to ensure we are achieving our environmental targets.

try needs strong thought and planning to ensure we are achieving our environmental targets in a way that is reasonable and practical.

Already the industry has begun on this path, particularly in light of the growing opportunity in overseas markets and talk of expanded production. I am interested to contribute to this discussion, to understand whether growth is really a viable option and to understand what the limits are and where we can be smarter about our operations and where we need to change tactics entirely.

I am excited to be a part of ADF's journey under a new president Simone Jolliffe and a part of an industry that is growing, changing and opening up. The next few years will be very interesting.

#### **Directors welcomed**

ADF president Simone Jolliffe welcomed the new additions to the board and said she looks forward to working with them in 2016.

"Their vision and ideas will help ADF in its work to promote the interests and sustainable profitability of all Australian dairyfarmers," Mrs Jolliffe said.

For more information on ADF's new directors, see website <www. australiandairyfarmers.com.au>.

### New target set for routine induction

National policy to phase out calving induction
 Improved breeding programs to lift fertility and support farmers through the policy change
 Learning from NZ approach
 Targeted assistance and advice to be provided to farmers impacted

N April 2015, following a series of meetings and consultation with farmers, vets and processors, the dairy industry agreed to phase-out routine calving induction nationally.

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF), Dairy Australia, vets and processors have since been working on establishing a process to implement the industry's agreement.

Chair of the ADF animal health and welfare policy advisory group David Basham said the industry was working with farmers, veterinarians, state dairyfarmer organisations and other stakeholders, to ensure the phase out worked for both animals and farmers.

"Caring for cows is always a key priority for Australian dairyfarmers we are dedicated to providing a high standard of care for our animals and are constantly reviewing our practices to ensure the best outcomes for our livestock," he said.

"The dairy industry is also aware of the community concerns around the use of this practice. We are committed to working with farmers to help phase it out."

Calving induction is already reducing in Australia and the dairy industry's breeding programs such as In-Calf and the improvement of fertility by genetic selection are making a difference.

A Steering Group, including dairy farmers, representatives from the Australian Cattle Veterinarians, Dairy Australia and the Australian Dairy Products Federation (ADPF), was established to progress the phase-out.

The New Zealand dairy industry has phased out routine calving induction and banned the practice as of June 1, 2015. The Australian industry is liaising with counterparts in New Zealand to understand and learn from their approach; in particular the setting of annual limits with a dispensation process.

A data survey of veterinary practices performing inductions was undertaken in 2015. The results confirm



The dairy industry has committed to phasing out calving induction.

estimates from previous farmer surveys that the number of cows induced is declining. It is estimated that in 2015 less than 1.5 per cent of the national herd was induced (about 24,000 cows) however, there is considerable variation between farms and regions.

The industry is now working to reduce the number of cows induced even further.

#### Target for 2016

After reviewing the 2015 induction data, ADF will introduce a target for 2016 that routine calving induction will be limited to a maximum of 15 per cent of cows within a herd unless an exemption has been granted.

The 15 per cent limit will apply unless a fertility management plan has been implemented or dispensation is granted for exceptional circumstances beyond a farmer's control such as herd health issues, severe weather events (floods, fire), artificial breeding failure, as well as other issues.

A Dispensation Panel including representatives from ADF, the Australian Cattle Vets and ADPF has been formed. The panel, with support from Dairy Australia, will establish guidelines and consider requests for exemptions exceeding the 15 per cent target set for 2016.

Farmers will apply to the Dispensation Panel via their vet for special dispensation to carry out inductions in excess of the 15 per cent limit for routine calving inductions.

The Steering Group will work with the Dispensation Panel to monitor progress and review the target each year to establish updated annual targets. Industry Programs

Improving herd fertility is a fundamental requirement to reduce the need for routine calving induction and it also delivers many benefits for farm profitability and resilience.

Mr Basham said the industry was working closely with veterinarians and reproduction advisers to ensure advice and services were available to assist farmers with fertility management.

"Industry programs such as InCalf, the Repro Right network and InCharge Workshops will be enhanced, and the industry will provide targeted reproduction advice to those farmers most in need," Mr Basham said.

#### Late calving induction

A particular concern recognised by industry has been the use of latecalving induction. ADF is aware that several veterinary practices no longer perform late-calving inductions, as they provide no reproductive benefit. Late inductions (performed within 4-6 weeks of the due calving date) provide no overall reproductive benefit for the herd and should not be performed except for the welfare of the cow or its calf.

Early pregnancy testing is required by these practices to make sure late inductions are not occurring.

ADF will continue to consult with farmers, veterinarians, state organisations and other stakeholders to ensure that the timing, the process and outcomes are right for animals and farmers.

\*Routine calving induction is all nontherapeutic inductions.



### ADIC reinstates Water Taskforce

2016 critical year in Murray Darling Basin Plan implementation

#### Secure access to quality water

points paramount Seeking review and delay of Key 450GL 'upwater'

HROUGH the course of 2015, the Australian Dairy Industry Council (ADIC) increased its advocacy focus on the impacts of the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP) and the need for changes to the plan and its implementation.

Significant achievements were made in 2015 with the Federal Government committing to legislation to cap water buybacks in the MDBP at 1500 gigalitres. Further, indications that more flexibility would be provided for environmental water trading were welcome. However, the ADIC still has concerns regarding the MDBP's unrealistic timelines as well as a lack of planned transition and structural adjustment.

#### 'Targets include a more transparent water market and information.'

2016 is a critical year in the plan's implementation. The deadline for the Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) adjustment mechanism is imminent. Progress with state offset projects leading up to this June 2016 review is also of significant concern.

Secure access to quality water is paramount to dairy's future. Reduced access to the water resources the industry relies on will impact dairv's profitability, productivity and international reputation. To ensure that the dairy industry's key priorities are ef-fectively represented and addressed in this discussion, the ADIC has reformed its Water Taskforce.

The ADIC Water Taskforce, chaired by Victorian dairyfarmer Daryl Hoey, provides a cross-industry group to support the ADIC in driving for prodairy solutions in current and future opportunities for review and change.

The priorities of the taskforce for 2016 are to seek a review and delay the 450GL 'upwater' as part of a stocktake to better understand the effects (both positive and negative) of water recovery. Further, the taskforce will also push for the delivery of the full 650GL in environmental offsets to ensure any shortfall does not have to be covered by farmers. Other targets include a more transparent water market and information as well as ongoing monitoring and support for regional and state water programs including the Northern Basin and Menindee Lakes and Connections Reviews.

For further information about the ADIC's Water Taskforce contact the ADF office phone (03) 8621 4200.



The ADIC has re-formed its Water Taskforce to ensure dairy's priorities are effectively represented.



This year marks five years since Coles dropped the price of home brand milk to \$1 per litre.

### Five years on from \$1/litre milk

- Milk value reduced to
- unsustainable level Stronger misuse of market power
- laws needed
- points é Effects test must be included

ANUARY 26, 2016 marked five years since Coles supermarket dropped the price of its home-brand milk to \$1 per litre, igniting a price war with Woolworths that reduced the value of milk to an unsustainable level.

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) has continued calls for the Federal Cabinet to adopt stronger misuse of market power laws to foster a more competitive business environment.

ADF president Simone Jolliffe said there had been important breakthroughs for competition policy since 2011.

"The introduction of the Food and Grocery Code, which included a large number of ADF's recommendations, was a constructive first step toward fostering a more competitive business environment," she said.

"Further to this the Australian Gov-

'Addressing the misuse of market power is crucial in determining the Australian dairv industry's future profitability and sustainability.'

ernment's support for key recommendations from the Harper Review of Competition Policy is extremely positive," Mrs Jolliffe said.

"ADF also welcomed the announcement in the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper of \$11.4 million over four years to boost the ACCC's engagement with the agriculture sector including a new Agricultural Engagement Unit.

However, Mrs Jolliffe said the industry would continue to advocate for improved transparency regarding the impact of retailer actions on suppliers. ADF also continues to advocate for the regulating bodies to have the power to prevent predatory pricing in future.

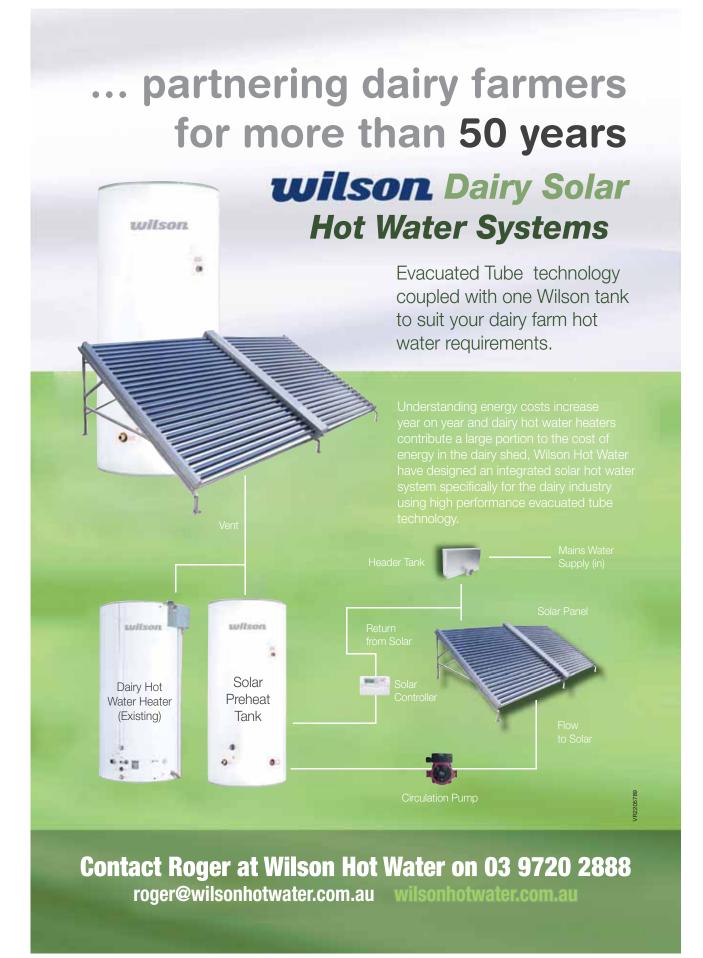
"ADF also strongly supports the Harper Review's recommendations for any updated competition and consumer law to include an effects test,' Mrs Jolliffe said.

"Addressing the misuse of market power is crucial in determining the Australian dairy industry's future profitability and sustainability.

Mrs Jolliffe encouraged consumers seeking to show their support for farmers to "buy branded".

"The more branded milk we buy the more money stays in our dairy value chain," she said. "By keeping these dollars in the value chain, dairy has the capacity to reinvest in industry research and innovation - which helps to strengthen our farmers, improving their efficiency and prospects of longterm sustainability.

"Buying branded means investing in choice for consumers on our supermarket shelves and in the future of our dairyfarmers."



### Dairy Australia Round Up



### **Cups-On-Cups-Off course gets big tick**

**T**O gauge the impact of the Cups-On-Cups-Off (COCO) training on milking practices, milk quality and the rate of mastitis, Dairy Australia recently commissioned a random survey of 100 participants who did the course in the past two years. "The findings are very encouraging," Dairy Australia's program manager animal health and fertility, Dr Kathryn Davis, said.

"COCO course graduates overwhelmingly report changing their onfarm practices for the better and are seeing the results."

Some 83 per cent of respondents made at least one change to their milking practices particularly when putting cups on, but also when bringing cows into the shed and taking cups off. Impressively, 90 per cent of respondents from farms where mastitis had been a major problem report significant improvements.

"Herds with major mastitis issues have seen the biggest benefits from COCO, which demonstrates the importance of structured training for everyday practices done on-farm," she said. "The evidence is clear that giving people the right training is one of the most important elements for managing mastitis." 'The international market opportunities for Australian dairy are growing and DairyBio will ensure those opportunities will be underpinned by scientific expertise.'

When asked how likely it was they would recommend the course to others, survey respondents gave 9.5 points out of a possible 10. A massive 71 per cent gave the highest possible rating 10 out of 10.

"The survey tells us that putting the whole milking team through the COCO training is a 'must do' for any dairyfarmer who wants to improve, not only the health of their cows and quality of their milk, but also the profits of their business," Dr Davis said.

Find out more about COCO at website <http://www.dairyaustralia.com. au/Animal-management/Mastitis/ Cups-on-cups-off.aspx>.

### Investment in dairy research a win

In December, The Victorian Agriculture Minister Jaala Pulford and Dairy Australia chair Geoff Akers announced joint State Government and Dairy Australia funding for DairyBio — a research initiative that will deliver innovations in forages and dairy herd genetic improvement.

"The investment in DairyBio will generate an estimated \$2.5 billion over 25 years in nation-wide returns for producers with associated economic benefits including jobs in regional communities," Ms Pulford said. "In this sense the joint venture is ultimately excellent news for dairyfarmers right across Australia, not exclusively those farming here in Victoria."

Dairy bioscience continues to provide the best option to substantially improve the key resources of pasture feedbase and herd for the dairy industry. Bioscience breakthroughs and applied learning in both these vital areas increase the yield, quality and persistence of pasture and enhance the productivity of cows.

Mr Akers said: "Cutting-edge research is crucial if Australia's dairy- ►



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A recent survey shows that putting the whole milking team through the COCO training is a 'must do' for any dairyfarmer who wants to improve, not only the health of their cows and quality of their milk, but also the profits of their business.

◄ farmers are to continue building profitable and sustainable businesses long into the future, and I am delighted the research investment announced today will generate returns for dairy farmers and the broader industry over the next 25 years.

"The international market opportunities for Australian dairy are growing and DairyBio will ensure those opportunities will be underpinned by scientific expertise."

#### Research encore for young innovator

La Trobe University agriculture researcher Jane Kelley was awarded the Dairy Australia Science and Innovation Award in 2014 to examine the causes and effects of liver fluke infection on cattle in north-east Victoria. She successfully completed her project in 2015 and as a result has won funds for a further extension of her research.

For 18 months, Ms Kelley documented an emerging animal health issue for dairy farms that rely on grazing irrigated pastures. Dairy herds in the Goulburn, Upper Murray and Macalister Irrigation Districts were surveyed and many had fluke infestations at levels that significantly suppress milk production in milking cows and cause clinical disease in young stock. Control of liver fluke in dairy cattle relies heavily on strategic use of the drug triclabendazole.

Ms Kelley found that resistance to

the drug is emerging on farms and is likely to spread to other farms linked through the irrigation schemes.

The Gardiner Foundation and Dairy Australia will invest in a new project with the researchers at La Trobe University to develop integrated control measures (both ecological and drugmediated) to better manage fluke burdens in dairy cattle.

"More research in this area is timely as Jane's study will build on our knowledge and help provide solutions to this problem," Dairy Australia's program manager animal health and welfare, Dr Kathryn Davis, said.

This two-year research project began in January 2016 and will be completed in December 2017.

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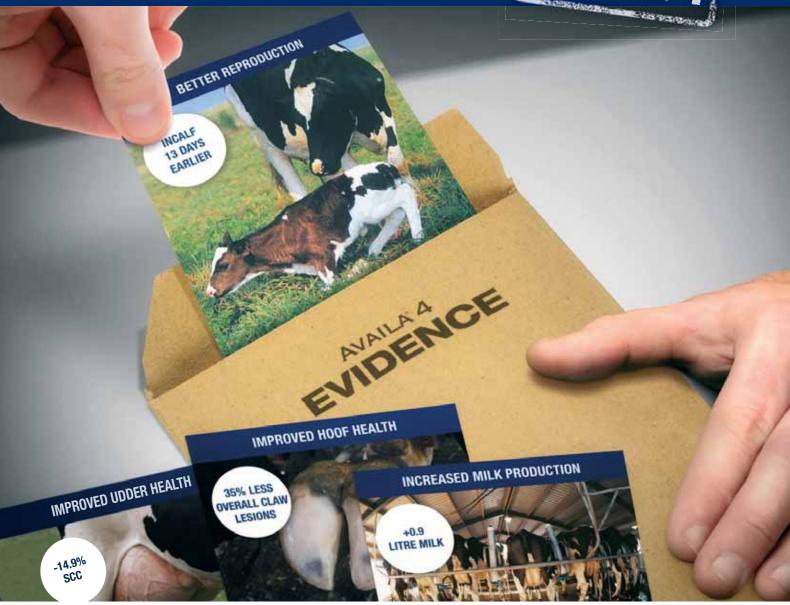
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### **Dairy faces new water reality**



#### **By Carlene Dowie**

THE dairy industry is going to have to face the reality that the cost of water is going to increase whether it likes it or not, the Australian Dairy Conference at Shepparton in February was told. The industry will face increasing competition for other uses of water, including environmental, cultural and recreational, as well as in other industries, such as horticulture.

The conference was also told that the Australian Dairy Industry Council had reconvened its Basin Plan Taskforce to look at key issues arising from the Murray Darling Basin Plan as deadlines for water recovery identified in the plan occur later this year (see story page 8).

A group of disgruntled northern

'There's only one water baron in the market and that the Feds — who can affect flows and prices.'

Victorian dairyfarmers, protesting outside the conference, urged farmers to write letters to the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, outlining the impact of the Murray Darling Basin Plan on their farms, their families and their communities.

Water is a hot issue in the northern Victorian and southern NSW irrigation districts, with low allocations and a dry season seeing temporary water prices rise to more than \$200 a megalitre this year.

Managing director of investment firm Kidder Williams, David Williams, told the conference dairyfarmers needed to be aware there was a lot of demand for water. Horticultural and



Dairyfarmers protesting outside the conference and urging farmers to write letters to the prime minister: Julie Young, Wyuna East, Vic; Gayle Hemphill, Kyabram, Vic, and Loretta Warren, Kyabram, Vic. broadacre cropping industries could make a lot more gross profit per hectare from irrigation than dairy. Walnuts could return as much as \$2170/ Ml, cotton \$200/Ml, soybeans \$90/Ml and rice \$109/Ml.

"As a dairyfarmer, you can't outbid someone in the horticulture industry," he said. His assessment was backed by two horticulturists on a panel later in the session. Almond grower, Select Harvest managing director Paul Thompson said the almond industry was planning massive growth and invested in water ahead of plantings, while Tatura, Vic, orchardist Paul Hall brought a reality check to those who thought \$250/Ml for water was expensive when he said they could afford to pay \$1100/Ml for water. "We don't like paying \$1100/Ml, but we have driven to that level of efficiency," he said.

Mr Williams said dairyfarmers needed to think carefully about what they could do to get more from the water they used on farm and how the could improve their efficiency.

"You've got to start to think five years out," he said. "Some of these industries have deep pockets and massive export markets."

Mr Williams, who had invested in a Tasmanian Midlands irrigation development when farmers in the region didn't take up the opportunity, dismissed the idea that there were water barons, such as him, manipulating the water market. "There's only one water baron in the market — and that the Feds — who can affect flows and prices," he said.

He warned that environmental demands for water were not going to go away.



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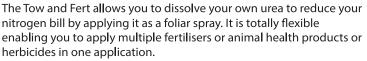


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 "There will be pressure on the government to release more water (for the environment)," he said.

"Water will get more expensive. It will be volatile. From year to year, you might get cheap water, but the price will be going up."

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority chief executive officer Chris Norman said the demand for water had increased markedly since the 1990s. At that time, the 10-15 per cent losses in the system were considered not worth chasing. But efficiency schemes now aimed to cut those losses.

Mr Norman said demand for water was increasing with calls for cultural water and recreational water now emerging. He said his organisation, which managed environmental water, was subject to the same drivers as farmers. "We get an allocation and we have to manage it well," he said.

But there was a lot of confusion about the role of environmental water and how it was managed, which meant the CMA was sometimes blamed for things for which it was not responsible. "We don't tell our story well," he said.

He admitted his organisation was still learning how to manage its water to deliver the best outcomes. "We've only been at this for five years," he said.

Mr Norman said his organisation was aiming to work to get multiple benefits out of water. "We need to work on how to co-operate not compete," he said. He called for a community partnership model to get the most from water. "We need to work collectively on this," he said.

Tallygaroopna, Vic, dairyfarmer

and member of the ADIC taskforce Natalie Akers said there were significant concerns within the dairy industry about uncertainties flowing from the Murray Darling Basin Plan and its implementation.

In particular, there was concern that the amount of water recovered through environmental projects was still significantly short of it 650 gigalitre target. The plan allows for more water to be recovered from productive use if the environmental projects failed to achieve their target. The adjustment to this amount is due to be calculated in June.

The ADIC is calling for this adjustment to be paused until the full impact of the water recovery under the basin plan is investigated and until the environmental projects are able to achieve their targets.

#### Murray dairy region's changing face

WATER policy changes in the past decade that have led to a massive reduction in water available for irrigation have dramatically changed the face of dairying in the Murray region.

Before the millennium drought and then federal buyback of water for the environment, large swathes of northern Victoria and southern Murray NSW were back-to-back dairy farms irrigating permanent pastures, participants in the Australian Dairy Conference farm tour in February were told.

The changes have seen many dairy farms shut down or converted to cropping operations to provide feed for the remaining farms.

But they have also seen the emergence of a new type of dairy farmer — forward thinking, flexible and prepared to make the most of any opportunity.

Participants in the farm tour saw four farms that have adapted to the challenges in different ways.

Rob and Gai Singleton and two of their children Sam and Ellie run a 850-cow operation on 1006 hectares at Blighty, NSW. The family moved to the Riverina in 1994 from a high-rainfall farm on the NSW north coast and converted a rice, sheep and lucerne property into a pasture-based dairy farm.

But the drought and lack of irrigation prompted them to switch to a system where cows are grazed from April to November and then fed a total mixed ration in a dry lot system across the summer.



The changing water environment has seen the emergence of more total mixed ration feeding systems such as this one on the Acock farm at Rochester, Vic.

This also allowed them to use irrigation to grow high-yielding summer crops such as maize, which is conserved as silage.

Neville and Ruth Kydd and their sons Daniel and Steven, who also farm at Blighty, continue to operate a seasonal, grazing system with an emphasis on keeping things simple and low cost.

To counter the risk of low rainfall and poor irrigation allocations, the Kydds have focused on silage production, aiming to have at least 12 months worth of silage stored on farm.

They have also bought more land to use for fodder production and still see a bright future in the region as they plan to start a second dairy business on a farm they bought in 2009.

Don and Meg Stewart own three farms in northern Victoria, including one at Yarrawalla, which is operated by sharefarmers Kelvin and Shelley Matthews. The irrigation system at Yarrawalla has been



The new pipe-and-riser automatic system with water-monitoring technology has lifted water use efficiency on the Stewart farm.

upgraded under the Federal Government On Farm Efficiency Program, in which the Stewarts received some funding to help with the investment in exchange for returning irrigation allocation.

The new pipe-and-riser automatic system with water-monitoring technology can be operated remotely via the internet. The farm now grows predominantly annual pasture and lucerne.

Tom and Emma Acocks, who farm with Tom's parents Mick and Heather at Rochester, Vic, have converted to a total mixed ration system, investing \$1 million in a barn and dry lot for their 760 cows. They have also bought nearby dryland cropping land and use this to grow feed, which is conserved or stored to be fed to the cows. Irrigation is now via centre pivots, growing crops such as lucerne and maize.

The May-June edition of the *Australian Dairyfarmer* will feature an in-depth look at these farms and their feeding systems.



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NO. 177

### Genomic semen sales rise

- Increased use of sexed semen
- Imported dairy semen 75 per cent of sales
- points Semen of 2600 individual dairy (ev bulls used

#### **By Carol Millar**

VERY year the National Herd Improvement Association (NHIA) conducts an annual semen market survey among Australia's largest cattle genetics wholesalers, and the results were released during International Dairy Week.

The survey contains data from the financial year ending June 30, 2015, and this is the sixth year of its release so some trends are discernible.

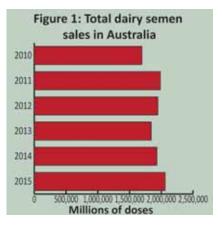
Firstly, the 2015 year saw the highest number ever of total dairy sales with 2,061,296 units of dairy semen sold. In contrast, total beef sales were only 174,216 units. This gives an indication of how prevalent artificial insemination is practised within the dairy industry but largely confined to stud breeders in the beef industry.

In terms of breeds, Holstein is - by a substantial margin - the largest breed with 77 per cent of the total sales, followed by Jersey with 16 per cent and then Australian Red Breed with three per cent.

#### Sexed semen popular

One of the noticeable changes in the 2015 survey was the overall increase in the use of sexed semen among dairyfarmers. Recent improvements in sexed semen processing technology have seen substantial improvements in conception rates using sexed semen in AI and clearly the increased sales are a response to this.

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Of interest is that the fastest growing category within sexed semen sales is for sexed genomic bulls, which would put Australian dairyfarmers at the forefront of improving genetic gain in their herds. Genomic bulls are, in general, the highest rated bulls and using sexed semen to derive heifers from this type of bull will be the fastest way to accelerate genetic improvement.

In 2015, there has also been a marked increase in the amount of fresh sexed semen used in breeding programs. To some extent, it will be interesting to see if similar increases continue into the future as the logistics of distributing fresh semen are very expensive.

#### Domestic versus imported semen

Imported dairy semen remains popular. Only 26 per cent of dairy units sold in Australia in 2015 were produced within Australia. Or another way of looking at it is that three out of every four straws of semen sold were imported.

It is interesting to ponder why this is the case. Are Australian dairyfarmers unaware of the origin of the genetics they choose to buy - or is this a deliberate choice and why?

Imagine if consumers took the same approach to buying milk products. Imagine if three out of four blocks of cheese bought at the supermarket were imported because the consumer was unaware or uncaring of the origin of their purchase?

#### Genomic bulls rise

Compared with farmers in the United States and Europe, Australians have been relatively slow to adopt the use of genomic bulls in their breeding programs.

Partly this may be explained by a more conservative approach to genetics in general, but may also indicate that it is difficult for innovative products to break into any market. In 2015, however, this has begun to change. Sales of genomic bulls increased by more than 154,000 units compared with the previous year whereas the sales of proven bulls declined. Most service providers are pricing genomic bulls attractively and the market is responding positively to that.

As always, though, it is important that farmers are aware that genomic bulls generally have lower reliability than proven bulls and, therefore, there is wisdom in using a team of bulls evenly rather than just one or two.

Finally, here is one last startling fact - the number of AI bulls sold in Australia in 2015 numbered in excess of 2600 individual dairy bulls. This is a high number and reflective of just how quickly the semen market is changing. Farmers need to keep pace with the changes - and so do service providers. D

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### Dairy careers on school curriculum

Cows Create Careers opportunity for farmers to be involved in promoting agriculture Students involved in rearing calves ê ✓ Part of the school curriculum

points

ETER Graham, from Rich River Farms at Codrington, Vic, is a fifth-generation dairyfarmer and proud of it. "I love agriculture, I've never wanted to do anything else," he said.

"I got involved in Cows Create Careers (CCC) because I want to encourage kids to learn about agriculture. It's all about careers and that can be anything from milking a cow, artificial insemination (AI), agronomy, to a rural bank manager.

For two years Mr Graham has worked with agriculture teacher, Alison McGeary, to help deliver CCC at Evans River K-12 School. In 2012, Ms McGeary recognised the importance of a school-based hands-on project, and a year later CCC was incorporated into the school's year nine Agriculture Technology — Dairy Cattle unit.

At the start of the project each year, Mr Graham delivers two calves to the school and teaches the students how to care for them. The students then weigh, feed and monitor the calves,

#### 'Agriculture needs to be hands-on for kids, so they can get involved and get excited.'

while completing classroom-based research and assessments.

"We don't have anything else like CCC that's actually linked to an industry," Ms McGeary said. "I always try to link the learning activities at school with things that happen in the real world, so I thought that CCC would be perfect - it links to something bigger and to the community."

'The students know that the calves are on loan, so they really step-up with responsibility. They know that they've been given an opportunity with a farmer who is lending something very important, and that they're wholly responsible for handing the calves back in a good condition.'

Throughout the three-week project an industry advocate also visits the students to discuss the diversity of career pathways in the industry. " CCC definitely opens the students eyes to the fact they could study agriculture at university," Ms McGeary said.

Mr Graham said dairy was a big in-

dustry and there were many opportunities.

"Younger generations should understand why a dairy technician, AI and geneticist are needed," he said. "Agriculture needs to be hands-on for kids, so they can get involved and get excited."

Since their introduction through CCC, Mr Graham and Ms McGeary have continued to build a strong working relationship. Together they have co-ordinated activities outside of CCC to further extend the students' knowledge of agriculture. Mr Graham also hosts the school's year nine students at his 250-cow farm, where they learn about pastures and rotation.

"The students develop a relationship with Peter from when they do CCC in year nine - so it's an ongoing relationship, which is great," Ms McGeary said.

Mr Graham said: "Alison and I have a good working relationship and I intend to keep it going. Going forward I hope to talk to more kids about agriculture, and even if just one student decides that they want a career in agriculture - that's success."

For more information on Dairy Australia's CCC project, visit website <www.dairyaustralia.com.au>.



Year nine students visit Peter Graham's farm to learn about different aspects of dairyfarming.



Cows Create Careers gives students a hands-on learning experience.



### Is farm electrical safety up to speed?

 Hard wire electrical powered equipment
 Check switchboards labelled correctly
 Take care, especially in wet areas

**E**LECTRICAL safety is a key factor to keeping dairy farm employees and property safe and the industry competitive into the future.

Power and electrical risks can cause injury and damage property. Wet conditions in dairies can also increase risk, so extreme care must be taken when using electrical equipment across a farm. Problems may arise from poor electrical work. Therefore an appropriately licensed electrician must always be employed for all installations and for the on-going maintenance of power and electrical equipment.

Potential hazards should be regularly monitored on farm, some key considerations include:

• check switchboards to ensure they are in good condition with all switches correctly labelled;

• switch off and lock out all power sources when you are about to work on a piece of equipment;

• minimise the use of extension leads by 'hardwiring' as many of electrical powered pieces of equipment as possible — this also avoids the need for Testing and Tagging these items;

• where electric extension leads are unavoidable, make sure they are connected to a Residual Current Device (RCD) or safety switch;

• ensure a dry powder extinguisher is available for electrical fires in appropriate areas;

• test the emergency stops on a regular basis to ensure they are in working order;

• be wary of overhead power lines especially when moving high implements around the farm; remember to also warn all contractors.

Dairy Australia's 30 Minute Safety Scan (see box story next page) has been developed to help reduce electrical risks on a farm. Safety Scan sheets can be completed by any farm employee and are also available on other hazard areas including quad bikes, tractors, mobile plant, confined spaces, etc.

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Good electrical practice: if electric extension leads are unavoidable, ensure they are connected to an RCD or safety switch.

'Power and electrical risks can cause injury and damage property.'



Use extensions leads with Residual Cut Off devices for increased safety.



Ensure switchboards are fitted with safety swtiches.

#### Attracting and developing people



FARM SAFETY SCAN						
POWER AND ELECTRICAL:						
POTENTIAL HAZARD/ CHECK	HAZARD DETECTED/ NO HAZARD	РНОТО	ACTION RECOMMENDED	CURRENT STATUS		
GREEN = Hazard under control ORANGE = Issues are on Action plan to be addressed RED = Hazard identified, but yet to placed on Action Plan						
1. Are RCDs (Residual Current Devices or Safety Switch) fitted to cover all power outlets?						
2. Are all electrical leads, including power tools, on fixed machinery and extension leads, in good condition and have a current test tag?						
3. Are electrical fittings and power outlets in wet areas protected with waterproof covers?						
4. Are extension leads being used in wet areas? Are they protected by connection to a portable or fixed RCD? Should they be hard wired?						
5. Are there appropriate and functioning Emergency Stop devices in place						
DATE:	SCANNERS:					
DALE.	SCANNEILS.					

#### **Electrical Safety Scan Sheet**

To test if the farm's power and electrical safety is up to 'speed', use Dairy Australia's Safety Scan sheet (see above). Safety Scans take around 30 minutes and can be completed by any member of the staff on farm.

If an issue is identified, briefly describe the issue and take a photograph.

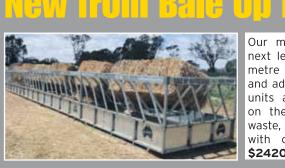
Discuss the issue with the farm team to come up with the best solution. Don't forget to use a licensed electrician when required.

For more information: View video link <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43vYz9FJMOQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43vYz9FJMOQ>.</a>

To print a copy of the Power and Electrical Safety Scan, or for other Safety Scan

sheets, visit website < www.thepeopleindairy. org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=151080>.

Also see the following WorkSafe factsheet on working with submersible pumps: <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov. au/forms-and-publications/forms-andpublications/working-with-submersiblepumps-on-farms>.



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### Manufacture program connects students

✓ Cows Create Careers Manufacturing Program promotes

- points pathways
  - Fun and educational
- ✓ Promotes understanding of dairy ) ev products

HE Cows Create Careers (CCC) Manufacturing Program is a dairy industry initiative launched by Dairy Australia in 2010. Following a successful pilot program in Victoria, the program was expanded to several other states establishing a vital link between secondary school students, teachers, dairy manufacturing and the dairy industry supply chain.

The program introduces secondary school students to career and education pathways in dairy manufacturing and encourages students to learn not only about the manufacture of dairy products but also the nutritional benefits of this amazing food source.

The program is strongly supported by dairyfarmers, field officers, dairy companies and others across the dairy manufacturing chain. The program is delivered to 140 schools and 3000 students across the country. A key part of the program requires secondary school students to visit dairy factories, and local industry advocates to visit schools to outline the myriad career opportunities available. It provides a link between schools, dairy companies and the local school community.

John Pye, a director of Murray Goulburn and farmer from Hamilton in

'It's important for kids to understand that milk is a perishable product, which must be processed before it can be sold commercially.'

Victoria, has been involved with the CCC Manufacturing Program since its inception. Mr Pye helps in the camembert in the classroom component and regularly attends presentation days.

"This program is fun and educa-tional," he said. "The teachers are so enthusiastic, and I've seen an improvement in the quality of the kids and their levels of interest each year. It's easy to notice the change in the kids understanding of dairy and how much they love it.'

While the manufacturing program continues to grow in popularity, Mr Pye said the program's benefits were as much about awareness and creating career pathways as they were about the program's achievements.

"The dairy industry has long recognised the opportunities for growth and profitability and how closely these are linked to its position as a world-competitive producer," he said. "Linking the local schools and students to the dairy manufacturers is a key aspect of this."

Site manager at Murray Goulburn's



John Pye (at right) with students from Hamilton and Alexandra College at Hamilton, Vic, at the Cows Create Careers presentation day.

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Leongatha plant, Simon Taylor, is a strong supporter providing ongoing support to the program. Mr Taylor, along with representatives of other local dairy companies, has been involved hosting students from Leongatha Secondary College at the factory and attending the program's Gippsland Presentation Day last year.

Passionate about maximising the industry's opportunities, Murray Goulburn is a key contributor to rural communities in Gippsland, and Mr Taylor is a member of the Local Area Network Board

"Increasing the flexibility of export markets and improving Australia's access and opportunities is critical to giving confidence to dairyfarmers and dairy companies for their long-term viability and to drive future growth and investment," he said.

As an advocate of the program, Mr Taylor is keen to engage the supply chain and encourage competition in the market, saying, "it will be good for the whole industry".

Another key advocate of the CCC Manufacturing Program is Laura Carver, a laboratory team leader for Parmalat. Ms Carver supports the program in Adelaide by working in the classroom teaching students about making camembert and as a judge of the project's multi-media component. She assesses students based on their team's presentation days, which includes a multimedia advertisement. The winning team is announced at the end of the day with the result sometimes reported in local media.

Ms Carver has supported the program for more than two years. "It's important for kids to understand that milk is a perishable product, which must be processed before it can be sold commercially," she said. "As a result, dairy production is integrated across the supply chain from pre-farm gate through to consumer and export markets and there is significant infrastructure involved in its collection, storage and retailing."

Ms Carver said she was grateful to her employer for allowing her to work closely with the program and said "the program contributes positively to the dairy and food industries". D



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#### **WA FIRES**

### WA fires highlight access issues

 Bushfires hit major WA dairy region
 Access to fireground becomes

 Access to fireground becomes issue
 Farmers warned about using volunteer labour

#### By Mal Gill and Jacinta Bolsenbroek

WO fires in as many months in the Harvey region in Western Australia have again highlighted issues for dairyfarmers arising from these disasters.

Access to properties in the fire ground to provide feed for stock and to allow milk pick up again became an issue, with nothing appearing to have improved since similar issues arose during fires in the Northcliffe, WA, area some 12 months earlier.

A new issue has emerged with landholders being warned they may be liable for any compensation claims made by volunteers helping to clean up their properties and erect fences. 'I am happy I am alive, my family is safe and my dairy is still standing, but I lost 30 kilometres of fencing and our paddocks.'

#### January fire

The first fire hit the region in early January. The Harvey property of Dale Hanks, a former chairman of Western Dairy, was surrounded on three sides by fire.

"I've won Powerball," was how he reacted to the massive bushfire, despite to having to tip three days' milk worth almost \$12,400 down the drain. He was grateful he still had a dairy, a herd, a home, fences and pasture on which to feed his cows.

"We dodged a bullet; this fire got real

close today. Thanks to firies, especially those planes and helicopters," Mr Hanks posted on Facebook during the fire.

"It (the bushfire) was racing straight for the back of us on Saturday," he later told *Farm Weekly*. "A wind change Saturday afternoon saved us.

"It blew it (the fire) back on itself and then it ran into some irrigated country and that slowed it up a bit. Then they (firefighters) just threw everything they had at it.

"There were helicopters and planes going everywhere, I think they had two of those big helicopters on it."

While the nearby Harvey Fresh milk processing plant lost power during the fire and was closed with staff evacuated, Mr Hanks, who supplies Brownes Dairy in Perth, initially hoped his milk pick-ups could continue. When police sealed off the area he knew he had a problem.

"On the Friday morning, the vat was full and we weren't going to be picked up so we had no alternative but to let it



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Paul Ferraro, Tessa Ferraro, Jarrad Blackburn, Tony Ferraro and Trent Stubberfield inspecting the burnt fences at their Yarloop, Western Australia, dairy farm.

(milk) go down the drain to our effluent dam," Mr Hanks said.

"We washed the vat out and then we did one Friday (afternoon) milking and two Saturday milkings straight into the drain. We literally poured about 22,500 litres of milk down the drain into our effluent dam. "I would say about half of the (WA dairy) industry will have been affected by this fire. Harvey Fresh has about 70 suppliers across the State and they will all have had to tip milk because Harvey Fresh hasn't been able to accept it.

"And all of the farms in the fire area that supply other processors will have had to tip milk down the drain like us because the tankers couldn't get in."

#### **February fire**

The second fire in early February burst out of tea tree scrub country onto the back of Graham Manning's dairy farm about 10 kilometres south-west of Harvey. Firefighters and neighbours helped Mr Manning battle the blaze in horrendous conditions of 40 degrees Celsius temperature and strengthening winds.

"We had great support," Mr Manning said, as he struggled to restore a permanent water supply to his dairy immediately after the fire. "We've still got the dairy, house and the sheds. We lost all our dry land and some fences.

"We've got no water to the cows and there's no power, the power lines that were on wooden poles that ran along the back of us are on the ground."

Mr Manning said he had moved the cows away from the back of the farm before the fire arrived and was able to milk using a generator. He said he believed his farm was the worst affected by the fire.

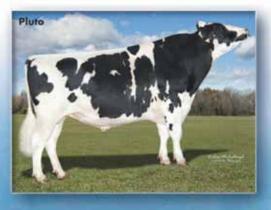
#### Access issues

Bureaucratic red tape stifling landowners' access to their properties during  $\blacktriangleright$ 





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 the bush fires became a major issue for WAFarmers.

WAFarmers president Dale Park, who is a fire control officer with Hill River Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade in Dandaragan Shire, said action was needed now to initiate changes.

"The current system is ridiculous," he said, citing delays and uncertainty in obtaining permission to re-enter the fire ground."The system is not working and the intransigence of the incident management teams on access only encourages landowners to avoid the road blocks.

"It's putting people at greater risk. They (incident management teams) need to recognise that life has to go on.

"It's a ridiculous situation when people turn up on one side of a roadblock to hand a food parcel to somebody on the other side who can't come out because they won't be allowed back in.

"With this fire (the January fire) we've been told of people who left to get vital supplies, including drinking water, were not allowed to return to their properties.

"It's not just the dairyfarmers either. Geoff Pearson who runs a beef feedlot at Lake Preston in the fire area told me he needs 60 tonnes of feed a day.

"What is he expected to do? He can't let those animals starve to death.

"We need a system that works. We want to put protocols in place that will allow landowner access, particularly in relation to animal welfare.

"We would like to see them in place before the next big fire."

WAFarmers has called for protocols to be established to govern early access to future fire zones.

Mr Park and WAFarmers chief executive officer Stephen Brown raised the access protocols issue with Fire and

#### 'I would say about half of the (WA dairy) industry will have been affected by this fire.'

Emergency Services Commissioner Wayne Gregson after the January fire.

Mr Brown said farmers in the fire area near Harvey had told him stories of seeming disorganisation, with some locals claiming they were told at roadblocks they needed a permit to enter the fire zone but after travelling back to emergency centres and queuing for a permit, were told they did not need one.

Reports of up to 40 Alcoa Wagerup alumina refinery employees being bussed through the fire without escort to keep the plant operating as the land around it burned have also angered farmers as well as the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.

Harvey Fresh and Harvey Beef plants were evacuated and shut down for four days although the fire remained several kilometres from them.

Fifteen dairyfarmers in the fire zone and all 67 Harvey Fresh suppliers were forced to tip out up to 1.5 million litres of milk because milk tankers were not allowed into the fire zone to collect or deliver it.

After milk tankers started rolling, a dairyfarmer near Yarloop still had a problem getting a tanker around a roadblock to his farm.

Other farmers have confirmed using back roads to avoid police roadblocks while trucking stock out to agistment after their own pasture was burnt because they were unsure they would be



The view looking north west from the driveway to the dairy on Dale Hank's Harvey, WA, farm as the bushfire approached in January. The picture was taken by Nick Henderson who helped prepare the farm for the worst.

allowed back to get subsequent loads.

They have also used local knowledge to direct stock feed trucks around roadblocks on the way in to supply farms and feedlots.

Once landowners were allowed back, there were further reports of people manning roadblocks being unfamiliar with the area, directing trucks carrying feed supplies to use roads that had bridges not designed to carry their weight.

WAFarmers is not alone in wanting fireground access reviewed.

Waroona beef producer Raymond Hull has initiated a petition calling for a parliamentary inquiry into the Department of Fire and Emergency (DFES) management of bushfire emergencies.

In part the petition calls for a parliamentary inquiry to investigate "once the emergency threat of fire is over, the ability for people to obtain supplies for themselves and stock and return to their properties".

WAFarmers has joined the Emergency Services Volunteers Association, SES Volunteers Association and Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades in calling for a retired judge to head a royal commission-style inquiry into the fire.

But Mr Park said he was not prepared to wait for an inquiry to recommend changes to access approvals.

Mr Park said the issue of landowner access had been raised at all recent big bushfires, including Northcliffe, Boddington and Esperance.

At the Northcliffe fire, two men and a veterinarian in a ute towing a tandem trailer loaded with fuel and other supplies kept at least three dairy farms operating within the supposedly sealedoff fire zone for several days.

They used old forestry tracks to skirt road blocks to deliver fuel to keep generators running to operate milking plants.

The recent independent review of the Northcliffe and Boddington fires found that the different "culture, expertise and approaches" of DFES, Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) and local government in managing the fires contributed to "less than optimal collaboration".

It did not make a recommendation on landowner access although it was an issue during the fires.

The Harvey fire had "amplified" access concerns.

Mr Park said Mr Gregson had agreed to "maintain a conversation" on the issue.

"We will come up with some draft ► The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016 29



### What's new in 2016? **Australian Breeding Values [ABVs] will** be released on Monday April 11th 2016.

Both WRANGLER and AUSSIEGOLD were high genomic bulls and based on daughters milking to date they may graduate amoung the best in their respective breeds.

### Rengaw Manoman Wrangler ET **RANGLER**

Man O Man x VG 88 Shottle x EX 91 Goldbullion

- Genomic numbers predicted moderate size cows with positive milk flow and excellent components. Based on daughters milking this appears to be an accurate prediction. Genomic numbers suggested SCC and daughter fertility to be good, based on daughters milking to date they may be excellent! WRANGLER is an outcross to DELSANTO, MEDALLION and CHRISTMAS

- From the same cow family as past favourite JUDGEI



### Broadlin Aussiegold P ET SIEGOLD P\*

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 protocols and consult with others on it," he said.

Mr Park said he expected consultation would involve dairyfarmers, beef cattle producers, feedlot operators, processors such as Harvey Fresh and Harvey Beef, the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA), DPaW, DFES and local government.

"We realise there are a range of concerns, other than the immediate fire threat risk, that incident management teams have to take into account before allowing access," he said.

"But we are talking restricted access for landowners and vital services.

"They're not cowboys, they know the area, they don't want their trucks burnt, they will not get in the way of firefighters or anyone else attempting to restore services.

"The fire plan for my farm, for example, depends on me being there to put it into action. It's the same for most farm fire plans that I know of, which is why landowners want to get back in as soon as possible to protect what might be left of their property."

DAFWA took on access liaison roles at the Esperance and Harvey bushfires on behalf of farmers.

It set up a helpline for primary producers requiring urgent access for stock feed, fuel, livestock transport or other vehicles and negotiated access approvals for them with the relevant authorities. The same helpline was used for those requiring veterinary assistance for livestock.

DAFWA regional director southern region Neil Guise said the department "has consistently advised farmers and industry that the permit system must 'The system is not working and the intransigence of the incident management teams on access only encourages landowners to avoid the road blocks.'

be followed as this is a matter of public safety". "The permit system means that the risk assessment for safety is based on the latest information and is managed by those with the emergency experience to make the assessment," Mr Guise said.

He said DAFWA had helped raise priority access issueas with the permit system providers, and all emergency situations DAFWA was made aware of were resolved.

A DFES spokesman said the department had not initiated a formal permit system for fire-ground access at the Harvey fire, although permits had been issued at other previous fires.

The spokesman said that as far as DFES was concerned, landowners or milk tanker and supply vehicle drivers had to produce identification and convince whoever was manning the roadblock they were stopped at of their legitimate reason to enter the fire zone.

#### Volunteer compensation

Western Australian bushfire victims were also told they may be liable for any compensation claims made by volunteers helping to clean up their prop-



The fire that ripped through the Harvey, WA, dairy region in February.

erties and erect fences.

Farmers in the Harvey bushfire zone were advised after the January fire to check for insurance cover before allowing volunteers to help with on-farm recovery efforts.

WAFarmers chief executive officer Stephen Brown warned about 50 farmers at a community meeting in the fire zone not to assume volunteers coming onto their properties to help re-erect fences or to clean up were automatically covered by insurance policies.

"Most farmers have public liability insurance and assume that will cover them if something happens to anyone on their property," Mr Brown said.

"But public liability insurance only covers common law, it doesn't cover statutory law, which is things like Worksafe.

"There is a separate insurance product you can buy that does cover statutory law, but not many farmers have it."

Mr Brown said BlazeAid and most not-for-profit organisations supplying volunteers to help with the fire recovery effort would already have their own insurance cover.

"It's when you get a group of blokes turn up, who have decided on their own to help out, that you need to establish first whether they or you have adequate insurance cover should something go wrong," Mr Brown said.

"If one of them puts an auger through his foot you could end up having to deal with a Worksafe incident on top of the bushfire aftermath."

Yarloop, WA, dairyfarmer Tony Ferraro said as everybody had kilometres of fencing to do, with little manpower, volunteers were needed.

"But volunteers aren't covered," he said. "If someone hurts themselves fencing and they are not my employee, they are not covered under workers' compensation and they aren't covered under public liability insurance.

"This needs to be looked into because we all need the help and want the help, but the liability aspect concerns me."

Those using volunteer organisations to assist with fencing were covered, but Mr Ferraro said those "good blokes" who want to lend a hand won't be covered.

"I just worry about those good blokes coming to lend a hand," he said.

"Maybe the government needs to investigate this, as everyone is concerned about it."

Mr Ferraro said he watched 60 years of hard work and fencing burn in one night.



**UPDATE FROM THE GARDINER FOUNDATION** 

### **Developing young talent in dairy**

🔉 🖌 Financial support for tertiary

- study
- Investing in emerging leaders
   Supporting dairy communities

#### By Alexandra de Blas

EAVING home to study at university can be a big challenge for young rural students. As they adjust to self-directed study in a new environment while developing new social and support networks — the financial stress can be a burden on students and families alike.

Each year Gardiner Dairy Foundation offers four scholarships to tertiary students to ease the pressure associated with furthering their education.

"Gardiner has awarded 33 scholarships worth half a million dollars since 2007," chief executive Mary Harney said. "We support young people from Victorian dairy towns who are pursuing a career that will either directly benefit the dairy industry and/ or benefit small dairy communities."

By assisting people to gain essen-

'The networks I am creating and the contact I am having with the industry is invaluable.'

tial qualifications that are in high demand, the foundation is helping to attract, retain and develop talented people who will come back to rural and regional Victoria and strengthen their communities.

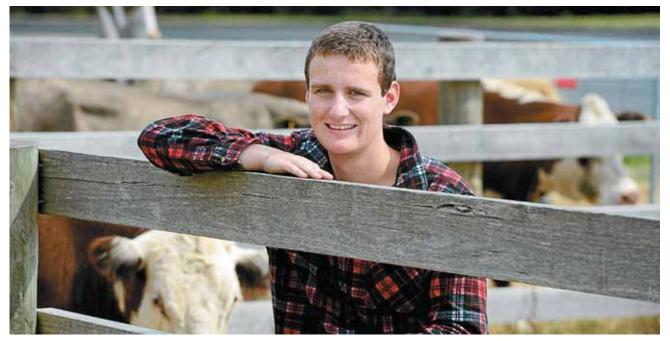
#### **Mitchell Dodds**

Mitchell Dodds grew up on a hobby farm running beef cattle at Boolarra in Victoria's Latrobe Valley. Passionate about becoming a vet and working with cattle and the dairy industry, in 2014 he successfully applied for the inaugural Jakob Malmo Dairy Scholarship. Now in his third year of the Bachelor of Science/Doctor of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Melbourne, he is loving the opportunities the scholarship has brought him. "The first year was interesting coming from a cohort of 50 people in year 12, in a small town where I knew everyone, to university where there were 2000-3000 people in my biology course," Mr Dodds said. "It was also really hard to find people who were interested in vet, specifically large animals and then the dairy industry as a whole."

Financially the scholarship enabled Mr Dodds to pay for some subjects up-front, buy a laptop and cover the cost of text books without the "massive financial strain" that some of his university friends faced. In his second year it also helped him to rent a sharehouse in Brunswick, enabling him to become more involved in campus and Melbourne life.

"The networks I am creating and the contact I am having with the industry is invaluable," Mr Dodds said. "For me it has been the most important aspect of the scholarship."

While his desire to work in dairy cattle has strengthened, his outlook has broadened and he hopes to extend his studies into the United Kingdom and the United States.



Mitchell Dodds won a dairy industry scholarship. He's not from a dairy but did placement at a dairy vet and hopes to work as a vet in the dairy industry.

#### UPDATE FROM THE GARDINER FOUNDATION





Monique McMahon-Hide, Rebecca Sexton and Mitchell Dodds after their panel presentation at the Gardiner Dairy Foundation Dairy Leader's Luncheon in Melbourne, February.

#### Laura Peters

Laura Peters received the Gardiner Dairy Foundation Tertiary Scholarship in 2008 to support her physiotherapy studies at Charles Sturt University in Albury, NSW. Ms Peters came from a dairyfarming family of seven in the Mitta Valley. At this time the scholarship consisted of a one-off payment of \$10,000, which Ms Peters welcomed as she was working to put herself through her four year full-time degree.

"It is a great initiative," Ms Peters said. "There is not much else like it. What the Gardiner Foundation has done for our valley is pretty substantial. It is very good."

Ms Peters is now working in private practice at Wodonga, Vic, and has moved back to Tallandoon in the Mitta Valley where she is active on committees in her local community and works on the family farm one day a week.

In the past two years she has taken the lead in building a new netball court in Mitta and is working on another at Eskdale. The Mitta building committee has just completed a new pavilion. Ms Peters provides pro-bono injury management for the netball and football clubs and is on the Mitta Muster Committee — a large community run event.

#### Scholarship evolution

The tertiary scholarships began in 2007 as a way of supporting dairyfarming communities during the hardship of the millennium drought. Four students now receive \$7500 annually for the duration of their university or TAFE course. Each scholarship is named after a dairy legend and this year Western Victorian Dairyfarmer Shirley Harlock was added to the list, joining Bill Pyle, Doug Weir and Jakob Malmo.

While many students study veteri-



Kyrra Rea receives the inaugural Shirley Harlock Dairy Scholarship from the legend herself in February. Ms Rea will undertake a Bachelor of Agriculture at the University of Melbourne.

nary science or agriculture, scholars have also been supported to undertake medicine, commerce, nursing/ psychology, environmental science and engineering.

#### **Rebecca Sexton**

In 2008 Rebecca Sexton left the family farm at Dingee, Vic, to begin a Bachelor of Business at La Trobe University, Bendigo. "It made my transition from high school to university much less stressful and reduced the pressure on my parents to support me at a time when we were struggling emotionally and financially due to the drought," Ms Sexton said.

After working for Bendigo Bank at Deniliquin, NSW, she is now working as a business consultant for ORM in Bendigo and has recently been accepted into the Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program for 2016.

#### Monique McMahon-Hide

Unlike most of the other scholars, the inaugural recipient of the Doug Weir Dairy Scholarship in 2013, Monique McMahon-Hide, didn't come from a farm. The year 9 Cows Create Careers program at her school at Wallington, near Geelong, first piqued her interest in the dairy industry and then work experience in year 12 took it further. She has just completed a Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience at La Trobe University, Bundoora.

In her second year at university Ms McMahon-Hide seized the opportunity to study for six months abroad at Washington State University in North America using her dairy scholarship to cover the costs. "It was an absolutely invaluable experience and taught me a lot both personally and academically," she said. Ms McMahan-Hide is yet to decide on how to venture forth from here but she has a keen interest in genetics and its potential within the dairy industry.

#### How to apply

Applications for 2017 scholarships will open in August via the Gardiner Dairy Foundation website.

Scholarships will be awarded to four students who have to relocate to study and have the potential to make an impact in the dairy industry or its communities.

Contact: website <www.gardiner foundation.com.au>, phone (03) 8621 2900.



### New Legendairy ads strike a chord

 New Legendairy campaign launched

points

(ev

- Uses humorous characters to
- promote dairy goodness
- Launch coincides with 'Februdairy' campaign

NEW burst of advertising from Dairy Australia's Legendairy communications platform hit the national airwaves in February, showcasing the amazing properties of milk and delighting TV audiences.

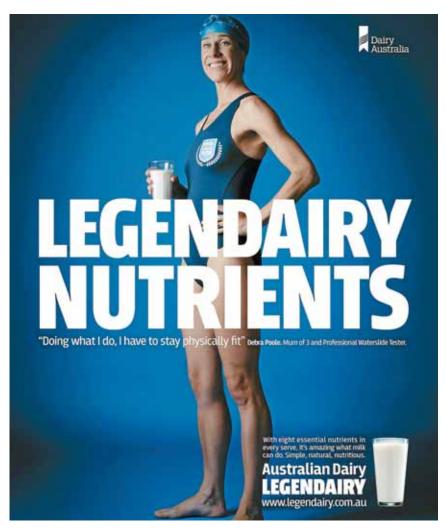
In the same way that AAMI's 'Rhonda' became a firm crowd favourite, Australia is falling in love with a central character of the campaign — Deb Poole, the waterslide tester and mum of three, whose extraordinary career is fuelled by milk.

Using fast-paced humour, the new television commercial showcases Deb's rigorous training routine and the amazing things milk makes possible.

"Of course, it's tongue in cheek," Dairy Australia's group manager for industry promotion Isabel MacNeill said.

"Being noticed is key, and creating fun characters is extremely powerful when it comes getting people talking and sharing messages, and eventually changing behaviours.

"Throughout the campaign, there is a strong underlying message about milk's



Deb Poole, waterslide tester, mum of three and milk devotee.34 The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016

amazing ability to help bone development and muscle recovery. It's all about pure, simple, Australian goodness.

"The first phase of Legendairy, in 2013-15, had a big job to do in raising positive awareness of the industry as a whole. Now we are zeroing in on our hero dairy products to get more of them onto more family shopping lists."

The initial campaign focus on milk will be followed later in the year with cheese, starring Jude Vale, the stand-in bridesmaid who uses cheese to get her through any occasion.

With the unifying tagline: "It's amazing what dairy can do", the campaign will reinforce the benefits of having dairy every day to women with children, the main campaign audience, who are searching for the best health and wellbeing choices for themselves and their family.

"Our research shows the campaign style and messages resonate with mums and will motivate more consumption of dairy, while positioning it as a simple, natural, and nutritious food produced here in Australia," Ms MacNeill said.

To coincide with the campaign launch, February was renamed 'Februdairy' across a range of Australia's most popular magazines, with titles including *Australian Women's Weekly* and *Good Health* featuring dairy-themed articles and recipes.

An extensive range of promotions is also planned including a media partnership with the Logies and the announcement of a Legendairy Ambassador, who will join Michael Klim as a public advocate for the Australia dairy industry.

In regional Australia, a major push is planned with print, radio, mobile and on-line executions of the 'It's amazing what milk can do' advertising campaign and the continued publication of the popular Legendairy stories series profiling local dairyfarmers and their animals.

A dedicated campaign page has been added to the Legendary website: <www.DebPoole.legendairy.com.au> for anyone wanting to see a lot more of Deb and her family, including additional interviews and footage not seen in the television commercial as well as scientific information on the many benefits of milk.

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### 'Urban Dairy' brings farm to city

 Urban Dairy to be created in points (ev

Melbourne

Quality dairy products to feature ✓ To tell story of dairy industry

USTRALIA'S dairy industry will be the central focus at this Wine Festival Hub from March 4-13, with the creation of an interactive 'Urban Dairy' exhibit and experience.

"More than ever people want to know where their food, such as dairy, is coming from but there is a gap between what really goes into these amazing products and consumer understanding," Dairy Australia's consumer marketing and communications manager, Glenys Zucco, said.

"The Urban Dairy will give us the opportunity to bring this story to life right in the middle of the city and to highlight the quality of Australian dairy products.

Showcasing the Legendairy industry will be a key part of the wider festival program which has, in the past, focused on foodstuffs such as coffee and culinary techniques such as bakery.

The Urban Dairy located at Queensbridge Square, Southbank, will include an educational site for all things dairy

'The idea is to create a fully immersive experience from which city visitors can learn about the industry's people, processes and products.'

with grass steps where people can sit and enjoy some of Australian's best dairy products and a dozen brightly painted Picasso Cows from local primary schools.

A 'sounds of dairy' noise-scape, featuring typical sounds from the dairy farm through to the familiar sounds of the milk splash in the glass, will accompany the 'personalities of dairy' pop-up gallery planned for the Festival Hub.

"The idea is to create a fully immersive experience from which city visitors can learn about the industry's people, processes and products," Ms Zucco said.

"The 'personalities of dairy' exhibit will display large-scale portraits of the amazing people involved in the industry from the dairyfarmer to the tanker

driver. It will also profile the favourite cow in the herd."

Dairy Australia's Legendairy program is the lead partner in the Urban Dairy, supported by Lion Dairy & Drinks, which will be promoting its milk, yoghurt and cheese brands within the Urban Dairy Festival Hub.

Ms Zucco said educational workshops including cheese and wine matching (for the adults) and educational sessions for children would be available for the public.

"Kids will be able to get handson with dairy in sessions such as a smoothie mystery box challenge with Legendairy ambassador Michael Klim and a cheese discovery experience," she said.

During the launch weekend, Dairy Australia and Lion will also co-ordinate the Big Mmmm Zone at Batman Park, where the focus will be on family fun with activities such as farming demonstrations, face painting, ceramic cow decorating and givea-

ways. "The Urban Dairy is bringing the country to the city and even though research tell us Australians already know a lot about dairy quality, the Urban Dairy is a great way to remind city folk of that message in their own backyard," Ms Zucco said.



Australia's finest dairy products will be showcased during the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival.

l reckon if they could talk, they'd ask for it by name.

> If we could talk we'd be on TV.

And asking for Champagne with breakfast.



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## **Dentists get messages loud and clear**

Collaboration with dental

- association Dentists provide nutritional advice to patients
- points ✓ Kits with posters to be distributed ) ev to dentists

AIRY Australia is collaborating with the Australian Dental Association (ADA) in a strategic partnership designed to help dentists and other dental health professionals educate their patients about the positive impact of dairy foods on oral health.

Tooth decay is the most common health problem in Australia but it is one that is largely preventable through good nutrition and better dental hygiene practices. Research shows that dairy foods have a specific role to play in dental health as they contain a unique combination of special antidecay nutrients such as calcium, phosphorus and the protein, casein. "While dentists are aware of the positive effect dairy foods have on dental health, the challenge is to bring this awareness to the fore and give them the tools and resources to advise their patients," Dairy Australia's health professional communication manager Emma Glassenbury said.

A recent survey\* of 100 dentists from across the country found that 95 per cent report giving nutritional advice to patients during a consultation, underscoring the significance of the new Dairy Australia and ADA collaboration.

More than 70 per cent of dentists surveyed agree that milk and water should be the preferred drink for children and more than half agree that milk, yoghurt and cheese are good for dental health. Despite this, the top advice currently given to patients is to reduce their intake of sugary drinks.



MILK AND TAP WATER KIDS' TEETH

The infographic showing the benefit of dairy nutrition for teeth will be distributed to dentists.

This presents a great opportunity for us," Ms Glassenbury said.

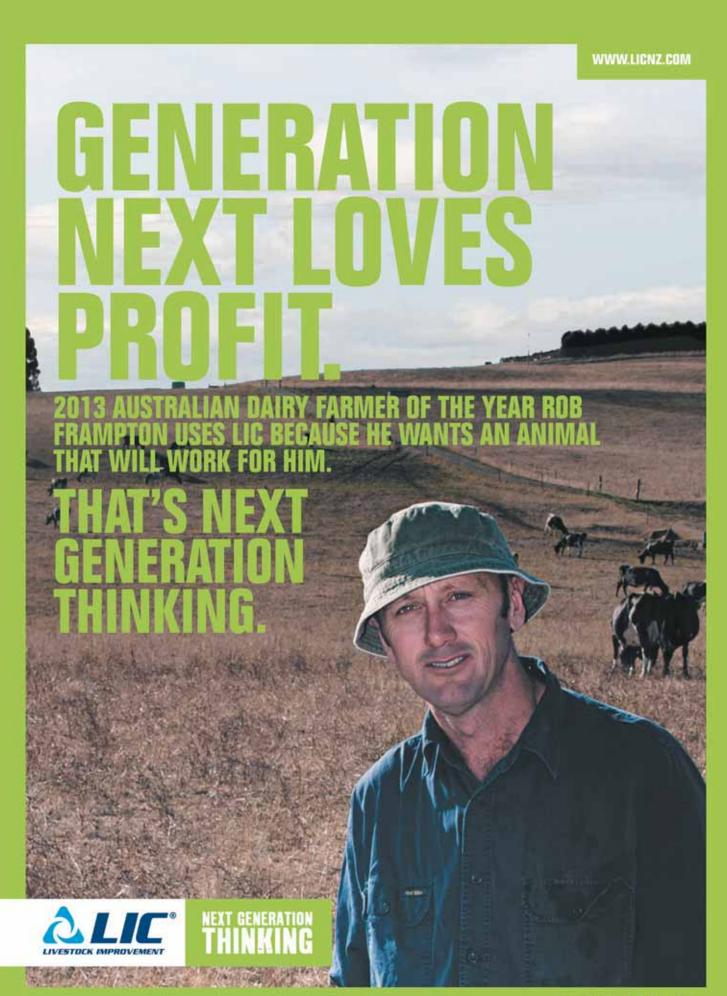
"Dentists feel positive about recommending dairy foods to patients, particularly mums and children, and they know milk is a non-acidic food. We have developed a range of information resources to help dentists simply extend their advice and position milk as the perfect replacement for sugary drinks.

"We also know that dentists are most likely to give nutrition advice to mums with children under the age of 12, and this is a very important target audience for the Legendairy consumer program.'

In March, to kick-start the new program, all 15,000 professional members of the Australian Dental Association will receive an ADA-endorsed kit of resources highlighting dairy's crucial contribution to dental health.

"By providing dentists and dental health professionals with an up-to-date patient factsheet and really easy to understand poster-sized infographics to display in both waiting and consulting rooms, we are filling an important gap that the ADA has helped identify," Ms Glassenbury said.

Professional webinars for ADA members, who comprise 90 per cent of all working dentists in Australia, and a tailored website for dentists, general practitioners and dietitians will also be rolled out during the year. D \*IMS Health October 2015.



FREECALL 1800 454 694



## Export subsidy removal right step



- 1 Subsidies mostly used in Europe and US
- points ✔ Market access liberalisation offers (ev most gains

HE World Trade Organisation's (WTO) agreement to end agricultural subsidies has given Australian dairy exporters a confident boost that they will be more competitive on the global market.

The decision by 163 WTO members, which came at the end of last year, will eliminate \$15 billion worth of export subsidies. These include direct payments, loans, tax breaks and other financial arrangement. About 90 per cent of the subsidy entitlements are in Europe and North America — Australia has not subsidised its agricultural exports for decades.

Under the new agreement, developed countries will "immediately" remove government export subsidies from agricultural products, with developing countries agreeing to phase out subsidies by 2018.

The exception to the immediate phase out of export subsidies for developed countries (some nations qualify for a five-year phase out) applies only to processed products, dairy products and swine meat. This particularly protects the interests of Canada. Switzerland and Norway, which use export subsidies on such products. However, conditions apply, including:

These countries cannot increase the quantity of goods that benefit from export subsidies beyond their average level in a 2003-2005 base period.

These countries cannot apply export subsidies to new markets or to new products.



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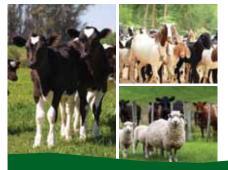
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· They cannot provide export subsidies for products destined for leastdeveloped countries after January 1, 2016.

Dairy Australia's group manager trade and industry strategy Charles McElhone said the agreement was a positive step forward for the industry, after export subsidies had distorted the international dairy market for many years. "The commitment to phase the subsidies out is a significant win for our industry," Mr McElhone said.

"Where the price for whole milk powder might be worth \$3000 a tonne today, if the export subsidy comes on and it's worth \$1000 a tonne, overnight the export price will be \$2000 a tonne. Those are mechanisms by which they undercut the world price for dairy products, and which have been used quite widely within the dairy industry over many years.

"To see that we can no longer return to those days is a real confidence boost for Australian dairy exporters."

However, Mr McElhone said the WTO deal did not cover a number of items, including delivering a market access outcome.

"The vast majority of the potential gains from trade liberalisation can be found in improvements to market access," he said. D

#### How does an export subsidy work?

• An export subsidy is a government policy to encourage export of goods and discourage sale of goods on the domestic market.

· An export subsidy reduces the international price of commodities on which it is imposed and masks market signals to farmers and exporters from countries receiving the subsidies. The most destructive use of export subsidies in dairy has been by the European Union and United States Governments, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s.

• Export subsidies have been less commonly used in recent years within the dairy industry, but re-emerged following the Global Financial Crisis in 2009 when global dairy prices plummeted.

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DON'T Avoid the

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ELEPHAN

## Be alert for Mycoplasma: vet

Incidence of Mycoplasma spreading in Australia

Once a herd is infected, it remains points

infected at subclinical level

#### Biosecurity measures key to ) ev containing it

#### **By Carlene Dowie**

YCOPLASMA was an emerging cause of untreatable mastitis that had caused significant problems in Australian dairy herds since 2006, Sydney University Associate Professor John House told a Gardiner Foundation presentation in Melbourne in February.

If an outbreak was not identified quickly, it could spread through large numbers of animals and be costly, he said. One large farm estimated an outbreak had cost it \$1 million.

The disease could infect both calves and cows and caused pneumonia, tendinitis, middle-ear infection and endometriosis and was potentially fatal.

No treatment was available for milking cows, which had to be culled.

Mycoplasma bovis was also shed in milk, so milk from the hospital herd could not be fed to calves or they could all end up with the disease.

Assoc Prof House said the prevalence of the disease in Australian herds was relatively low - about 3.5 per cent - but it was spreading, and once a herd was infected, it remained infected at a subclinical level.

'No treatment is available for milking cows, which had to be culled.'



Assoc Prof John House: The prevalence of Mycoplasma bovis infection in Australian dairy herds is relatively low but it is spreading.

But numerous farms that had gone through a severe outbreak of the disease were now able to manage it.

The key was being vigilant and acting quickly to isolate any animal suspected of having the disease. It was also important, particularly on large farms, to have 'herd memory', so that new staff were aware of what had happened in the past and could recognise symptoms of the disease if it flared again.

A relatively cheap PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test was now available to detect the disease.

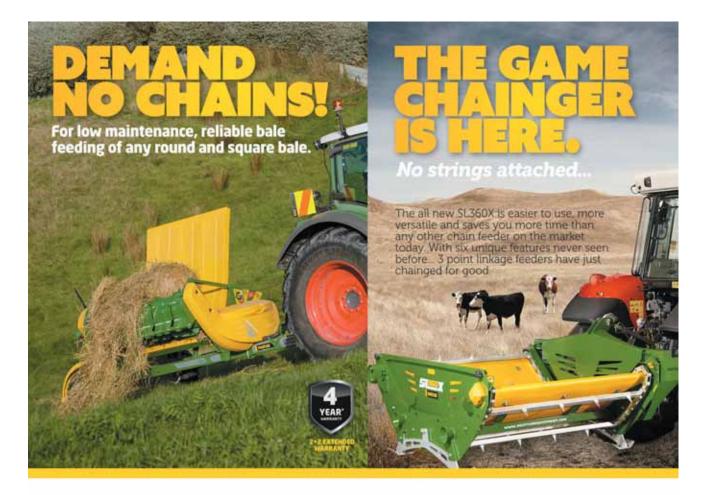
Assoc Prof House said he first became aware of the presence of Mycoplasma bovis in Australian herds in 2006 when he had a request from a dairy farm manager of a herd he regularly treated for a stronger antibiotic to treat cows with mastitis.

The number of cows with mastitis had increased from about 15 to 60 in less than two weeks, and most cows were infected in three or four quarters.

The realisation that this disease was present in Australia and that there was no cost-effective test prompted Assoc Prof House to contact Dairy Australia and led to the funding of a project by the Gardiner Foundation to examine the Incidence of Mycoplasma bovis in eastern Australian dairy herds and to develop the relatively cheap test for the disease.

This initial research effort continued with support from Dairy Australia, and has also led to the development of industry biosecurity recommendations to curb the spread of the disease. D





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#### **RESEARCH UPDATE**

#### Pasture research delivers big gains

WORLD-LEADING plant research in Melbourne promises to deliver big gains to Australia's dairyfarmers, a Gardiner Foundation presentation in February was told.

Dr Luke Pembleton, from the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, said conventional ryegrass-breeding research that he was involved with at the Dairy Futures CRC would deliver improvements in forage yield and plant quality.

This conventional breeding research did not involve genetic modification, so was "without regulatory burden", Dr Pembleton said.

The research into plant quality allowed plant breeders to identify plants higher in water soluble carbohydrate and lower in nitrogen.

The genomic selection of pasture species — using genetic markers to identify specific traits — promised to significantly speed up the development of new varieties.

"It is particularly useful around the things that are difficult to measure, expensive to measure or must be measured late in the breeding cycle," Dr Pembleton

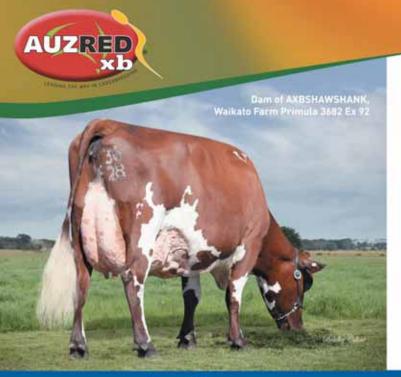


Dr Luke Pembleton discusses his pasture research with Dingee, Vic, dairyfarmer Peter Sexton at the Gardiner Foundation presentation.

said. "These are things such as sward base yield, herbage quality and persistency.

"Persistency is a good one. If you think about persistency in perennial ryegrass, we want our pastures to last for 10 to 20 years. So a breeding program has to assess for that long. With genomic selection, we can get that information on day one.

"So there's opportunity for massive genetic gain through this technology."



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Dairy Australia

**By John Droppert** Analyst **Dairy** Australia

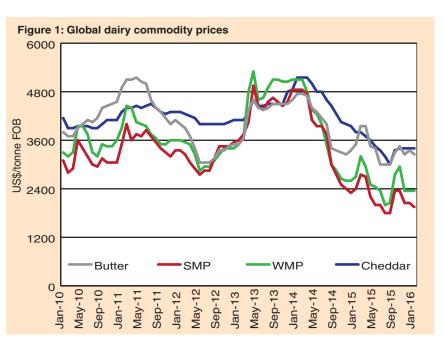
- Global dairy prices remain at low levels
- ✓ High input costs are keeping
- Australian margins under pressure
- points A stable domestic market, ongoing investment, and trade policy gains é offer some upside

HERE has been little cheer for sellers of dairy products at the start of 2016, as evidenced by price falls for all four GlobalDairy-Trade (GDT) auctions for the calendar year so far. While GDT itself is far from the whole story, the challenge of extracting attractive returns from an oversupplied international market is familiar to all exporters at the moment. At home, challenging seasonal conditions and stubbornly high input costs have also tightened pressure on Australian farmers' margins, despite the buffering effects of a stable domestic market and a more favourable exchange rate.

Production is slowing markedly in Australia, down 4.6 per cent for the month of December, and down 0.2 per cent for the season to date. A solid start to the season faltered during spring, as dry conditions cut pasture growth, and tighter margins reduced the capacity (and economic incentive) for farmers to respond. December was generally hot and dry, while January offered little relief, though cooler temperatures and rainfall in some areas towards the end of the month helped.

Milk production in New Zealand has also slowed, with January intakes down two per cent compared with the same month in 2015. For the (June-May) season to date, production is down 2.7 per cent. Although this reflects the pressure exerted by low milk prices (Fonterra's current forecast is about A\$4.11/kg MS) on New Zealand farmers, so far the

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fall in production is less than had been expected. Better-than-forecast weather conditions through summer have supported pasture growth, which farmers have readily utilised to maintain cash flow.

Concurrent with a weaker than expected contraction in the southern hemisphere, growth in the northern hemisphere persists. In particular, European milk production continues to rise, seemingly impervious to global market influences. With the northern spring flush just around the corner, the global industry is again seeing the prospect of stronger prices pushed back.

#### 'European milk production continues to rise, seemingly impervious to global market influences. '

Ongoing supply growth is the prominent factor keeping the market depressed, but sluggish dairy demand has also contributed. While the longer term trends of growing demand remain intact, recent months have seen slower growth in global demand, concentrated in price-sensitive markets. This demand has ebbed as inventories have built up through opportunistic buying at low prices. Many South East Asian countries continue to stock up on relatively affordable dairy products, while the pace of exports to the Middle East has moderated.

Subdued demand from Greater China remains a feature, while on the other hand, global exports to Japan have demonstrated their strongest growth in years. Demand from Russia, hitherto the world's second largest single country dairy market, has plummeted following the embargo on major (western) exporters, now considered likely to persist as late as 2018.

Back home, Australian supermarket sales of the major dairy categories displayed divergent trends in the most recent 12 month period. While dairy spreads continue to grow strongly, milk and cheese sales are steadier, as are sales values for yoghurt and dairy snacks, although volumes continue to shrink.

The current combination of market fundamentals makes for a sobering outlook for commodity prices. However, the stability of the domestic market, the trend towards value adding for export, and (with more rain) some input cost relief do offer some comfort. Similarly, investment in processing capacity, and incremental trade policy gains continue to improve the footing of the industry when it comes to capitalising on the eventual market recovery. D



#### **GROWING BETTER PASTURES**

# Graze right ryegrass to lift returns



By Frank Mickan Pasture and Fodder Conservation Specialist Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

A UTUMN is fast approaching and many farmers will be determining what and when to sow pastures. Front of mind, especially this year, in areas such as the Goulburn-Murray irrigation region where the water price has increased dramatically in the past 12 months, will be cash-flow issues. Although it is important to save money wherever possible, making a short-term decision on planting pasture may limit returns in the long run.



In most dairy zones, a later maturing cultivar will offer greater back-end yield and feed quality and, ultimately, be a cheaper option.

For dairy farms located in the high rainfall/irrigation zones, choosing ryegrass cultivars that limit potential late season production and quality may be short sighted. A bit of money saved now could cost a lot more money later in the season. Despite alternative feeds currently being at a similar or slightly cheaper price than (temporary) irrigation water at \$260 to \$300 per megalitre,



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'For dairy farms located in the high rainfall/ irrigation zones, choosing ryegrass cultivars that limit potential late season production and quality may be short sighted.'

ryegrass pasture is still the backbone of any successful dairy farm and usually is the cheapest feed source both on a cents per kilogram of dry matter (cents/kg DM) and cents per megajoule of metabolisable energy (cents/MJ ME) basis. Therefore, the aim should be to maximise the amount of consumed DM on farm as possible for the year.

Below are some considerations on which to focus to maximise pasture consumed on farm this coming year.

#### 1. Get grazing right

The single most beneficial action to maximise returns from investing in pasture is to get grazing right. Establishing a pasture wedge, using the correct rotation length, and maintaining pasture residuals can drastically improve the bottom line and reduce feed costs. To establish a pasture wedge farmers use several techniques:

• Cows are fed in sacrifice paddock(s) or feedpads during the night or day and may graze some pasture (with or without fodder) to establish a slow rotation.

• The pasture allocated will be initially larger but will decrease in area as the growth accelerates.

• Aim to leave a residual level of 1500-1600 kg DM/ha, or four to six centimetres height, between the clumps. This is not easy to achieve and will require substantial supplementary feeding initially.

• If residuals are left too low and/or first grazing is too early and/or the rotation is too fast, then the farm will probably be short on feed and overgraze in the second round. At that time, the farmer will potentially buying/using their own higher priced supplements to keep the cows performing.

• Towards the end of the first round, aim to graze ryegrass pastures at the 2.5-3-leaf stage. If there are fewer leaves than this, slow the rotation.

• Remember, many other factors such as calving date, current soil moisture,



Improved varieties of ryegrass, such as Italian ryegrass varieties, can deliver more returns.

rainfall events and cost of irrigation water can have large impacts also.

### 2. Choose the right ryegrass option

A trap too many farmers fall into is that when deciding which ryegrass cultivar(s) to sow is to only look at the initial cost of the seed. While not always, there is a strong relationship between the price of ryegrass seed and the level of performance. Choosing a cultivar on price alone could potentially limit the amount of home-grown feed, the cheapest feed source and a key to annual profitability. Therefore consider the following;

Don't put 'all your eggs in one basket'
 choose at least a couple of ryegrass types to suit different soil types, rain-



If you wish to participate in this trial please contact Jim Allen on 0427 229 151 jimallen@allenag.net www.allenag.net Table 1: Additional consumed DM requirement to justify an investment in an improved cultivar compared with an early annual ryegrass type such as Tetila based on varying water prices (\$/ML)

		Water Price (\$/ML)							
	\$100	\$100 \$150 \$200 \$250							
Late Annual RG	≈200kg	≈250kg	≈300kg	≈350kg	≈400kg				
(+0.5 ML/ha)	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha				
Late Italian	≈600kg	≈700 kg	≈900 kg	≈1050 kg	≈1200 kg				
(+1.5 ML/Ha)	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha	DM/ha				

N.B There is an additional ML requirement for the late annual (+0.5ML/ha) and late ltalian(+1.5ML/ha).

Table 2: Additional consumed DM requirement to justify an investment in an improved cultivar compared with an early annual ryegrass type such as Tetila for a rain-fed system over a range of grazing utilisations

		Utilisation (%)						
	Consumed DM required	60%	70%	80%				
Late Annual	≈50kg DM/ha	83kg DM/ha	71kg DM/ha	6kg DM/ha				
Late Italian	≈200kg DM/ha	333kg DM/ha	286kg DM/ha	250kg DM/ha				

fall/likely irrigation and try to match growth curve to the calving pattern.In most dairy zones, a later maturing cultivar will offer greater back-end yield and feed quality and, ultimately, be a cheaper option.

• Does the variety have reliable data to support its performance and is it listed



The single most beneficial action to maximise returns from investing in pasture is to get grazing right.

as a confirmed variety (PBR listed and certified)? Visit the following website, which is listed by the Australian Seed Federation page <www.asf.asn.au/ seed\_database\_mobile.php> or check out the pasture variety tables, starting on page 75. Choosing a non-confirmed variety or a 'Variety Not Specified' (VNS) cultivar is a huge risk that can



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and has cost farmers thousands of dollars.

#### Return On Interest (ROI) comparison

Outlined in the tables on these pages is the amount of additional consumed DM required to justify an investment in an improved cultivar over an early annual such as Tetila. This assumes a milk price of \$5.80/kg milk solids, any additional DM growth requiring 1.6c/kg DM of additional fertiliser, and that 1kg of DM consumed will, conservatively, produce one litre of milk for the purpose of the analysis.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 illustrates the extra DM needed to justify the investment for a range of scenarios when comparing a range of ryegrass cultivars. Costs used are Tetila (\$66/ha), a late-annual ryegrass at \$91/ha and a late-Italian ryegrass at \$159/ha.

As can be seen from Tables 1 and Table 2, that while the price of seed and water (if applicable) influences the decisions process, consumed DM far outweighs these costs. An improved ryegrass would be required to produce an additional 285-1700kg DM/ha (based on 70% utilisation), despite the additional seed, fertiliser and water costs.

The upper value is equivalent to one additional grazing. It would be typical to see extra yields in excess of 3-4 tonne DM/ha with an Italian ryegrass and 1-3 tonne DM/ha for a late annual over early annual ryegrass types such as Tetila under an irrigation or high rainfall system. Table 3 demonstrates the actual return on investment from using a late-annual and a late-Italian over and above Tetila in an irrigated system.

### 3. Fertilise to maximise return on investment

Ensure that pastures are fertilised correctly to allow potential growth to be realised and to maximise return. If investing in an improved variety, it needs to be fertilised correctly.

Fertiliser regimes that limit the performance of an improved variety will likely see the ROI being decreased significantly to a point where there is little to no benefit. Speak with a fertiliser adviser or agronomist earlier rather than later, soil test if needed, kick start the plants at sowing with the right nutrients and apply fertiliser as required.

Getting these three critical areas right will see dairyfarmers go a long way to increasing their returns this coming year. Table 3: The additional return (\$/ha) of a late annual and late Italian ryegrass compared with an early annual ryegrass type such as Tetila with varying water price, assuming a yield advantage of 1450kg DM/ha (1000kg consumed) and 3000 kg DM/ ha (2100 kg consumed) respectively

		Water Price (\$/ML)								
	\$100	\$250	\$300							
Late Annual (+0.5 ML/ha)	+\$373/ha	+\$348/ha	+\$323/ha	+\$298/ha	+\$273/ha					
Late Italian (+1.5 ML/ha)	+\$697/ha	+\$623/ha	+\$548/ha	+\$473/ha	+\$398/ha					

N.B There is an additional ML requirement for the late annual (+0.5ML/ha) and late Italian (+1.5ML/ha).





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#### **GROWING BETTER PASTURES**

## Four-way grazing boosts AMS performance

- ✓ 'Clever cows' work out three-way grazing gate
- change

an an

- ✓ Four-way grazing spreads milkings
- Minimal additional labour required

FTER five years of automatic milking, Tasmanian dairyfarmer Nick Dornauf decided to test run a fourway grazing system, and so far he and his staff are happy with the results.

Mr Dornauf, and his partner Rebekah Tyler, milk up to 600 cows through a DeLaval Automatic Milking Rotary (AMR) at Gala farm in northern Tasmania. Gala is one of four dairy farms run by the Dornauf family; the others have conventional milking systems.

Three-way grazing is the current recommended best practice for Australian automatic milking systems (AMS). The successful operation of three-way grazing at Gala gave Mr Dornauf the confidence to think about options to refine the performance of his AMS.

"With a grazing-based AMS, voluntary cow movement is central to the system's performance," Mr Dornauf said.

"We are always aware of how the cows are moving around the farm because this determines utilisation of the robots, grazing intake and milk production. And voluntary cow movement is all about animal behaviour. Like most AMS farmers, over the years we have become keen observers of animal behaviour and the ways our management practices affect the cows."

He had noticed that across time, a small proportion about 5-10 per cent (depending on the stage of lactation) — of cows would learn to wait at the dairy for gate changes to access the best of the fresh pasture when it became available. As the herd has grown, this small proportion of 'clever cows' has equated to bigger numbers — up to 60 consistently waiting at the dairy at each gate change. This created queues at the dairy at certain times of the day. And these 'clever cows' were also getting preferential access to the fresh pasture breaks where they could selectively graze the best quality feed.

Other cows, arriving up to eight hours later, accessed relatively depleted pasture. There was less available to them and the quality was lower as the leafy material had been eaten by earlier cows.



Nick Dornauf has moved to four-way grazing to encourage more even cow flow through his farm's automatic milking system.



Rebekah Tyler sets up an electric fence at Gala farm. Fourway grazing has involved a slight increase in labour with one additional fence to be set each day.

#### Technology key to boosting dairy growth

**F**OR Ashleigh Wildridge, developments in technology and innovation will help contribute to an exciting future for the dairy industry.

The Sydney University PhD student, who works in the FutureDairy research and development program at Camden, NSW, is carrying out research into cow traffic in various dairy situations.

Part of her research has involved the dairy unmanned ground vehicle, which can be equipped with various sensors and can perform tasks such as checking a dairy herd at night, and monitor soil and pasture quality. Her research has specifically looked at the use of the unmanned ground vehicle in conjunction with robotic milking systems.

Potential impacts include improvement in cow performance and overall health.

Ms Wildridge said technologies such as this could contribute to a dynamic future and growth for the dairy industry.

"We live in a technology-driven world, and in the dairy industry robotic milking systems are a prime example of that," she sad.

"It is all very interesting, and is targeted towards the next generation of farmers.



Alex Wildridge with the unmanned ground vehicle on Sydney University's dairy farm at Camden, NSW.

"Technology is certainly going to become a big part of farming in general."

-Nick Heydon

#### **GROWING BETTER PASTURES**

#### 'We are really happy with the results and at this stage I can't imagine going back to three-way grazing.'

One of the Dornaufs' main motivations to try four-way grazing was to improve animal welfare across the herd. "We wanted to reduce the time cows waited in the queue to be milked, and we wanted to reduce the time those 'clever cows' spent standing on concrete," he said. "We also wanted the other cows to have more equitable access to fresh breaks of pasture."

At FutureDairy's annual AMS gathering, several AMS farmers had expressed an interest in trying four-way grazing. The barrier was the cost of changing the farm layout (for example, an extra one-way gate) to allow for four-way grazing when the benefits were unknown.

The Gala Farm layout was already suitable for four-way grazing so Mr Dornauf decided to test the idea from the start of spring calving (August 1, 2015).

Gala Farm is split into four areas of different sizes, but each with equal proportions of irrigated and dryland pasture. Under three-way grazing the gate changes had been at equal, eight-hour intervals: 6am, 2pm and 10pm.

For four-way grazing Mr Dornauf deliberately set the gate changes at unequal intervals (5am, 11:30am, 6pm, 9:30pm), partly because the four famlets were different sizes and also to reduce the number of cows waiting at the dairy at when the queues were longest — in the middle of the day and early evening.

To enable the desired rotation length to be maintained across the farm, he offered a different size of the pasture break in each area.

"The cows are still fully fed," he said. "But their daily pasture allowance is split across four meals."

Five months down the track, the Gala team is cautiously optimistic.

"We are really happy with the results and at this stage I can't imagine going back to three-way grazing," Mr Dornauf said. "But we are only mid-way through a season and it makes sense to see out the whole lactation before getting too excited.

"Initially four-way grazing added a little complexity to our grazing system but once I got my head around it, putting it into practice has been straightforward and all of our staff actually prefer four-way grazing."

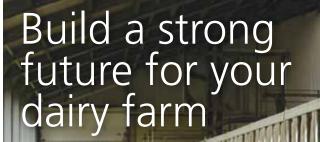
Four-way grazing has involved a little more labour but not as much as expected.

"There's a fourth fence to set up each day, but we now fetch two areas at the same time," Mr Dornauf said. "There's fewer cows to fetch and the queue they join at the dairy is shorter. Plus we don't have the frustration of trying to encourage the 'clever cows' to leave the dairy after milking.

"It took less than a week to see the impact, most notably, a large reduction in the number of cows waiting at the dairy, especially at the hottest time of the day and at night.

"This has been accompanied by a reduction in the average queuing time by 25 per cent. We've all commented that the cows seem more content."

Records from the AMS show the distribution of milkings is now more evenly throughout the day and night. "We still ►







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Nick Dornauf says the benefits of four-way grazing have far outweighed the effort of setting an extra fence each day at Gala automatic milking farm.

see a drop off in cows visiting the dairy between 3:30am and 5am, but it is less than in the past. We are milking at capacity now (80 cows/hour and longer into the night) and I think four-way grazing has allowed us to achieve this."

While milk production is significantly up on last year, Mr Dornauf acknowledges multiple things have contributed to this. He estimates four-way grazing may have contributed about five per cent increase in milk production.

"I think it's lifted production of the lower-production cows because they are now getting more equitable access to fresh pasture breaks and therefore better quality feed," he said. "But four-way grazing was never about improving production. We saw it as a tool to improve voluntary movement and cow comfort and it has been very successful in achieving that."

The FutureDairy team and other AMS farmers are follow-

ing with interest the Dornaufs' experience with four-way grazing.

FutureDairy project leader Associate Professor Kendra Kerrisk said that while three-way grazing was currently considered best practice for pasture-based automatic milking systems, four-way grazing could be more suitable for certain situations.

"As Nick said, it's early days but the results at Gala so far look promising," Assoc Prof Kerrisk said. "Four-way grazing may be a better option on farms where queuing becomes an issue, which is likely to be large herds or AMS running at close to capacity."

Contact: Associate Professor Kendra Kerrisk, mobile 0428 101 372, email <kendra.kerrisk@sydney.edu.au>. FutureDairy's major sponsors are Dairy Australia, DeLaval and the University of Sydney.

#### Science and dairy mix for ag career

**S**YDNEY University student Alex John is in his second year of a PhD looking at pasture management and robotic utilisation in automatic milking systems (AMS).

Mr John works with the FutureDairy at the university's Camden, NSW, campus.

"The FutureDairy group is probably the leader in AMS research in the southern hemisphere," he said. "As AMS is a growing field at the moment, I hope to work in this area, such as advising farmers on pasture management in AMS systems."

Mr John completed his undergradu-

ate studies — a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, with Honours — at the University of Tasmania.

"I was always interested in science, and started working on a dairy farm when I was 16," he said.

He enjoyed both and decided to combine the two in his studies.

"I think if you want to do science, and if you also want to be involved in agriculture, then there's plenty of opportunities out there," he said.

"There's a big variety of jobs available in agriculture."

Mr John said the broad nature of career options meant it was a viable op-



Alex John is one of the researchers looking at pasture management in automatic milking systems.

tion for graduates to pursue a job within a particular sector of agriculture that was of interest to them.

-Nick Heydon

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Shogun should be your choice if you're looking for an Italian ryegrass establishment and winter performance, with the flexibility that it will last for multiple years.

Shoguri NEA is a late flowering hybrid ryegrass released recently by Heritage Seeds and is emerging as a 'game changer' for many farmers. Bred for high production systems like dairying, Shogun NEA has exceptional early vigour and winter production which is comparable to Italian ryegrass.

In addition to strong early establishment, the strong winter growth and extended growing season Shogun provides are seen as major advantages. In trials conducted by Heritage Seeds, Shogun NEA has demonstrated yield advantages through winter of 15-20% over 3 years when compared with leading perennial ryegrass cultivars. This highlights Shogun's ability to produce feed for multiple years when you require it most.

Shogun was bred from a cross of an elite Italian ryegrass and Bealey NEA2 perennial ryegrass, which continues to be one of Australia's best performing late season perennial ryegrasses. Shogun also contains NEA endophyte, which assists persistence, whilst providing protection against insect pests such as Root Aphid & African Black Beetle, without the associated animal health concern of some other endophytes.

#### WHAT FARMERS ARE SAYING

MICK MYERS. STRATHALLAN, VIC

"Shogun has done very well here over the winter and spring period. It has the added advantage over other varieties that if we have a favourable season, it can be watered and grow on all the way through summer.

It does cost a little bit more for seed than short term ryegrass, but it grows for a long time and it gives us the opportunity that if we get a favourable season we can take it right through the summer as a cheaper feed option."

#### JOHN HENDRY, DENMARK AG COLLEGE, WA

"We trialled Shogun in a small area in 2013 on a pretty hostile soil type on the eastern side of the farm and it was really the only grass that persisted," he said.

"From what we saw we thought it would be good to trial Shogun on better soil, so we sowed more in 2014. On more fertile soil it was really impressive. It had really high growth rate and fast recovery, which would suit a tight dairy grazing system.

Every now and then you see something in farming that really catches your attention. You think, that's really extraordinary and on what I've seen over three years, Shogun is a standout".

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MICK MYERS. STRATHALLAN

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Aston has strong performance across a multitude of environments and years. In the 24 Australian trials in which Aston has been included, it has scored in the top 3 commercial varieties for total yield in 22 (92%) of these highlighting its ability to consistently perform over a number of environments and years. Aston's fast establishment results in good early feed production from an autumn sowing, which also makes it particularly useful for filling late autumn and winter feed deficits or oversowing. Aston will produce plentiful feed for multiple grazings through late autumn, winter and early spring and its late season quality will be of benefit for the production of valuable silage or hay cuts into late spring and early summer.

#### MAXIMISING MILK RETURNS IN NTH VIC.

#### JOEL LAWLOR. YALCA, VIC

"We were grazing our February sown Aston in March, this is the first time we have been able to graze new pasture in March."

"Aston has extended our production at both ends of the season, we started grazing earlier than normal and even with a really harsh spring it kept growing and producing into summer."

"It's got really good regrowth and bulk, its one of the main reasons we were able to achieve a marked increase in our milk production per cow last year."

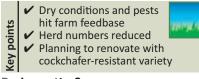
Excellent late season quality and law aftermath heading. Aston maintains very good feed quality into late spring due to high overall feed quality and very law aftermath heading. In particular Aston has a low Neutral Detergent Fibre (NDF), a measure of fibre content which allows a higher feed intake.

As a result stock can consume more energy, which will drive up milk production.

#### For more information visit www.heritageseeds.com.au or call 1800 007 333



# **Dry challenges Gippsland farmers**



#### By Jeanette Severs

WATER audit in spring 2015 underscored how precarious the pasture situation was for Lardner, Victoria, dairyfarmers Rob and Jenni Marshall. The audit showed they had only five days' reserved water on their property, if a natural spring near the dairy dried up.

Already deep in a drought, with little pasture, it was alarming news. The couple relied on the spring to fill dams and on rainfall to support pasture and forage crops. But at that point, the rain was lacking.

Although they could plan to improve water storage and infrastructure, it would take considerable time and funding to implement.

Lardner in West Gippsland is an historically reliable heavy rainfall district — 1000 millimetres of annual average rainfall - so it well set up for

#### 'But the pasture you grow is the cheapest feed, so we're doing all we can to keep that going.'

dryland dairyfarming. However, in recent years, rainfall has been up to 25 per cent below average and last year it was unreliable, with some monthly falls as low as 17mm. "Last year was our lowest rainfall for six years," Mr Marshall said.

The farm is a mix of red loam undulating country with some grey loam flats and grows perennial ryegrass pastures.

The Marshalls milk a self-replacing Friesian herd of 320 cows on the 121 hectares, using a 20-a-side herringbone dairy, aiming to produce 1.8 million litres, but in recent dry conditions annual production has reached only 1.2 million litres. Heifers are grown out on a 57ha agisted block.

Annual calving begins on July 31 to match the farm's pasture cycle.

We calve once a year from July 31 because I can get a bank of grass and by the end of the calving, spring feed is coming on," Mr Marshall said.

The natural spring-fed dams have an annual allocation licence of seven megalitres for dairy and stock water only. Effluent is spread on paddocks from a 2.6Ml dam, pumped out periodically.

Usually 0.8 tonnes/cow/year is fed but last year this was lifted to one tonne/cow.

On-farm harvest of silage usually produces half the herd's fodder needs, but this season when Mr Marshall realised the harvest would only yield half that quantity again, he bought 120 tonnes of silage. "We also buy standing grass and process it ourselves," Mr Marshall said.

This season's pastures, apart from lack of rainfall, were also affected by cockchafers — 50 per cent of the farm had to be re-sown. He decided to diversify his risk and planted 21ha of forage crops for the first time this



Rob Marshall, Lardner, Vic, in the only decent forage crop on the farm, a chicory crop in the paddock under which the natural spring runs.

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summer, which had mixed results, with poor germination due to lack of rainfall and a consequent long delay on grazing.

"We got nervous as the season went on and we didn't want to risk having lack of feed, so we diversified into chicory, rape and millet as part of a risk-management strategy," Mr Marshall said. "Unfortunately, growth was offset by poor strike rates."

The lack of ready pasture and forage crops meant he began feeding silage in late November, rather than January.

His response to the drought was:

• bought more feed by any available means;

• forward bought grain;

• culled herd early — normally Mr Marshall culls the herd at the end of the lactation, but began the process from November;

• culled empty cows immediately after pregnancy testing;

• herd tested in January and set a



Jenni and Rob Marshall in the 20-a-side herringbone dairy.

threshold of eight litres/cow/milking and culled anything producing less;maintained a 30-45 day grazing rotation compared with a normal 45-60 day

rotation; and

- culled regular mastitis offenders and cows with high cell counts.
- "I'm prepared to bring the herd down ►

#### **Drought-resistant tetraploid success in Gippsland**

WITH shorter rest periods from grazing and better growth in dry summers, PGG Wrightson Seeds Base perennial ryegrass with AR37 endophyte has been a real success story for Victorian farmer Tim Kooloos.

Mr Kooloos, who runs a dairy farm at Leongatha South, started growing Base AR37 two seasons ago as he wasn't happy with the persistence of other tetraploid ryegrasses on his red soils, which are particularly susceptible to dry summers.

"Base ryegrass was selected from drought survivors in Maryborough and Hamilton, which is a fair bit drier than Leongatha South, so I thought if it can survive there it could survive down here pretty well," he said.

"So I trialled it one year in two paddocks with an autumn renovation, directdrilling on an existing paddock and it established really well with really dense tillering, and then the winter performance I've never seen that in a perennial ryegrass before."

While the growth rates of most perennial ryegrasses slowed down significantly during winter, Mr Kooloos said he was pleased to see that the Base AR37 was not just better than other perennials, it actually lifted the performance in his milk vat compared with his annual ryegrasses.

"I was really surprised by the Base performance — during winter I normally give perennial ryegrass a 40-50 day rest period between grazings to allow it to grow out to needed dry matter requirements, whereas I found the Base product could do the same with just 35 days rest period in the middle of winter," he said.

With a heavier sowing rate of 35kg/ ha, complemented by high rates of nitrogen to get an extra growth response, Mr Kooloos was happy with the establishment and persistence of the Base ryegrass and has seen no problems with his cows grazing the AR37 endophyte.

"We have had trouble using standard endophytes in the past, but I've had no problems with the cows handling AR37, it's the best endophyte we've used," he said.

"The beauty of it is we've just farmed through two of the wettest winters on record followed by two of the driest summers on record and that's brought in above average levels of pest pressure that we wouldn't normally see in Gippsland, including root aphid, and the Base AR37 product seems to be a level above resistance-wise to the other species we've got on the farm."

Article supplied by PGG Wrightson Seeds, website <a href="http://www.pggwrightsonseeds.com.au/">http://www.pggwrightsonseeds.com.au/</a>>.



Tim Kooloos in a pasture on Base AR37 on his Leongatha South dairy farm.

# **PASTURE PROPHET**

#### **OVERSOWING & FAST FEED**

There has been a steady stream of enquiries this year for quick feed options. People are looking for fast feed to sow into fields coming out of crops, to replace struggling pastures and to set up green feed into autumn and winter. Quick autumn feed options will also allow longer rest for the better pastures, thus preserving them into winter and giving them a longer useful life-span. Here are some notes around what species to look at, the cost benefits and why good new varieties are worth the cost.

#### FAST FEED OPTIONS INCLUDE:



	Annual or Italian Ryegrass	Foroge Oots	Forage Triticale	Forage Barley	Autumn Rope
Pros	High quality feed	Suits dry sowing	Copes in wetter sites Suits later sowings		High animal performance
	Good animal acceptance	Reliable	Suits lower pH sites	Grazing, Silage, Hay	Cheapest option per ha
	Silage, hay & spring/early summer feed	Bulk feed in chasing fibre, silage or hay	Very high siloge yield potential	Quality cereal: lower NDF, good ME	Less bugs etc. with autumn sowing
Cons	Winter yield reduced from Ider sowing Performance		Not suitable for hay due to long awns	Does not like wet sites	Likely some re-sowing in spring
Sowing rate	25 - 35 kg/ha	75 - 100kg/ha	90-120 kg/ha	60 - 100 kg/ha	3 - 5 kg/ha
Sowing times	Feb - Apr	Feb - May	Mar - Jun	Apr - Aug	Feb - Mar
Other notes	Add 2 kg/ha of rape for increased early yield, but may reduce the spring yield	Select forage types: grain types may have meagre autumn/winter DM yields	Higher feed value as late winter grazing or siloge over ryecom	Can be sown early autumn for fast feed, but this may reduce spring yield	Ideally should be sown, up & going by late March to be most useful

#### SOW GOOD QUALITY, NEWER VARIETIES

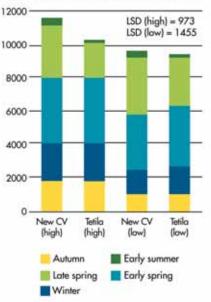
Ryegrass plant breeding has achieved an average of around 1.0 to 1.5% yield gain potential per year. If you are using 20 year old varieties, then you are potentially 20-30% behind in yield potential. But what if the input levels are low? Do the new genetics still offer a benefit? Here is an extract from a replicated trial from Howlong in 2015 to compare a new and old cultivar under a higher and a lower input regime. In this case comparing two tetraploid annual ryegrasses.

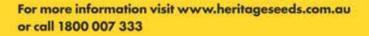
#### Return on investment (ROI analysis)

Return on investment (ROI analysis)	Total Yield kg DM/ha	Yield adv. kgDM/ha	S/ha over Tetila @ 30c/kg DM	\$/kg Seed cost e.g.	Cost of seed @ 30kg/ha	Marginal ROI from new variety
New ov [high input]	11,659	1480	\$444	\$4.00	\$120	673%
Tetila (high input)	10,179			\$1.80	\$54	
New cv. (low input)	9,620	336	\$101	\$4.00	\$120	153%
Tetila (law.input)	9,284			\$1.80	\$54	

New varieties from sound breeding and evaluation programs, used effectively, will outperform old types and the investment is justified by the return. Increasing fertility or inputs will further improve the yields and return.

#### SEASONAL YIELD KG DM/HA





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 to 280 and rely on heifers to bring the herd up when conditions improve," he said.

"We've got a lot of empty silos and empty sheds, so I have to be firm about culling. And as quick as we've been making money, we've been spending it.

"Production is down 30 per cent the past two seasons and it's two years since our milk output hit the peak of 1.8 million.

"But the pasture you grow is the cheapest feed, so we're doing all we can to keep that going.

"We're feeding cows to maintain their condition and not worry about production."

Ongoing work included applying fertiliser and urea, finding affordable agistment for dry cows and monitoring for cockchafers and black beetles.

When it comes to pasture renovation this year, Mr Marshall said he was interested in changing to ryegrass variety AR37 and expected to renovate at least 50 per cent of the farm again, including a lease block.

"Our agronomist told us AR37 was cockchafer and root-aphid resistant," he said. PGG Wrightson Seeds Australia markets AR37 as a late maturing, high-yielding densely tillered ryegrass, resistant to a number of Australia's major pasture pests, including cockchafer and root aphid. It can be grazed 55-85 days after sowing, requires a minimum 650mm rainfall, and is recommended for high rainfall dairy regions, such as Lardner district.

"I'll be sowing down 50:50 annual and perennial ryegrass," Mr Marshall said. "I'm hoping for an autumn break in the third week of March. As a rule, we get over 100mm.

"I'm also considering a winter turnip crop or similar — maybe 8ha — because of the lack of hay.

"I think, unless the season turns around dramatically, there'll be no feed on agistment and what agistment is available will be expensive.

"So I'll be spreading fertiliser and urea to get as much feed bank up as possible. We get cold winters, where there's little grass growth; so lack of feed is a risk because cow condition will go down.

"Our biggest fear is getting another infestation of cockchafers and black beetles."

In the medium and long term, Mr Marshall's plans were investing in water infrastructure for pasture feed. That includes utilising the effluent dam and laying underground pipes and standing pipes across the farm to irrigate pasture and crops.

Future infrastructure also included installing tanks to catch rainfall from



Rob Marshall in O'Mahoney's Creek, which other farmers have tapped into for stock water. He said he would investigate options for acquiring an irrigation licence.

sheds, which could be used for dairy washdown, stock water and paddock irrigation.

Other farmers in the area had irrigation licenses for O'Mahoney's Creek, part of which ran through the Marshall property. Mr Marshall thought it was time to investigate an irrigation licence, for stock water. "We've got some major investment in the future," he said.



The poorly germinated crop of millet and rape.





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	Mean*		days	ering from tila	ME MJ/kg	CP%	NDF%	Extra meat	Extra milk	No. of	
	Winter yield	Spring yield	Total yield	NSW	WA	DM			value \$/ha	value \$/ha	trials
OreTet®	104	104	104	0	0	10.73	22.32	47.85	+\$164	+\$390	2
Tetila	100	100	100	0	0	10.40	22.40	49.2 3	\$0	\$0	35

Relative rankings have been undertaken by comparing all yields as a percentage of Tetila

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## Seed dressings boost pastures start

 Seed treatments protect plants from insects
 Can lead to more

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 Can lead to more persistent pastures
 Limited protection under

(ev

 Limited protection under high pest pressure

ASTURE seed dressings can provide valuable insurance to protect the significant investment of a new pasture. Seed treatment products include insecticides, fungicides and biological additives (in combination or singularly), designed to help maximise plant establishment.

The placement of pesticides in close proximity to the seed means seed treatment is cost-effective and environmentally friendly, as they provide targeted control of insect pests.

Seed treatments can protect the seed and seedling from low-moderate attack by insects during emergence and establishment. They work by forming a chemical barrier over the surface of the germinating seed, which protects it from chewing insects, such as wireworms (see Figure 1).

Systemic seed treatments result in insecticide being translocated to the above-ground parts of germinating plants, deterring or killing pests such as aphids and mites (see Figure 2). They offer protection post-sowing and can delay or remove the need to apply foliar sprays.

In some instances, using seed treatments rather than foliar sprays can preserve beneficial populations of insects. However, the benefits of seed treatments can be short-lived or the efficacy of seed treatments can be low if pest pressure is extremely high.

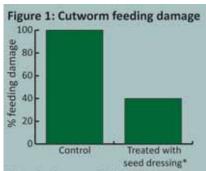
Seed treatments should be included in any resistance or insecticide management strategy (e.g. exposure of pests to particular insecticide groups, rotation of insecticide groups).

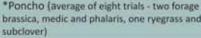
Although the duration of protection may be limited, a delay in pasture damage and pest establishment can boost plant survival and longer-term pasture productivity (see Figure 3).

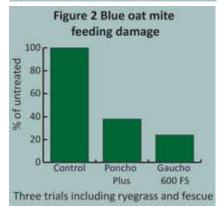
#### When to use seed treatments

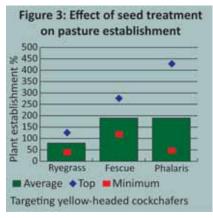
• Planting in conditions that make the seedlings more susceptible to insect damage, for example dry or cold and wet conditions.

• Sowing into paddocks where pests are known to be present and are difficult to control or detect before crop









damage occurs e.g. soil insects, earthmites.

• Where losses cannot be tolerated e.g. seed is expensive or sown at a low rate per hectare.

Most producers prefer the hasslefree option of buying pre-treated seed, as opposed to applying seed treatments themselves.

Store all pasture seed (even nontreated seed) in a dry, cool environment to minimise quality loss and impact on germination.

Species and the quality of the seed

at purchase are the biggest drivers determining sowing rates and whether seed can be carried over from one season to another.

Some treated pasture species can be carried over from one season to another without too much impact on germination percentage, while other species will lose germination and or vigour if not sown in the year it is purchased. If in doubt, increase the sowing rate so there is no seed left over.

Always confirm the total germination of purchased seed from the seed company to determine sowing rates and potential to save leftover seed for the following season.

Always observe withholding periods specified on seed treatment labels. If buying seed be sure to know the number of weeks from sowing before a pasture can be grazed or cut for hay.

#### Advantages

**Precision targeting.** Little insecticide is applied to non-target sites, or to non-target organisms, such as beneficial insects. Soil insects and insects that attack the seedlings as they are emerging can be controlled or deterred.

**Low dose.** Small amounts of pesticides are used in seed treatments compared to broadcast sprays. This reduces the environmental impact.

**Reduce traffic over paddock.** Control of early insect attack, such as redlegged earth mite (RLEM), through the use of seed treatments can reduce the need to apply insecticides by ground, saving costs and minimising potential off-target spray drift.

#### Disadvantages

Limited protection under high pest pressure. Under high pest pressure, significant crop damage may occur. Duration of protection. Seed treatment may not provide protection for long enough to provide complete protection to the establishing pasture. Pesticide breakdown is most rapid under warm, moist conditions.

**Phytotoxicity.** Some seed treatments may be phytotoxic when applied at high rates. Cracked, sprouted, and scuffed seeds are particularly susceptible to toxic effects.

Contact: The Pasture Improvement Initiative (PII), website <www. pastureimprovementinitiative.com. au>.

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## **Online pasture web application launched**

Pasture application combines grazing and feeding information
 Helps farmers manage pastures better
 Can be adapted to different systems

**P**ASTURE.IO is a new online web application that compiles and crunches farm pasture data and ruminant nutrition.

The founder of Pasture.io Oliver Roberts said its mission was to revolutionise pasture management by providing farmers with a platform that enabled them to take greater control of their operation.

Mr Roberts, who was raised on a dairy farm at Flowerdale, Tasmania, has had more than 10 years experience measuring pasture. By doing this he has increased his farm's average pasture utilisation to more than 15.5 tonnes of dry matter per hectare.

"The development of Pasture.io came about due to no other product on the market taking full advantage of the farm data we capture, and all lacking the customisability, flexibility and suitability to accommodate numerous management styles," he said. "On top of this, none offer the integration of ruminant nutrition and pasture, which is core to all dairy and beef farming businesses."

Pasture.io provides includes comprehensive grazing planner, dynamic feed wedges, ration builder, individual paddock attributes and fertilisation module.

"Many metrics are saved at each of your grazing activities to be used

'Many metrics are saved at each of your grazing activities to be used strategically in future decisions.'

strategically in future decisions for taking advantage of pasture surpluses and mitigating pasture deficits," Mr Roberts said. "This is particularly important in any season and more so in seasons such as the one we are experiencing now."

Pasture.io is accessible by phone, tablet or computer and can be used in the paddock, at home, or while travelling.

Richard and Melissa Duniam run a 500-cow 150-hectare dairy farm at Sisters Creek, Tas. They also lease other dairy farms in north-west Tasmania.

Mr Duniam said Pasture.io had given them the confidence to grow their business by knowing that the cows' ration would be balanced and knowing how much pasture was being grown on each farm, as pasture utilisation was a key driver in farm profitability.

After discussing with Mr Roberts the benefits of measuring his pasture and then using Pasture.io to utilise this data, Mr Duniam bought a trailing pasture meter (C-Dax).

Mr Duniam said the benefits of Pasture.io were that it was easy to use and offered the flexibility to fit his grazing system. Consistently measuring pastures every week and utilising the data in Pasture.io had given Mr Duniam greater confidence in his grazing management, and he was able to extend and shorten the grazing round with ease.

Fluctuations in the milk vat were smaller due to maintaining a tighter feed wedge and a feeding regime based around pasture quality, which meant a more consistent ration, both in terms of nutritional value and weight, was going down the cows' throat.

Mr Duniam said he was also able to keep the herd's ration balanced, which had been particularly important this season to maintain milk production in a dry year, by feeding palm kernel extract, silage and grain.

"Pasture.io doesn't lock you into any management style, but encourages you to be a better farmer by providing tools to allow sound grazing decisions to be made that are not possible to do on the fly," he said.

"It not only helps manage growing and grazing pasture but also assists in balancing the ration to optimise feed intakes for maximising your inputs."

Mr Roberts said he believed all farmers could improve their pasture management.

"With the use of Pasture.io and my support, farmers can improve their farm productivity whether they use a lot of inputs or not, or whether they have a big or small, simple or complex operation," he said. Contact: Oliver Roberts, email

Contact: Oliver Roberts, email <ollie@pasture.io> or visit website <http://pasture.io>.



Oliver Roberts the founder of Pasture.io taking a plate metre reading at Robin Hill, Flowerdale, Tasmania.



Dairy cows grazing pasture at Robin Hill, Flowerdale, Tasmania. The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016 69

# **Focusing on improved performance**

 Focus farm project looking to lift homegrown fodder production
 Summer forage crops replace poorer summer pastures
 Milk production increased without increase in concentrates
 ISMORE, NSW, district fourth-

generation milk producer Andrew Wilson and his partner Kelly Boyd are at the core of NSW's first dairy focus farm, a cutting-edge, whole-ofbusiness learning initiative with an emphasis on lifting home-grown feed production.

The two-year program, being run by Subtropical Dairy, began in 2014. It selected a farming enterprise, with a strong family emphasis, and aims to improve operating surplus through reducing fixed costs, maximising home-grown feed and fine-tuning strategic business decisions.

A support group of local farmers, an accountant, banker, agronomist and veterinarian meet every second



Improving pastures has been one of the goals of the focus farm.

month on farm to nut out management decisions. Mr Wilson and Ms Boyd milk 250 predominantly Holstein cows at Woodlawn, on a mixed irrigated pasture and grain system.

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#### 'Despite a more favourable year this year, Mr Wilson's milk production has increased by a significantly higher percentage than the regional increase.'

A large crowd gathered for the second open day at the farm late last year to see what had been achieved nine months on from the start of the project, and what were their future plans.

### What has changed and what has been achieved?

**1. Better quality home-grown feed.** Summer forage crops were grown for the first time last year as part of a program to replace poor quality kikuyu and setaria. There are plans to grow 10 hectares again this summer as part of the summer pasture renovation. Summer crops were conserved as round-bale silage to provide quality autumn feed as opposed to buying in feed.

Nitrogen fertilisation and mulching of

Table 1: Farm o	overview
Total area:	170ha
Milking platform:	77ha
Irrigation:	35ha solid set and travellers
Milking:	245 (predominantly Holsteins)
Current production:	23 litres/cow
Calving pattern:	3 blocks/year: May, August/September, December/January

summer pastures was carried out to maintain quality.

**2. Increase in milk production.** Average annual milk production per cow has increased from 5286 litres/cow to 6000 litres/cow without increasing concentrate feed levels. Concentrate is fed at four kilograms pellets/cow/day and 1kg molasses/cow/day (in summer).

**3. Herd health program.** A monthly program has been introduced with a particular focus on reproductive health. Patches were introduced to improve heat detection, and cows



Andrew Wilson, Bill Fulkerson, from Norco, and Nathan Jennings, from NSW Local Land Service, address the field day.

Table 2: Variation in milk production

Variation in milk production — last nine months versus the same time last year ▲ Focus farm increase: 19.6% ▲ Regional increase: 2.4%

Variation in milk production — last three months versus the same time last year ▲ Focus farm increase: 26.4% ▲ Regional increase: 4.4% with uterus infections identified and treated monthly.

**4. Started herd recording.** A key driver to milk production increases has been a better use of home-grown feed and improved reproductive performance.

Before the project, Mr Wilson had always had a keen focus on managing a pasture-based system, utilising 10 tonnes/dry matter (DM)/ha compared with regional average pasture utilisation of 7t/DM/ha.

Although the project would like to take all the credit for the increase in milk production, 2015 has been a better year compared with 2014 in the region.

Despite a more favourable year this year, Mr Wilson's milk production has increased by a significantly higher percentage than the regional increase for the same period last year. The difference is higher again for the last three months during the prime ryegrass season. (See Table 2.)

#### **Additional savings**

As part of the project, a Ferts\$mart plan was developed for the farm. Recent soil testing as part of the plan indicated high fertility for the main nutrients, attributed largely to the frequent use of chicken litter in previous years.

Nitrogen is all that's required short term to assist pasture growth. Mr Wilson believes this will save him an estimated \$15,000 in fertiliser application this year alone.

#### **Future priorities**

Priorities for Mr Wilson in the future include:

• Maintaining a full pasture-based system with minimal grain. This will involve establishing and maintaining quality summer grass species on degraded areas and conserving surplus pasture (both ryegrass and tropical grasses).

• Building to 300 milking cows, aiming for 6000 litres/cow, mainly from home-grown feed (maintaining current levels of concentrate feeds).

• Installing auto-draft based on animal electronic identification tags.

• Adding a simple concrete feedpad for all-weather feeding.

• Renovating the house.

The final open day for the project will take place early this year, where the numbers behind the final results will be examined in detail.

This project is supported by funding from Dairy Australia and the Australian Government.

#### **GROWING BETTER PASTURES**

# Adding forage rape to autumn ryegrass

- Forage rape sown into dryland perennial pasture
- V Needs good autumn rains
   to establish
- points
  - Can't be used with broadleaf weed herbicides

OST farmers think of brassica forages as spring-sown crops for extra summer grazing, however, one South Australian dairyfarmer included forage rape in his ryegrass oversowing mix last autumn with impressive results.

Bill Fraser dairy farms at Waitpinga on the southern Fleurieu Peninsula and routinely oversows many of his dryland pastures with extra Italian and perennial ryegrass seed in autumn.

He aims to drill the seed in just before or soon after the opening seasonal rains with the goal being to boost winter growth and thicken up the ryegrass base.

"We sow early in autumn so new seedlings can better compete with the



Bill Fraser and Gary Beaton inspecting one of their paddocks oversown with ryegrass and forage rape in autumn.

### Farming, it's what we do.

"Optigen II has become a regular part of my feeding strategy. The cows respond to it unlike any other supplementary protein that I have used. Optigen II gives me the ability to feed more fibre, without halting production. It's been a great tool and helped me use more home grown feed rather than buy expensive hay, like Lucerne."

> — David Brinkman, Wonga Lea Farm Victoria



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MANAGEMEN

'The forage rape seemed to add a second storey to the pasture base without appearing to compromise ryegrass growth underneath.'

existing pasture and provide a useful boost to winter growth," Mr Fraser said.

After hearing the idea from dairy adviser Neil Lane, Mr Fraser decided to try and further boost winter growth by including forage rape in his seed mix in 2015.

Forage rape seed was added at only two kilograms per hectare in the oversowing seed mix for an additional seed cost of \$20 per hectare.

"Knowing brassica seedlings need warm soils to establish well, I reckoned last autumn was a good opportunity to include forage rape," Mr Fraser said.

"We got good early rains at Easter and forecasts were for above average rains throughout autumn, so we acted immediately to include forage rape in the seed mix for 12 paddocks."

Paddocks oversown with rape in the mix were only first grazed at the end of May when pastures had accu-

## Background and tips for forage brassicas

**B**RASSICA forages like rape have potential for strong autumn growth if sown early with irrigation or early rains.

Bill Fraser's experience was favourable, with the extra growth from added forage rape seed costing him only \$25 per tonne dry matter — but Mr Fraser's good result was highly dependent on the solid early opening to the 2015 growing season and reduced incidence of broadleaf weeds.

mulated around 3000 kilograms dry matter (DM) per hectare. Even so, Mr Fraser thought that the rape plants were not well anchored and deliberately grazed other paddocks first.

Nevertheless the forage rape grew well early. Mr Fraser and farm adviser Greg Mitchell estimated it added about 400kg DM/ha at the first grazing, and at least as much again at the second grazing in mid-winter.

"The forage rape seemed to add a second storey to the pasture base without appearing to compromise ryegrass growth underneath," he said.

Forage rape will not tolerate many of the selective broadleaf herbicides commonly used in dairy pastures each autumn.

Mr Fraser said that the farm enjoyed less broadleaf weed problems

Most herbicides that control capeweed, mallows, nettles and geranium will destroy brassica seedlings.

Brassica seedlings are strongly susceptible to pests such as earth mites, so full insect pest protection is required.

If forage rape is added to autumn pasture mixes, apply nitrogen and sulphur fertiliser to maximise early growth. —Greg Mitchell, DairySA forage project

officer

than normal in 2015, so they were able to delay or omit broadleaf sprays in many paddocks.

"But with hindsight, we should not have bothered including rape in a couple of paddocks known to have heavy weed burdens like mallows," he said.

In summary, Mr Fraser would consider including forage rape in his oversowing mixes in the future, but only in years when he is confident of an early break and continuing rains.

Article supplied by DairySA. This project funded by Dairy Australia has been developed as part of the DairySA Hills and Fleurieu Forage Network project. To be kept informed of the project contact email <info@dairysa.com.au> or DairySA forage project officer Greg Mitchell. mobile 0417 814 037.



Forage rape adding extra bulk to a ryegrass pasture at the second grazing in winter 2015.

# The benchmark for production and performance

Trial Data To view the performance of Matrix in trials, visit our web site: www.cropmark.com.au/Trial-Data.aspx

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Matrix Enhanced<sup>®</sup> perennial ryegrass truly is the benchmark for production and performance on Victorian dairy farms. It is thoroughly proven, reliable, persistent and high performing.

Many farmers would argue that there is simply no better perennial ryegrass. And the cows won't argue with that either.

They find it very palatable and eat it readily.

Farmers tell us the milk production lifts when the cows are grazing Matrix.

Matrix is suitable for all pasture renovation, including over-sowing.

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KEY

\*Variety Confirmation: Confirms if a brand of a species qualifies for the use of the term 'variety' by way of meeting one or more of the definitions for a 'variety' as nominated by International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plant, Organisation for Economic Co-opeartion and Development, Plant Breeders Rights or UPOV, OECD, PBR or Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies.

Registered Trade Mark but no variety confirmation

\*\*Australian Plant Breeders Rights Granted \*\*\*Registered Trade Mark Granted

Agronomic Selection Criteria		Market Information			Pro	Intellectual Property Status	
Type Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics		Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI***
ANNUAL RYE							
Annual Ryegrass (Lolium rigidum)	Very Early	Diploid	Safeguard		Valley Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
(Lonum rigidum)	Early	Dipioiu	Fantăstic Guard	V V	Valley Seds		
	Early	<b>D</b> : 1 : 1	Wimmera		Many		
Annual Italian (Lolium	Earlý	Diploid	Diploid Tetila® Grassmax®		Valley Seeds		
multiflorium ssp.	Earlý Early	Diploid Diploid	Grassmax® SF Flyer®	V	Heritage Seeds Seed Force		
westerwoldicum)	Early	Diploid	Thunder	~	Many		
	Earlý Early	Diploid Tetraploid	Winterhawk Betta Tetila	V	Seed Force Parkseeds Pty Ltd		
	Early	Tetraploid	Diamond T		Parkseeds Pty Ltd PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Earlý Early	Tetraploid Tetraploid	New Tetila Rhantom	~	Vicseeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Early	Tetraploid	Phantom SF Catalyst	V V	Seed Force		
	Early	Tetraploid	SF Catalyst SF Catapult SF Sprinter	V	Seed Force		
	Earlý Early	Tetraploid	Suparazer® T	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force PGG Wrightson Seeds	-	
	Early	Tetraploid Tetraploid	Sungrazer® T Tetrone		PGG Wrightson Seeds Pasture Genetics		
	Early	Tetraploid	Tetila	~	Many		
	Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season	Diploid Tetraploid	Aristocrat II Atomic Ryegrass	V	Valley Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Mid Season	Diploid	Devour		Speciality Seeds		
	Mid Season	Diploid Diploid	Noble Progrow		Valley Seeds Valley Seeds	_	
	Mid Season	Tetraploid	Abundant	V V	Ilrwin Hunter		
	Mid Season	Tetraploid	Astound	V	Valley Seeds	_	
	Mid Season	Tetraploid	Burst (BurstARG) Grasslands Tama	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Vicséeds Many	-	
	Mid Season Mid Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	Mach 1	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Agricom		
	Mid Season	Tetraploid	Maximus	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds Upper Murray Seeds Pasture Genetics		
	Mid Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	R2 Ryegrass Rocket		Pasture Genetics	_	
	Mid Season	Tetraploid	SF Adrenalin	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force		
	Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	T Rex Winter Star II® (WSRII)	~	Heritage Seeds	_	
	IVIIU-IALE SEASON	Tetraploid	Vortex	V V	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Late Season	Tetraploid Diploid	Arnie SF Sultan	V	Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Seed Force		
	Late Season	Diploid Tetraploid	Ace Ryegrass	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Loner Murray Seeds		
	Late Season Late Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	Bullet	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds Cropmark Seeds Pasture Genetics Cropmark Seeds Seed Force		
	Late Season	Tetraploid	Jivet	V	Pasture Genetics		
	Late Season Late Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	Zoom SF Pinnacle		Seed Force		
	Late Season	Tetraploid	SF Pinnacle SF Speedyl Dargo (DoubleCrop)	V	ISeed Force		
Italian Ryegrass (Lolium	Early Mid Season	Diploid	Dargo (DoubleCrop)		Vicseeds Valley Seeds Valley Seeds		
multiflorium)	Mid Saacon	Diploid	Asteroid	V	Valley Seeds		
,	Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season	Diploid	Eclipse Select	<ul> <li>V</li> </ul>	Vallev Seeds		
	Mid Season Mid Season	Diploid Tetraploid	Kano Amass		Specialty Seeds	Pending	
	Mid Late season	Diploid	Charger LM	V	Valley Séeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late Season	Diploid	Asset Asset AR37	Pendina	Agricom	Pending	
	Late Season Late Season	Diploid Diploid	Awesome	Pending	Agricom Upper Murray Seeds	Pending Pending	
	Late Season	Diploid	Blade	<b>v</b>	Smyth Seeds	Pending	
	Late Season Late Season	Diploid	Concord® II (Supercruise) Crusader		PGG Wrightson Seeds	Pending	
	Late Season	Diploid	Diplex® Hulk		Pasture Genetics		
	Late Season	Diploid	Húlk	<ul> <li></li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds	_	
	Late Season	Diploid Diploid	Icon Jackpot	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Pasture Genetics		
	Late Season Late Season	Diploid	Knight	V	Agricom	Pending	
	Late Season	Diploid	SF Accelerate® SF Indulgence		Seed Force		
	Late Season Late Season	Diploid Diploid	SF Momentum®		Seed Force		
	Late Season	Diploid	SF Tonuss	V	Seed Force		
	Late Season Late Season	Diploid Diploid	Sonik Surge		Cropmark Seeds		
	Late Season	Diploid	Tabŭ	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
	Late Season	Tetraploid	Aston	V	Heritage Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late Season Late Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	Denver® Feast® II (FSTII)	~	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Late Season	Tetraploid	Nourish (KLM 138)	V	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Late Season	Tetraploid	Jeanne Ó		Pasture Genetics, Irwin Hunter & Co.		
	Late Season Late Season	Tetraploid Tetraploid	SF Emmerson Thumpa		Seed Force Agricom	Pendina	
	Late Season		Mona		Pasture Genetics		

# Sonik – fast, reliable winter feed

**Trial Data** 

O UMBER

To view the performance of Sonik in trials, visit our web site: www.cropmark.com.au/Trial-Data.aspx

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## Sonik – rapid establishment and strong winter activity

### Take the worry out of winter feeding.

Sonik is the winter feed champion, with rapid establishment and strong growth rates over autumn, winter and spring providing the feed platform you need for great livestock performance.

Sonik is ideal for over-sowing into run-out or damaged pastures, rejuvenating paddocks or for full cultivation as short term (1-2 year) specialist pastures.

Sonik has excellent tiller density for higher yield, persistence and better ground cover.

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Agı	ronomic Selection Criteria			Market	Information	Intelle Prop Sta	perty
ype pecies	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics		Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI*'
	Very early	Diploid	SafeGuard	V	Valley Seeds		
lyegrass Lolium	Early Mid Season	Diploid Diploid	Guard Maverick GII		Valley Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		
oucheum)	Mid Season Mid Season	Tetraploid	Ohau	· ·	Agricom		
-	Mid Season	Tetrabloid	Ohau AR37	V	Agricom		
ybrid Ryegrass - estulolium Hybrid	Late	Tetraploid	Aber Niche Perun		Upper Murray Seeds		
estulolium Hybrid	Late	Tetraploid	SF Splice AR1	V	Pasture Genetics Seed Force		
PERENNIAL R		Tetraploid			ISeed Force		
		D: L : L					
erennial	Early	Diploid Diploid	Boomer Everlast	Pending	Valley Seeds	Pendina	
	Early Early	Diploid	Fitzroy		Upper Murray Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Early	Diploid	Kangaroo Vallev**		Many		
	Early	Diploid	Kandaroo Vallev Gold®		Upper Murrary Seeds		
	Early	Diploid	Kidman Matilda®	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds Parkseeds Pty Ltd		
	Earlý Early	Diploid	Roper	V	Valley Seeds		
	Early	Diploid Diploid	SETenacity®	-	Valley Seeds Seed Force		
	Early	Diploid	Skippy		Vicseeds		
	Earlý	Diploid	Skippy Valley® Victorian		Pasture Genetics		
	Early Mid season	Diploid Diploid	Victorian Arrow AR1	V	Many Heritage Seeds		
	Mid season Mid season	Diploid	Allow ART		Vicseeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Avalon (+ AR1)	· ·	Vicseeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Award Ryegrass	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds	Pending	
	Mid season	Diploid	Blitz Bolton		Specialty Seeds		
	Mid season Mid season	Diploid Diploid	Camel		Vicseeds Valley Seeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Drylander®		Pasture Genetics		
	Mid season	Diploid	Extreme® (XTM) AR1 Extreme® (XTM) AR37 Excess AR1	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	PGG Wrightson Spads		
	Mid season	Diploid	Extreme@(XTM) AR37	V	PGG Wrightson Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Excess AR1	V	PGG Wrightson Seeds	Pending	
	Mid season	Diploid	Excess AR37 Grasslands Nui	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many	Pending	
	Mid season Mid season	Diploid Diploid	Grasslands Nui Helix - Festuloliom	<b>v</b>	Many Cropmark Seeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Jumbuck	V	Upper Murray Seeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Kingsgate	V	Agricom		
	Mid season	Diploid	Kingston Prolong	<u> </u>	Agricom		
	Mid season Mid season	Diploid Diploid	Samson AR1		Valley Seeds		
	Mid season	Diploid	Samson AR37		Agricom Agricom		
	Mid season	Diploid	Shootout®		Pasture Genetics		
	Mid season	Diploid	Wintas II	D I	Tasglobal Seeds		
	Mid season	Tetraploid Diploid	Endure Ansa		Vicseeds Pasture Genetics	Pending	
	Mid-Late Mid-Late	Diploid	MegaRich		Specialty Seeds		
	Mid-Late	Tretraploid	Kai	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Cropmark Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late	Diploid	Aber Magic	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late	Diploid Diploid	Bronte Expo AR37		Pasture Genetics		
	Late	Diploid	Impact 2 NEA2	V V	PGG Wrightson Seeds Heritage Seeds		
	Late	Diploid	Matrix - Festulolium	V	Cropmark Seeds		
	Late	Diploid	One50	V	Agrícom		
	Late	Diploid	One50 AR1	V	Agricom		
	Late Late	Diploid	One50 AR37 Platinum		Agricom Valley Seeds		
	Late	Diploid Diploid Diploid	Prospect AR37 (PSPT)	V	Agricom	Pending	
	Late	Diploid	Revolution - Festulolium	V	Seed Force		
	Late	Diploid	24Seven Ultra - Festulolium		Pasture Genetics		
	Late Late	Diploid Tetraploid	Aber Gain	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Notman Seeds		
	Late	Tetraploid	Base AR37	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds	Pendina	
	Late	Tetraploid	Base AR37 Halo AR37	V	Agricom		
	Late	Tetraploid	Optima Reward Endo5	<b>D</b> "	Pasture Genetics PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Late	Tetrraploid	Reward Endo5	Pending	PGG Wrightson Seeds	Pending	
erennial hybrid	Very Late Early	Tetraploid Diploid	Bealey NEA2 Barberia		Heritage Seeds		
	Mid season	Tetraploid	Jeta	V V	Pasture Genetics		
	Late	Tetraploid	Banguet II (BQT II) Endo5	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Pasture Genetics PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Late	Tetraploid	Shogun NEA2	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
ALL FESCUE							
editerranean	Mid Season		Anywhere	V	Valley Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
	Mid Season		Charlem		Upper Murray Seeds	Pending	
	Mid Season		Flecha	Pending	Agricom Pasture Genetics	Pendina	
	Mid Season		Origin Prosper		Heritage Seeds		
	Mid Season		Resolute	· ·	Heritage Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds Seed Force		
	Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season		SF Medallion®	V	Seed Force		
	IVIIU JEASUIT		Temora	Pending	PGG Wrightson Seeds	Pending	
emperate	Early		Ability	✓ <sup>−</sup>	Valley Seeds		
	Early		Au Triumph Barnaby	V	Maný Heritage Seeds	Pendina	
	Fariv						
	Earlý Early		Hummer MaxP	V	Agricom	Pendina	
	Early Early Early Early		Hummer MaxP Quantum II MaxP SF Royal Q-100 Advance MaxP		Agricom PGG Wrightson Seeds Seed Force	Pending Pending	



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Zoom<sup>™</sup> can provide multiple grazings over autumn and winter before being shut up for high quality silage in the spring. ZOOM<sup>™</sup> IS AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL SEED MERCHANT OR FARM MERCHANDISE OUTLET



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Ag	ronomic Selection Criteria		Market Information			ectual perty atus
Гуре Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics	Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI**
	Mid Season Mid Season Mid Season	Demeter**		Many		
	Mid Season	Kentucky 32 Pastoral	V	Seed Force Upper Murray Seeds	Pendina	
	Mid Season	SE Festival		Seed Force		
	Mid Season Mid Season	SF Festival SF Finesse-Q	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force		Pendi
	Late	Boschhoek	V	Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late	Martin 2 Tower	×	Upper Murray Seeds Pasture Genetics Pasture Genetics		
PHALARIS						
emperate	Semi Winter Dormant	Australian	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many		
•	Semi Winter Dormant	Australian II	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Herifage Seeds Upper Murray Seeds Pasture Genetics		
	Semi Winter Dormant Semi Winter Dormant	Australian Original® Australis®	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Deper Murray Seeds		
		Fosterville		Tasglobal Seeds		
	Semi Winter Dormant Semi Winter Dormant Semi Winter Dormant Winter Active Winter Active	Grazier		Tasglobal Seeds Upper Murray Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Semi Winter Dormant	Maru		PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Semi Winter Dormant	Uneta Advanced AT		Many Heritage Seeds		-
	Winter Active	Amplify	· ·	Vallev Seeds		
		Amplify Holdfast Holdfast GT	V	Heritage Seeds		
	Winter Active	Holdfast GT		Heritage Seeds Valley Seeds Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds		<u> </u>
	Winter Active Winter Active	Landmaster		Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Seed Force		-
	Winter Active	Lawson SF Maté	· ·	Seed Force		
	Winter Active	Sirolan	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many Many		
	Winter Active	Sirosa		Many Upper Murray Seeds	Donding	
	Winter Active Summer Dormant	Stockman Atlas PG		Heritage Seeds	Pending	-
COCKSFOOT						
emperate	High Summer Dormancy	Kasbah	×	Heritage Seeds		
	High Summer Dormancy	Sendace		Tasglobal Seeds		
	Moderate Summer Dormancy	Currie**		Many		
	High Summer Dormancy High Summer Dormancy Moderate Summer Dormancy Moderate Summer Dormancy Moderate Summer Dormancy	Gobur Uplands	×	Vicséeds Tasglobal Seeds		
	Summer Active	Admiral	· ·	Vallev Seeds		
	Summer Active	Ambassador®		Valley Seeds Pasture Genetics		
	Summer Active	Drover		Upper Murray Seeds	Pending	<b> </b>
	Summer Active	Howlong Kara		Upper Murray Seeds Heritage Seeds Agricom		
	Summer Active	Megatas	· ·	lasglobal Seeds		
	Summer Active Summer Active	Oxen		Pasture Genetics, Upper Murray Seeds	, Ballard Seeds	
	Summer Active	Porto** Savvy	Pending	Many	Pendina	
	Summer Active Summer Active	SF Greenly		Agrićom Seed Force		
	Summer Active	SF Greenly SF Lazuly	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force		
	Summer Active	Tekapo		PGG Wrightson Seeds Cropmark Seeds		
	Summer Active Summer Active	Vision Wana		Cropmark Seeds		
	Summer Active	Yarck		Vicseeds		
lediterranean	Summer Active	SF Medly	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force		
	NNIAL GRASSES					
arazing Brome	Winter/Spring Active	Gala	· ·	Agricom		
Pasture Brome	Spring/Summer Active	Bareno Exceltas	✓	Heritage Seeds Tasglobal seeds		<u> </u>
	Spring/Summer Active	Nandu Brome	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds		
Prairie Grass	Winter/Summer Winter/Summer	Atom		Agricom Many		
	Winter/Summer Winter/Summer	Free Flow Matua		Many		
	Winter/Summer	Matua SF Jeronimo	~	Many Seed Force		1
	Winter/Summer	Lakota	V	Seed Force PGG Wrightson Seeds		
Juginglije	Winter/Summer	Leona	· ·	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
Pucinellia Timothy Grass		Menemen Grasslands Charlton		Many Agricom		
/eldt Grass		Mission		Many		
Vallaby Grass	Medium Soils	Taranna		AusWest Seeds		
<b>FROPICAL GR</b>						
ngleton grass Dichanthium ristatum)	Late Maturing, suited to alkaline cracking-clays soils	Floren	~	Progressive Seeds		
Bahia Grass Paspalum	Not selected by stock	Argentine Pensacola		Many Many		-
notatum) Bambatsi Panic	Heavy clays	Bambatsii		Many		
Brachiaria		Signal Grass		Many		
Brachiaria		Mulato II	~	Heritage Seeds		
decembens) Brunswick Grass (Paspalum nicorae)	Rhizomatous for sands	Blue Dawn		Progressive Seeds		
				Manu		
	Red loams and clave	American				
Buffel Grass	Red loams and clays Fertile friable soils	American Biloela		Many Many		
		American Biloela Gayndah Nunbank		Many Many Many Many		

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A proven versatile mix of long rotation diploid /tetraploid enhanced late seeding perennial ryegrass and persistent white clover. An excellent quality pasture mix providing high levels of metabolisable energy and good palatability. Strong year round production, disease resistance and suitable to all livestock classes.



Perennial pasture mix containing the highest performing ARI, AR37 and standard endophyte perennial cultivars & interspecies crosses that will promote high energy and palatability along with low aftermath heading. The blend promotes higher levels of pasture growth and increased ryegrass percentage.

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Bullet

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Agronomic Selection Criteria		Market Information			Prop	ectual perty atus	
Type Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics		Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	ТМІ***
Carpet Grass (Axonopus affinis)			Narrowleaf		Many		
Creeping Blue grass ( <i>Bothrichloa</i> insculpta)	Nutritious leafy/Late flowering Heavier soils		Bisset Hatch		Selected Seeds, Others Many		
Couch Grass (Cynodon dactylon)			Common Giant Bermuda		Many JH Williams & Sons		
Désmanthus Digit Grass (Digitaria criantha)	Clay soils Tufted - sands and loams		Marc Premier		Progressive Seeds Many		
Finger Grass	More suited to wet tropics		Jarra Strickland	· ·	Many Prograssiva Saada		
Forest Blue Grass Bothriochola blahhii)	Stolons - sands, loams Wide range of soils		Swann	· ·	Progressive Seeds Progressive Seeds		
Green Panic	mus var. pubiglumis)		Petrie		Many		
Guinea Grass	Wet tropics		Hamil		Many		
(Megathyrsus	Wet tropics		Common		Many		
maximus)	Friable clays		Common		Many		
Hamil Grass	Tougher than green		Common Common		Many		
( <i>Panicum maximum)</i> Humidicola ( <i>Uroahloa humidicola</i> )	Wet tropics, waterlogged		Common		Many		
Indian Blue Grass			Bowen		Many		
(Bothriochloa			Keppel		Many		
pertusa)			Medway		Selected Seeds		
Kikuyu ( <i>Pennisetum</i>			Common Whittet		Many Many		
clandestinum)			Acacia Plateau	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force		
Lovegrass			Consol		Many		
( <i>Eragrostis curvula</i> Mitchell Grass ( <i>Astrebla</i> spp)	var. conferta)		Common		Many		
Molasses Grass			Common		Many		
Panic ( <i>Atra paspalum</i> ) Panic <i>(Megathysrus</i> <i>maximus</i> )	Gatton type with broader leaf		Common G2®	~	Many Australian Premium Seeds		
Panic ( <i>Panicum</i> laxum)			Shadegro	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Australian Premium Seeds		
Panic ( <i>Panicum</i> maximum)			Common		Many		
Panic Grass			Megamax 049	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		Pending
			Megamax 059	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		Pendin
x P. infestum	Well drained, fertile soils		NuCal™ Guinea grass		Progressive Seeds		
Para Grass Paspalum ( <i>Pas +</i>	Ponded pasture		Common Common		Many Many		
A49:N49 palum spp)			Broadleaf		Auswest Seeds		
Pearl Millet	Late flowering		Maxa Millet		Australian Premium Seeds		
Purple Pigeon Grass (Setaria incrasata)	Heavy soils		Common		Many		
Queensland Blue Grass ( <i>Dichanthium</i> <i>sericeum</i> )	(Native) sands to clay soils		Scatta™	Pending	Progressive Seeds	Pending	
Rhodes Grass	For high rainfall zone	ina	Callide		Many		
(Chloris gayana)	Fine stem and leaf, medium flower Salt tolerant, fine leaf/stem. Even fl	lowering	Finecut Gulfcut		Selected Seeds Pty Ltd Selected Seeds Pty Ltd		
	Resilient type		Katambora		Many		
	Cold tolerance, late flowering Nematode resistant		Mariner®	V	Australian Premium Seeds Heritage Seeds		
			Nemkat	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
	Salt tolerant strongly stoloniferous	High DM	Pioneer Beclaimer	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many Selected Seeds Ptv Ltd		<u> </u>
	Fine leaf and stem, salt tolerance		Sabre®	V	Selected Seeds Pty Ltd Australian Premium Seeds		
	Salt tolerant pioneer type. Medium	flowering	Salcut	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Selected Seeds Pty Ltd		
	Improved Pioneer, medium flowering	na	Topout		Australian Premium Seeds		
	Salt tolerant, strongly stoloniferous Fine leaf and stem, salt tolerance Salt tolerant pioneer type. Medium Fine stem and leaf, late flowering Improved Pioneer, medium flowering Large leaf, fine stem, late flowering Utitod species	a	Toro®		Selected Seeds Pty Ltd Australian Premium Seeds Selected Seeds Pty Ltd Australian Premium Seeds		
Jani 01 a 33 (01001110a	Tulleu Species		NIAUT		Many		
masambicensis)	Stolon - light to heavy soils		Sarajii	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Progressive Seeds		
Setaria ( <i>Setaria</i> spp)	Frost tolerant		Kazungula Narok		Many Many		
	Frost tolerant		Solander		Many		
	Frost tolerant		Splenda		Herifage Seeds		
Signal Grass ( <i>Bracl</i>	hiaria decumbens)		Signal		Many		
Siratro	Rust resistant		Common		Many		
SUB CLOVER							
	Farly		Losa	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
Brachycalyinum	Early		Mawcon (PEE)		Haritado Sacda	Donding	
Brachycalyinum	Early Early Mid		Mawson (B55) Antas		Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds	Pending	

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Agronomic Selection Criteria			Market Information			Intellectual Property Status	
Type Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics	Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI***	
	Mid	Clare 2®		Pasture Genetics			
	Mid	Mintaro	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds			
Subterraneum	Early	Daliak		Many		<u> </u>	
	Early	Dalkeith	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Maný			
	Early	Dalsa®		Pasture Genetics	_	_	
	Early	Izmir	<u> </u>	AusWest Seeds & Irwin Hunter	_		
	Early	Nungarin	V	Many	Liveter	-	
	Early Forty Mid	Urana		AusWest Seeds, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Irwin PGG Wrightson Seeds	Hunter		
	Earlý-Mid Early-Mid	Bindoon	V	Heritage Coode	-		
	Early-Mid	Seaton Park		Heritage Seeds	-		
	Mid	Campeda	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Horitago Sooda			
	Mid	Coolamon	V	Heritage Seeds AusWest Seeds, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Irwin	Huntor		
	Mid Mid	Junee		Many	TUILEI	<u> </u>	
	Mid	Woogenellup	V	Many		+	
	Mid- Mid-Late	Denmark	V	Heritage Seeds			
	Mid-Late	Denmark Goulburn	V	Herifage Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		<u> </u>	
	Mid-Late	Karridale	· ·	Many			
	Mid-Late	SE Narrikun	V	Seed Force	Pending		
	Late	SF Narrikup SF Rosabrook	- V	Seed Force	Pending		
	Late	Ovaflow®		Pasture Genetics		1	
	Very Late	Leura	V	Pasture Genetics PGG Wrightson Seeds			
Yanninicum	Early-Mid	Trikkala		Many			
	Mid	Hatrik®		Pasture Genetics			
	Mid	Meteora		Many			
	Early	Monti	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds	Pending	1	
	Mid	Narrikup		Many			
	Mid	Riverina	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	AusWest Seeds, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Irwin	Hunter		
	Mid	Trikkala	<ul> <li>V</li> </ul>	Many			
	Late	Gosse	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds			
PERSIAN CI	Late	Napier		Many			
Hard Seeded	Early season	SARDI® Persian Nitro Plus		Pasture Genetics	_		
	Early-mid season	Nitro Plus	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds			
		Morbulk		Auswest Seeds	_		
		Prolific		Heritage Seeds, Ballard Seeds Auswest Seeds	_		
0.4.0	M'shares and	Thunder		Auswest Seeds	_	<u> </u>	
Soft Seeded	Mid season	Flash		Seed Genetics International	_	<u> </u>	
	Mid season	Lightning	V	Heritage Seeds	-		
	Late season	Laser		Heritage Seeds Tasglobal Seeds	-		
	Mid-late season	Lusa	V	Pastura Capatian			
	Mid-late season	Turbo® Enrich		Pasture Genetics			
	Late season	Turbo Plus		Many Llapor Murroy Soods		+	
	Late season	Anchor		Upper Murray Seeds Auswest Seeds		+	
		Maral (Shaftal)		Many		-	
		RD8		Auswest Seeds		+	
OTHER ANN	IUAL CLOVER					<u> </u>	
Arrowleaf	Early	Cefalu	×	Heritage Seeds West Coast Seeds			
	Late		- V	Heritage Seeds, West Coast Seeds Heritage Seeds Pasture Genetics		1	
	Late	Zulumax®		Pasture Genetics			
	Late	Seelu		Many			
	Very Late	ArroTas	V	Tasglobal Seeds			
Balansa	Early	Enduro®	•	Pasture Genetics			
				Heritage Seeds			

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Type Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics	Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI***
	Early	Cobra		Pasture Genetics		
	Mid	Border	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Genetics International		
	Mid	Taipan	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Mid	Paradana		Many		
	Late	Bolta	V	Herifage Seeds AusWest Seeds, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Irwin		
	Late	Viper	V	AusWest Seeds, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Irwin	Hunter	
	Late	Vista	V	Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Upper Murray Seeds Pasture Genetics	Pending	
Berseem	Mid-Late	Elite II	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
	Mid-Late	Memphis	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Upper Murray Seeds		
	Late	Alexandria®		Pasture Genetics		
	Multi-cut	Carmel		Many		
Bladder	Farly-Mid	Agwest Bartolo	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Pasture Genetics, PPA, Ballard Seeds, PGGW See	ds	
Crimson	Mid-Late Mid-Late	Blaza	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
	Mid-Late	Caprera		Many		
Gland		Prima		Many		
Purple		Electra SARDI Rose		Auswest Seeds, Upper Murray Seeds Pasture Genetics		
Rose	Early	SARDI Rose		Pasture Genetics		
	5	Hvkon		PGG Wrightson Seeds		
Sulla	Mid-Late	Moombi	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Mid-Late	Wilpena	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
SERRADELL/	A					
Yellow	Early - Mid	Charano	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds		
(Hard Seeded)	Early - Mid	Elgara		Many		
( ,	Early - Mid Mid (WA)	Mădeira		Many		
	Mid (WA)	Santorini	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Ballard Seeds		
	Mid - Late	Avila		Many		
	Early (WA)	Yelbeni	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Ballard Seeds WR Hanhoom & Co		
Yellow (Med-Hard Seedec	Early	Yellotas		Auswest Seeds, Tasglobal Seeds		
French	Mid (WA), hard seeded	Margurita	V	Ballard Seeds		
(Hard Seeded)		Serratas		Tasglobal Seeds, Auswest Seeds		
(Soft Seeded)	Mid	Cadiz	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Ballard Seeds. Heritage Seeds		
(con occura)	Early - Mid	Eliza	· ·	Ballard Seeds		
BISERRULA	I Larly Init	TENES				
Biserrula	Mid-Late (WA), hard seeded	Casbah	V	Many		
Discinala	mid Luce (W/Y), hard beeded	Mauro	V	Many		
VETCH		Inidaro		initiariy		1
Wooly Pod	Mid (Low hard-seed)	Capello	×	Heritage Seeds		
noony rou	Mid (Low hard-seed) Mid (High hard-seed) Mid - Late (High hard-seed) Early - wooly pod - soft seed Early - common - soft seed Mid, common - soft seed	Haymaker Plus		Heritage Seeds		
	Mid - Late (High hard-seed)	Namoi		Many		
	Farly - wooly pod - soft seed	RM4	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds	Pending	
	Early - common - soft seed	Volga	· ·	Heritage Seeds	Pending	
	Mid - common - soft seed	Rasina		Heritage Seeds		
	Late - common - soft seed	Morava	· ·	Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds		
	Late - common - soft seed	Timok	Pending	Pasture Genetics	Pendina	
R henchalensis	Late	Benatas	rending	Auswest, Stephen Pasture Seeds	Gruing	
B.benghalensis MEDIC			·			
Barrel	Early season	Caliph	×	Seed Distributors		
	Early season	Cheetah	V	Stephen Pasture Seeds		
	Mid season	Jester	· ·	Heritage Seeds		
	Mid season	Lvnx	V	Heritage Seeds PGG Wrightson		
	Mid season	Paraggio	V	Many		
		Sephi		Many		
	Mid season Mid-Late season	Jemalong		Many	-	



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Type Species	Flowering, Activity or Characteristics	Brand Name	Variety *	Australian Marketer	PBR**	TMI**
Burr	High hard seed	Santiago	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many		
	Mod hard seed	Scimițăr	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Heritage Seeds Seed Distributors		
	Spineless	Cavalier	/	Seed Distributors		
Button	SU tolerant Vey Hard seeded	Sultan SU Bindaroo®	V	Heritage Seeds Seed Distributors		
Gama	Good aphid tolerance	Paraponto	×	Many		
Aurex	High hard seed	Zodiac		Many		
Snail	Early season	Zodiac Silver®		Many Seed Distributors		
		Sava		Many		
No. Is a sure	Late season	Kelson	/	Many		
Sphere Strand	Mid season	Orion		Maný Horitago Soodo		
biranu	Early season Early season	Angel Jaguar		Heritage Seeds Seed Distributors		
	Mid season	Harbinger		Many		
	Mid season	Harbinger AR		Many		
WHITE CLOV	/ER	Alexa Normana		literar Marrie Orașele		1
.arge leaved		Aber Normous Excel Ladino		Upper Murray Seeds		-
		Grasslands Kopu II		Seed Genetics International PGG Wrightson Seeds		
		Haifa		Many		
		Jumbo	<b>v</b>	Pacture Constine		
		Mainstay	Pending	Agricom PGG Wrightson Seeds Seed Force Pty Ltd Auswest Seeds	Pending	
		Osceola		PGG Wrightson Seeds		-
	Late	Quest		Seed Force Pty Ltd		-
		Super Ladino Waverly	V	Linner Murray Soods		-
	+	Waverly Will Ladino		Agricom		
		WinterWhite	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Genetics International		
		WinterWhite II	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Genetics International PGG Wrightson Seeds		
/ledium-Large		Grasslands Bounty		PGG Wrightson Seeds		
eaved		Grasslands Tribute	✓	Agricom		
	Mid-late	Grasslands Trophy Mink	V	Heritage Seeds		
		Weka	· ·	Agricom Heritage Seeds Heritage Seeds Upper Murray Seeds Heritage Seeds Code Constitue International	Pending	
ledium leaved		Aber Dance	V	Upper Murray Seeds		
		Altitude		Heritage Seeds		
		Braidwood	V	Seed Genetics International Specialty Seeds Cropmark Seeds		
		Canterbury		Specialty Seeds		
		Demand Grasslands Huia		Many	_	
		Grasslands Pitau		Many		
		Grasslands Sustain		Maný Seed Force		
		Irrigation		Many		
		Super Huia	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Auswest Seeds		
		Storm	<ul> <li>V</li> </ul>	Auswest Seeds Heritage Seeds Pasture Genetics		
New will be seen al		Reisling	/	Pasture Genetics		
Small leaved		Aber Ače	✓	Upper Murray Seeds Upper Murray Seeds		
		Grasslands Prestige	V	Agricom		
		Grasslands Tahora II	· ·	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
		Nomad	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Agricom		
<u>.otus</u>						1
otus corniculatu		Leo Ltus		JH Williams & Sons		
9 MAN BEIN	Erect	Palestine		Many		
	Semi-erect	l ucilla		PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Prostrate	O'Connors	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Many		
RED CLOVER arly maturing	Low	Astred	×	PGG Wrightson Seeds		-
any maturing	Low	Grasslands Broadway		Agricom		
	Low	Rubitas	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	AusWest, Stephen Pasture Seeds, TasG	lobal	
	Medium	Grasslands Colenso		Agricom		
	Medium	Renegade		Pasture Genetics	<b>D r</b>	
	Medium	SF Rossi	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Seed Force	Pending	ļ
orly mid moturin	High	Hamua Grasslands Relish	V	Many		
arly-mid maturin /id season	Verv Low	Raiah	- V	Agricom Pasture Genetics		
naturing	Low	Rédauin	Ť	Many		
J		Red 812		Upper Murray Seeds		
-4	Medium	Tuscan		Heritage Seeds		
ate season	High	Turoa		Many		
naturing IERBS	High	Pawera		Many		1
Chicory	Short term	Commander		Heritage Seeds		
	Short term	Grouse	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Agricom		
	Perennial	Balance®		Pasture Genetics		
	Perennial	Chico®		Cropmark Seeds		
	Perennial			Agricom		
	Perennial	Le Lacerta Puna		Valley Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds PGG Wrightson Seeds		<u> </u>
	Perennial Perennial	Puna II	V	PGG Wrightson Seeds		
	Perennial	SF Punter		Seed Force		Pendir
Plantain	Perennial	Ranger®		Pasture Genetics		
	Perennial	Ranger® SF Boston		Seed Force		
	Perennial	SF Endurance		Seed Force		
	Perennial	Tonic	<ul> <li>V</li> </ul>	Agricom		1



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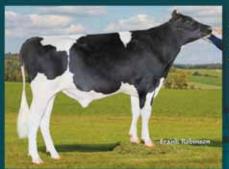
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# Supreme Shirlinn scores at IDW

### **By Carlene Dowie**

JERSEY cow that has set numerous records added to the trophy cabinet being named the Australian Grand Champion cow at International Dairy Week (IDW) in January. Shirlinn Icy Eve, owned by the Wilson family, Shirlinn Jerseys, Tamworth, NSW, took the interbreed award after picking up the IDW supreme Jersey, senior champion and best udder awards.

The nine-year-old cow set records at Sydney in 2014 when it was named the Supreme Champion All Breed for the third year in a row. It is also the only EX-95 Jersey cow in Australia.

One of the owners Lindsay Wilson said it was a bigger thrill to win at IDW than at Sydney. "It is a great achievement," he said. He said Icy Eve was just a great

He said Icy Eve was just a great cow. "She's a great producer at home," he said. "She eats, she drinks and she makes milk."

The Jersey cow took the interbreed award on a countback after it and the senior Holstein cow, Windy



International Dairy Week supreme champion cow, Shirlinn Icy Eve, with RASV chief executive Mark O'Sullivan; RASV president Steven Spargo; exhibitors Brooke Boyd, and Shirley, Lindsay, Vicky, Todd and Sarah Wilson, and children Ella, Marlie and Koby Wilson, Shirlinn Jersey stud, Tamworth, NSW. Picture by Wayne Jenkins

Vale Contender Rose, finished with equal points in the interbreed competition.

Shirlinn Icy Eve has three times produced more than 9000 litres in a lactation.

After the Jersey judging, another of the owners Todd Wilson said the

cow was the complete package. "She's stylish and has the best udder," he said. "She's a milk cow. It's nice to have a production cow that's also a show cow."

Jersey judge Robert Anderson, Drouin West, Vic, said it was hard to get much better than a cow that ►

## International Dairy Week Champion Honour Roll

#### INTERBREED

Australian Grand Champion: Shirlinn Icy Eve,

Shirlinn Jerseys, Tamworth, NSW. RASV Interbreed Intermediate Champion:

Paringa Fever Opa Paringa Holsteins,

Invergordon, Vic.

RASV Interbreed Junior Champion: Brunchilli Excitation Belle Brunchilli Farming Trust, Finley, NSW.

#### JERSEY

Grand champion: Shirlinn Icy Eve. Senior champion: Shirlinn Icy Eve. Reserve: Brunchilli Sambo Priscilla Brunchilli Farming Trust, Finley, NSW.

Intermediate champion: Bushlea Galaxie Fernleaf 4, D Patten, C Moscript & F&D Borba, Sale, Vic. Reserve: Salvation Tequila Belle, Cherrylock Cattle Co & Salvation, Tallygaroopna, Vic.

Junior champion: Brunchilli Excitation Belle. Reserve: Miami Verbatim Cowslip 4930, Philmar Dairy Company, Tocumwal, NSW. Premier Sire: Tower Vue Prime Tequila. Premier Breeder: Shirlinn Jerseys. Premier Exhibitor: Shirlinn Jerseys.

#### HOLSTEIN

Grand champion: Paringa Fever Opa. Senior champion: Windy Vale Contender Rose Bluechip Genetics, Windy Vale Holsteins & F&D Borba, Zeerust, Vic. Reserve: Murribrook Goldwyn Candace-IMP-ET, MJ Sowter, Mossvale, NSW. Intermediate champion: Paringa Fever Opa. Reserve: Hawova R Reginald, Tamie Shaw, Clarke & Sieben, Finley, NSW. Junior champion: Bluechip Goldchip Beciee Bluechip Genetics, Zeerust, Vic. Reserve: Bluechip Contender Cherrypop-RED. Premier Sire: Braedale Goldwyn. Premier Breeder: Bluechip Genetics. Premier Exhibitor: Bluechip Genetics.

AYRSHIRE

Grand champion: Cher-Bar Rippa Lasselle, C Liebich, Jervois, SA.

Senior champion: Cher-Bar Rippa Lasselle. Reserve: Eastern View Modem Neenie, J & K Sykes, Ringarooma, Tas.

Intermediate champion: Billabong Dreamer Bonny-C, Billabong Farm, Woods Point, SA. Reserve: Encore Tri-Reality Keeley Scarlett, Burgmann & Bawden, Warragul, Vic. Junior champion: Regal Park Reality Solax, S&R Cole, Wagga, NSW. Reserve: Boldview Dream-A-Rilla, Boldview Farms, Jervois, SA. Premier Sire: Palmyra Tri Star Burdette. Premier Breeder: Boldview Farms. Premier Exhibitor: Boldview Farms.

#### **ILLAWARRA**

Grand champion: Llandovery Ja-Bob Stella, Hayes family, Girgarre, Vic. Senior champion: Llandovery Ja-Bob Stella. Reserve: Braelee BP Dairymaid 2-TWIN, Glenbrook Illawarras, Murray Bridge South, SA. Intermediate champion: Llandovery Blushes Queenette, Hayes family. Reserve: Llandovery Blushes Queenette, Hayes family. Junior champion: Llandovery LB Betty, Hayes family. Reserve: Glenbrook Poppy 6 Glenbrook Illawarras. Premier Sire: Llandovery Jinnys Empire. Premier Breeder: Hayes family. Premier Exhibitor: Hayes family.

#### **BROWN SWISS**

Grand champion: Tandara Dynasty Fortuna 2, Tandara Brown Swiss, Dingee, Vic. Senior champion: Tandara Dynasty Fortuna 2. Reserve: Tandara Denver Lunda 216, Tandara Brown Swiss.

Intermediate champion: Tandara Brookings Ann Arbor 29, Tandara Brown Swiss. Reserve: Tandara Carter Sarajevo 107, Tandara Brown Swiss. Junior champion: Kit Brookings Spencer, K Davidson, Finley, NSW. Reserve: Tandara Blooming Sarajevo 113, Tandara Brown Swiss. Premier Sire: HillTop Acres EN Dynasty. Premier Breeder: Tandara Brown Swiss. Premier Exhibitor: Tandara Brown Swiss.

#### GUERNSEY

**Grand champion**: Wintergreen Brave Weave, Joyce family, Kyabram, Vic.

Senior champion: Wintergreen Brave Weave. Reserve: First Love McKenzie, T&S Shea, M&R Shea & N&M Wilkie, Bacchus Marsh, Vic Intermediate champion: Brookleigh Spruces Ashtree, A Cleggett, Glencoe, SA. Reserve: Rockmar Prada Graceful, M & R Shea, Bacchus Marsh, Vic.

Junior champion: Marloo Yogibear Pasha, MD & PM Gray, Rollands Plains, NSW. Reserve: Rockmar Crosby Graceful, M & R Shea. Premier Sire: Sniders Option Arrow. Premier Breeder: LF & JM Cleggett. Premier Exhibitor: LF & JM Cleggett.



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A had had this many calves (seven). "A cow that has got overall balance, presence and quality from end to end," he said.

Shirlinn Icy Eve impressed him in the older cow class earlier in the judging.

"She's a very graceful lady," he said. "I love her style, angularity and the way she is balanced."

The owners of the intermediate champion, Bushlea Galaxie Fernleaf 4, bought it at the Bushlea Jersey sale in November for \$20,000.

"We've been looking for a special young cow for a long time," said Callum Moscript, Leongatha, Vic, who owns the cow with Declan Patten, Sale, Vic, and Frank and Diane Borba, California, US.

He said they had picked out some heifers to buy at the sale but were told there was a young cow worth considering. "As soon as we saw her we knew she was the one," he said.

The cow was by Galaxy, which had left a lot of good daughters, from a cow from the great Fernleaf family. Bushlea has continued to manage the cow.

The owners plan to breed it back ready to show at IDW again next year.



Interbreed junior champion at International Dairy Week 2016, Brunchilli Excitation Belle, being sashed by president of the RASV Steven Spargo, with exhibitors Lyn, Brooke and David Boyd, holding baby Jack, with leader Julia Paulger at front. Picture by Wayne Jenkins

Mr Anderson said the cow was exceptionally well balanced and showed tremendous dairyness throughout. "She's all style; she's one pretty lady," he said in the class judging earlier in the day.

Winning the inaugural RASV junior interbreed champion topped off a great week for the Lyn Boyd from Brunchilli Jerseys, Finley, NSW.

The Boyd family's junior Jersey champion Brunchilli Excitation Belle took the interbreed award, beating the Holstein exhibit by just one point. "Wasn't that great, little Belle has delivered," Mrs Boyd said.

It was excellent to have the supreme heifer, especially as the Holsteins usually dominated the interbreeds. "But it is six different opinions — so it's just what people prefer on the day," Mrs Boyd said.

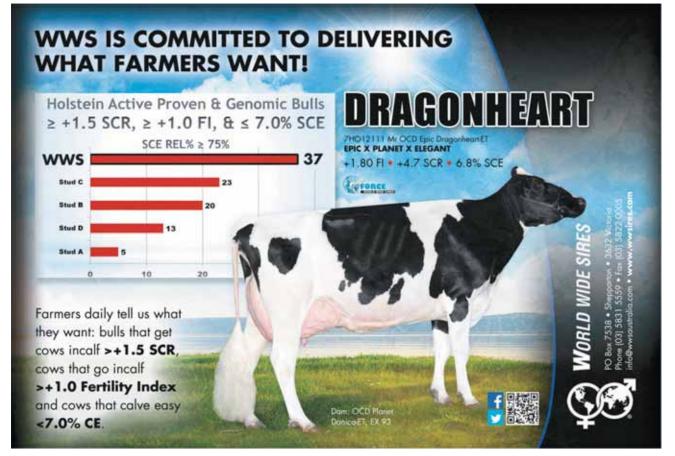
The heifer had excellent families in its pedigree, including grand dam Tinaroo Juno Belle, which was "a very good cow that lived until she was 19".

"She'll be joined to sexed semen and hopefully she calves as good as she looks now," Mrs Boyd said.

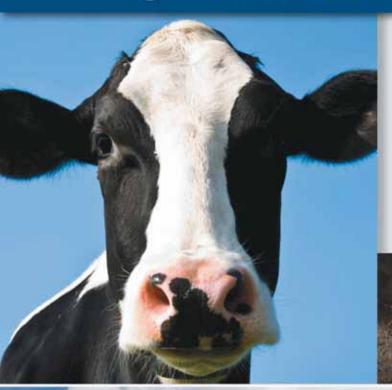
The win continues Brunchilli's success at IDW. "It was just amazing," Mrs Boyd said. "I like to enter animals in each class and see how we go."

Mr Anderson said the heifer would one day make a great cow. "She has dairy quality right throughout," he said.

Mrs Boyd was also awarded the inaugural Power of Women in Dairy award during the event.



# Losing time and money on transition cows?





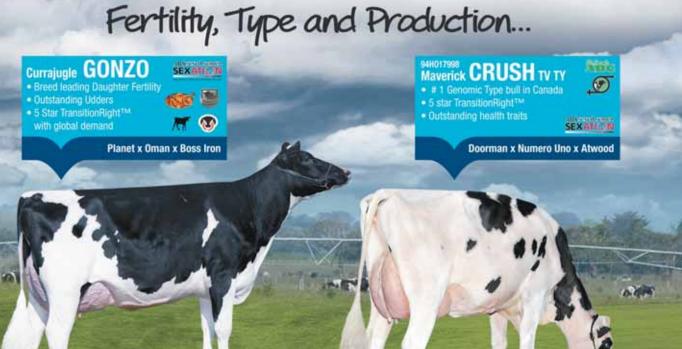
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Dtr: Ben-Akers Gonzo Luise 54-ET (photo Kathy DeBruin).



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Dam: EDG Glaine Gling-ET\_VG-85 (Photo: Vicki Fletcher)



# One cow enough to sweep awards

### By Carlene Dowie

AM Malcolm brought just one animal to show at International Dairy Week but that was enough to take the Holstein supreme champion and interbreed intermediate champion awards.

Ms Malcolm, from Paringa Holsteins, Invergordon, Vic, returned to the show ring after a four-year absence.

She brought just one cow to the show, Paringa Fever Opa, whose three-month-old calf sold at the World Wide Sires Evolution Holstein sale on Wednesday night for \$6000.

Tim Weller from World Wide Sires told Mrs Malcolm she should show the calf's mother. So Paringa Fever Opa was consigned to Andrew Cullen and Erin Ferguson to prepare for the show. The decision paid off when the cow won the intermediate Holstein champion award and then went onto win the interbreed award.

The decision was unanimous with the cow taking the top award ahead of the Jersey intermediate champion Bushlea Galaxie Fernleaf 4, owned by Callum Moscript, Leongatha, Vic, Declan Patten, Sale, Vic, and Frank and Diane Borba, California, US.

Ms Malcolm said she was thrilled to win the award. "I just can't believe it — I am over the moon," she said.

Canadian judge Pierre Boulet, in placing the cow ahead of the senior champion for the top Holstein award, said the three-year-old cow was all quality.

"I like this cow a lot — to build a cow like that at that age," he said.

He also awarded it the Holstein best udder award.

In the earlier judging, Mr Boulet said the cow had a tremendous udder and good feet and legs.



Cameron Bawdon, Jamie Wilson, Pam Malcolm, Kellie Malcolm with baby Jessie and judge Pierre Boulet with the supreme Holstein, Windy Vale Contender Rose. Picture by Wayne Jenkins



Vaughn Johnston, Semex; Canadian judge Pierre Boulet, and handler Alberto Medina, from Spain, with the Holstein senior champion cow. Picture by Wayne Jenkins

"She's my kind of cow — that's a dairy cow," he said.

Bluechip Genetics, from Zeerust, Vic, dominated in the event — taking the champion senior cow, champion and reserve junior cow and premier breeder and exhibitor awards.

The senior cow was Windy Vale

Contender Rose, owned by Bluechip in conjunction with Windy Vale Holsteins and Frank and Diane Zorba, from the United States.

Di Malcolm, from Bluechip, said the win was the stud's first in the senior championship since 2006. The stud sold a lot of animals so keeping at the top of the competition, particularly at an event like IDW, was always a challenge, she said.

Mr Boulet said the cow was "really stylish and really dairy" with great teat placement and size of teats.

The junior champion, rising twoyear-old Bluechip Goldchip Beciee, was described by Mr Boulet as a cow with lots of dairyness.

"She's a very nice heifer, with lots of style and real femininity," he said.

The reserve champion was a sixmonth-old red heifer, Bluechip Contender Cherrypop-Red, from the youngest class.

## Jerseys sell to \$11,500

**J**ERSEYS sold to \$11,500 and averaged \$5345 at the International Dairy Week Jersey Showcase Sale.

The top-priced lot, offered by Darien and Alex Mathews, Inverloch, Vic, was an 18-month-old heifer, Langdale Verbatim Martha-Imp-ET-Can, that was the Junior Champion at the 2015 All Breeds Dairy Youth Show.

It was bought by Brett Kuhne, First

Choice Investments, Leongatha, Vic. Mr Kuhne said he selected the heifer because of its in-depth pedigree, featuring families from the United States. It was an attractive heifer, which he planned to show, he said.

The second top-priced lot, Shirlinn Celebrity Evangelina-ET, offered by the Wilson family, Shirlinn Jersey stud, Tamworth, NSW, sold for \$9500. The heifer's dam, Shirlinn Icy Eve EX-95, was three-time supreme champion cow at the Sydney Royal Show and has three times produced more than 9000 litres in a lactation. The heifer was bought by Graham Cochrane and family, Kangaroo Valley, NSW.

In all 14 lots were offered, with two passed in and 12 sold.

-Carlene Dowie



## Holsteins sell to \$15,500

**T**HE World Wide Sires Holstein sale at International Dairy Week (IDW) topped at \$15,500 for a September-drop heifer Linsand Goldwyn Louisville-ET, account LR, SJ & LA Thompson and W McKay, Bracknell, Tasmania.

It was bought by Struan Trading, Jancourt East, via a phone bid.

Dairy Livestock Services (DLS) Brian Leslie said its dam Fairvale Morty Lady 51 had recently reclassified Excellent 95.

The dam won champion cow and supreme all breeds at IDW in 2011 and 2014; and champion cow and supreme all breeds at the Sydney Royal Easter Show in 2011.

The sale averaged \$5935.29 across the 34 lots, which was down on last year's average of \$8668, which was the second highest average at IDW.

DLS general manager Scott Lord said it was still a strong result although the top end did not sell to last year's heights reflecting myriad industry factors, including the dry conditions prevailing across many of Australia's key dairying regions.

The dry conditions and high water prices were particularly hitting Goulburn Valley producers, which impacted local



The top-priced heifer at IDW sale with Tim Weller, Berrigan, NSW, who bought the heifer for Straun Trading, Jancourt, Vic; Mark Putallo, Numurkah, Vic; auctioneer Brian Leslie, and handler Zoe Hayes, Invergordon, Vic, holding lot 6, Linsand Goldwyn Louisville, that sold for \$15,500. Picture by Wayne Jenkins

buying support. "It's in-line with pre-Christmas sale prices; and as we've seen in the past, generally once the sale got momentum, people saw better opportunities and bidded higher," Mr Lord said.

He said farmers were also conscious of cashflow as there were flat export milk prices, inputs were continuing to rise, and chopper cows were not commanding as strong prices as they had in spring.

Many of the cattle were bought by NSW, western Victoria and Gippsland buyers.

An additional three females sold for five figures.

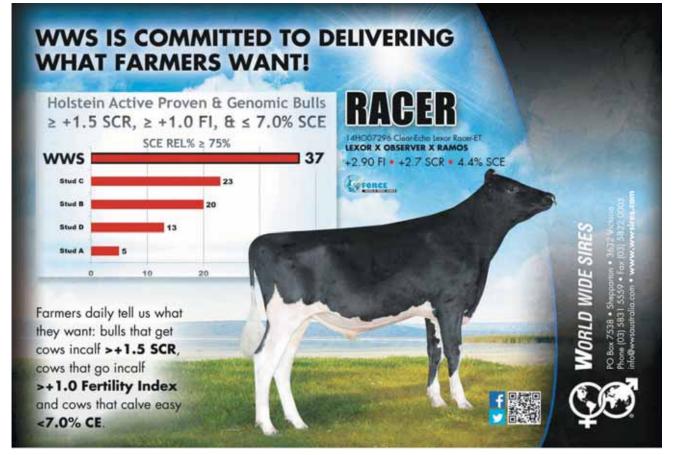
Two lots made \$10,100 — Lightning Ridge GC Adeen-Imp-ET-USA, account Declan Patten; and Mari Park Red Hot Kiwi-Red-ET, account M&J Polson.

They were bought by B&J Gavenlock and M&J Polson, Taree NSW, and P Timbs, Jaspers Brush, NSW.

Fraserlee Jordon Frosty, account Leeanne Fraser, NSW, sold for \$10,000 to Elders Goulburn, NSW.

There was some confusion following the sale with lot 2 Glomar Supersire Lucky 5433-ET consigned by account R Johnston, being knocked down for \$19,000 at auction but that sale was later withdrawn.

-Laura Griffin



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# **South Aussies dominate in Ayrshires**



Brittany, Caitlin and Cheryl Liebich with the supreme Ayrshire cow Cher-Bar Rippa Lasselle and judge Max Hyland. Picture by Carlene Dowie

### **By Carlene Dowie**

Solution of the Ayrshire ring at International Dairy Week. The champion cow was Cher-Bar Rippa Lasselle, owned by Cheryl Liebich.

Ms Liebich's brother Scott Braendler family's stud, Boldview Farms, picked up the premier breeder and premier exhibitor awards.

The Jervois-based farm milks up to 400 cows twice a day, with the bulk Boldview Farm Ayrshire stud cows, owned by the Braendlers, and cows from the Cher-Bar Ayrshire herd, which Ms Liebich owns.

Although registered as two studs, the cattle are run and managed as one dairy herd.

Ms Liebich said it was a great effort by the champion cow to win the award as it calved down in June. It had previously won champion cow at the Royal Adelaide Show four times.

Judge Max Hyland, who dispersed his award-winning Ayrshire herd last year, described the champion as a cow that had stood the test of time.

"She's a bit stale, but she still has a great udder and is really well put together," he said. "If I was going to be taking a cow home, she would be the one."

Ms Liebich said she hoped to get the cow in calf again for next year's IDW and possibly flush it in the future.

96 The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016

An emotional Courtney Afford was thrilled when a heifer she described as her 'twin' because it shared her birthday was named the Intermediate Champion.

Ms Afford, from Billabong Farm, Woods Point, South Australia, had prepared the heifer, which last year won the Reserve Intermediate Championship at Adelaide Royal Show.

She said she liked the temperament of the Ayrshires, which make up only a small portion of the predominantly 150-head Holstein herd they milked.

Mr Hyland said he liked the heifer's sweep of udder and its length.

"I would love to milk all three of

### Ayrshires average \$3287

AYRSHIRES averaged \$3287.50 at the AInternational Dairy Week Elite Ayrshire Sale.

The top-priced lot was Geelunga Hundella Brandy, sold by Greg Edmonds, South Australia, for \$5500 to B&J Johns and P Mc-Culloch, Forest, Tasmania.

Mr Edmonds also sold the second toppriced lot, Geelunga Bom Iris, for \$5250 to WP and AM Macadam, Gillieston, Victoria.

Embryo packages averaged \$3000, although two packaged were passed in, while semen packages averaged \$3500 at the sale.

The top-priced Ayrshire Geelunga Hundella Brandy, which sold for \$5500.

-Carlene Dowie

them but my wife won't let me milk any more," Mr Hyland said when announcing the heifer as the winner of the two-and-a-half-years in-milk class earlier in the day. The owner of the junior champion

The owner of the junior champion Ayrshire said she couldn't wait for the heifer to calve next month.

"She's a beautiful animal," said Rebecca Cole, who with her husband Stewart milks 180 cows at Wagga Wagga, NSW. The two-and-a-half-year old Regal Park Reality Solax was sired by Palmyra Tri-Star Reality.

Judge Max Hyland said the heifer showed great development and dairyness, while its rear udder was high and wide.

# Tandara tops Brown Swiss again

### **By Laura Griffin**

**B**EN Govett, Tandara stud, Dingee, Vic, again dominated the Brown Swiss show at International Dairy Week (IDW). His April 2009-drop Tandara Dynasty Fortuna 2 took out the grand champion and best udder of the show.

Judge Paul Trapp, from the United States, said he was impressed by this trueto-type senior cow as soon as he saw it in the six years and over in-milk class.

Mr Trapp said it had a tremendous rear udder, dairy strength, width and capacity. In awarding it grand champion over herd-mate Tandara Denver Lunda 216, Mr Trapp said it had a wider frame for more capacity and was stronger in its topline.

Mr Govett was thrilled the success of the last few years had continued for the family, who have had a closed breeding program for 20 years.

With a team of 10 entries, Tandara had eight that won first or second in their class.

The winning cow calved in September and has been joined again. Its dam Tandara Rhythm Farina 83 was also champion cow.

Tandara also had the intermediate champion Brown Swiss, its reserve and junior reserve. The intermediate champion was Tandara Brookings Ann Arbor 29 by RNR Payoff Brookings and out of Tandara Ann Arbor 2, and its reserve Tandara Carter Sarajevo 107 was out of a different cow family.

"The intermediate champion is a daughter of a cow we imported from the US a long time ago," owner Mr Govett said. "Hopefully she's back in calf now (with her third calf)."

Tandara took home premier breeder and exhibitor of the breed.

For Kit Davidson, 24, the junior champion Brown Swiss ribbon was the first broad ribbon she has won at IDW. Its May 2015-drop heifer Kit Brookings Spencer is also an RNR Payoff Brookings daughter, and is out of the first Brown Swiss cow family Ms Davidson ever owned. She is hoping the young heifer will grow out well and continued to be shown.

She brought three Brown Swiss females to the show.

Mr Trapp described the exhibit as a stylish, balanced heifer with a nice set of legs and feet. "This is the heifer most on the money; I love the stretch and the style," Mr Trapp said. "She goes over the reserve because she has more balance and spring in her rib structure."



American judge Paul Trapp and Ben Govett, Tandara stud, Dingee, with his grand champion Tandara Dynasty Fortuna 2. Picture by Laura Griffin

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# Joyces win again in Guernseys

### By Carlene Dowie

HE Joyce family from Kyabram, Vic, may not have shown their four-time International Dairy Week (IDW) champion Guernsey cow but it didn't stopped them taking the top award in the event.

The family again won the IDW Grand Champion Guersey Exhibit with a cow, Wintergreen Brace Weave, they bought last year.

The cow, owned by Steve and Renee Joyce and Steve's father Gary, had earlier won the five-year-old cow class.

Judge Murray Sowter, Murribrook Holsteins, Moss Vale, NSW, said the cow had most things he was looking for in a champion. It had good width, had more spring of rib and was long bodied.

He also awarded the cow best udder, commending its teat placement and the rear udder definition. Although it was well into its lactation, it was still obviously making a lot of milk and its udder had a nice bloom to it, he said.

The reserve champion was First Love McKenzie, shown by T&S Shea, M&R Shea and N&M Wilkie, Bacchus Marsh, Vic.

The intermediate champion was won by a cow described by its owner Amy Cleggett, Glencoe, South Australia, as "her ugly duckling". Ms Cleggett,



Tyson Shea with the 2016 International Dairy Week reserve grand champion Guernsey, judge Murray Sowter and Steve Joyce with the champion Guernsey. Picture by Carlene Dowie

a veterinary university student, owns about 15 cows that run in the herd of her parents, legendary Guernsey breeders Lyndon and Joyce Cleggett.

She said the intermediate champion, Brookleigh Spruces Ashtree, was not much as a heifer but had developed so much. "I love her udder," she said.

Mr Sowter agreed, describing the cow as having a quality udder throughout, with a high rear udder and overall mammary quality.

The junior champion, Marloo Yogibear Pasha, was shown by Michael and Paula Gray, from Rollands Plains,

NSW. "I'm pretty pumped — she's the first juvenile I've bred and won with," Mr Gray said.

The Grays milk 320 cows, including about 100 Guernseys, on the mid north coast of NSW. Mr Gray said he liked the easy-going nature of the Guernsevs.

Mr Sowter said the heifer had the least number of things he would like to change from the animals shown in the junior classes. It had nice breed character, style and balance, he said.

The premier breeder and premier exhibitor awards were again picked up by the Cleggett family.

## Guernseys sell to \$7000

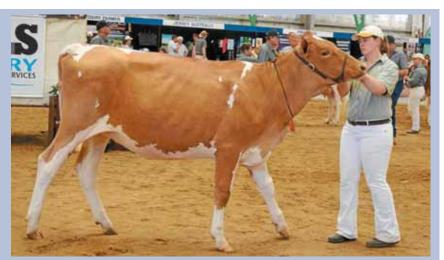
UERNSEYS sold to a top of \$7000 Gand averaged \$3818.75 at the International Dairy Week National Guernsey Sale. The top-priced lot was Brookleigh Grumpy's Bittersweet, sold by Lyndon and Joyce Cleggett, Glencoe, South Australia, for \$7000 to their employee Ollie Abblitt, Glencoe, SA.

The 18-month-old heifer is a maternal sister to 2011 International Dairy Week Grand Champion Guernsey Brookleigh Actions Brunch Ex93.

It is sired by Golden J Ronald Grumpy and its dam is Brookleigh GB Breakfast.

Second top-priced lot was Glencrest Dynamci Dreamlady, which sold for \$5000 to Michael and Julie Moore, Dorrigo, NSW. It was sold by W Gibson, Qld, and D&J Clarke, NSW.

The sale also featured a package of five embryos from the four-time International



The top-priced Guernsey, Brookleigh Grumpy's Bittersweet-ET, that sold for \$7000. **Picture by Carlene Dowie** 

dairy Week Grand Champion Cow Floranda SD Koala, which sold for \$6500 to Eagle Park Farming Co, Nowra, NSW.

The embryos were sold on account of

G Joyce and K&C Gass. The 10 live lots in the sale averaged \$4205 while the embryos averaged \$5750 and semen packages averaged \$587.50.



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# Hayes family on top in Illawarras

### **By Laura Griffin**

T has been seven years since the Hayes family, Llandovery stud, Girgaree, Victoria, have had the grand champion Illawarra cow at International Dairy Week (IDW). But this year, in a first for the breed, they had the three age group champions in contention for the broad ribbon.

Judge Ryan Weigel, from the United States, awarded the grand champion Illawarra to the senior champion the April 2010-drop Llandovery Ja-Bob Stella. "What a cow, boy, I love her and I'd certainly have her in my barn," Mr Weigel said. "She has tons of dairyness, tons of style."

He highlighted the cow's high, wide, correct frame and its impressive mammary system and udder, for which it also won best udder. Mr Weigel described the udder as having plenty of volume and beautiful form, which stood out from the impressive Illawarra line-up.

Tony Hayes said the cow, which had had four calves, was of a cow family



Tony Hayes (left), Taya Hayes, 15, Zoe Hayes, 17, Callum McPhee, Elle Hayes and judge Ryan Weigel with the grand and senior champion Illawarra Llandovery Ja-Bob Stella. Picture by Laura Griffin

his mother Gloria Molinaro started and they had used for years and years. It was out of Llandovery Plummer's Stella and by home-bred bull Llandovery Ja-Bob Sam. The cow won intermediate two years ago, and Mr Hayes said he'd try to get it back at IDW next year, but if it did not get in calf, he'd flush it. The Hayes family won premier breeder and exhibitor of the breed, and also bred the premier sire Llandovery Jinny's Empire, which has now won the award for three consecutive years.

Mr Weigel awarded the intermediate Illawarra champion to Llandovery Blushes Queenette. The November 2012-drop cow came through the three years in-milk class. It has a six monthold calf on the ground and the Hayes family, said they would likely AI it in the lead up to the next big show.

Mr Weigel said that it and reserve Riversleigh Zeus Stella 20, an April 2013-drop heifer in-milk, were both "very, very correct" although the winner had a little more width throughout and its udder was higher and wider.

The Hayes family also took the junior champion award. Mr Weigel selected the champion Llandovery LB Betty from the second class of the day, saying the younger animals sorted themselves to the top. He selected the heifer for its cleanliness and openness in the rib.



## WHAT'S ON

March 16	Tasmanian Dairy Conference and awards dinner			
Tasmania	Phone: (03) 6432 2233 Email: <m.smith@dairytas.net.au> Website: <http: www.dairytas.com.au=""></http:></m.smith@dairytas.net.au>			
March 16	Stepping Up Stepping Back Contact: GippsDairy			
Maffra, Vic	Phone: (03) 5624 3900 Email: <executiveassistant@gippsdairy.com.au> Website: <http: www.gippsdairy.com.au=""></http:></executiveassistant@gippsdairy.com.au>			
March 17-30	Sydney Royal Easter Show			
Homebush, NSW	Phone: (02) 9704 1111 Email: <enquiries@rasnsw.com.au> Website: <www.eastershow.com.au></www.eastershow.com.au></enquiries@rasnsw.com.au>			
March 17	Precision agriculture: soil moisture monitoring field day Contact: Monique White			
Mount Compass, SA	Phone: 0400 972 206 Email: <monique@dairysa.com.au> Website: <http: www.dairysa.com.au=""></http:></monique@dairysa.com.au>			
March 22	Check Your Farm Health and Choose Your Path Contact: Albert Mullen			
Taree, NSW	Phone: 0428 670 524 Website: <a href="http://www.dairynsw.com.au/">http://www.dairynsw.com.au/</a>			
March 23	DairySA Conference 2016: People, Production, Technology: getting the right mix Contact: Penny Schulz			
McLaren Vale, SA	Phone: (08) 8766 0127 Email: <penny@dairysa.com.au> Website: <http: www.dairysa.com.au=""></http:></penny@dairysa.com.au>			
April 7 -10	Farm World Field Days			
Warragul, Vic	Phone: (03) 5626 1373 Email: <office@lardnerpark.com.au></office@lardnerpark.com.au>			
April 7	Ruminant nutritionist Assoc Prof Adam Lock Contact: DairyNSW			
Camden, NSW	Phone: (02) 9351 1737 Email: <info@dairynsw.com.au> Website: <http: www.dairynsw.com.au=""></http:></info@dairynsw.com.au>			
April 15	United Dairyfarmers of Victoria Conference 2016			
Melbourne, Vic	Phone: 1300 882 833 Website: <www.vff.org.au></www.vff.org.au>			
April 27-28	Churn Milk into Money Contact: GippsDairy			
Traralgon, Vic	Phone: (03) 5624 3900 Email: <executiveassistant@gippsdairy.com.au> Website: <http: www.gippsdairy.com.au=""></http:></executiveassistant@gippsdairy.com.au>			
April 28-29	Western Dairy Dairy Innovation Day, dinner and farm tour Contact: Esther Price			
Boyanup, WA	Phone: 0418 931 93 Email: <esther@westerndairy.com.au> Website: <http: www.westerndairy.com.au=""></http:></esther@westerndairy.com.au>			
April 29-1	Tocal Field Days Contact: Ruth Luckner			
Paterson, NSW	Phone: (02) 4939 8827 Email: <fielddays@tocal.com> Website: <www.tocalfielddays.com></www.tocalfielddays.com></fielddays@tocal.com>			
May 19	Great South West Dairy Awards			
Warrnambool, Vic	Phone: (03) 5557 1000 Email: <awards@westvicdairy.com.au></awards@westvicdairy.com.au>			
May 22-25	The 31st Annual Alltech International Symposium			
Lexington, Kentucky, US	Website: <http: one.alltech.com=""></http:>			
May 24-26	Irrigation Australia 2016 Conference			
Melbourne, Vic	Phone: (02) 8335 4000 Email: <info@irrigation.org.au> Website: <www.irrigationaustralia.com.au></www.irrigationaustralia.com.au></info@irrigation.org.au>			
June 2	DairySA Innovation Day Contact: Rebecca Hehir			
Mt Gambier, SA	Phone: 0418 951 324 Email: <rhehir@dairyaustralia.com.au> Website: <http: www.dairysa.com.au=""></http:></rhehir@dairyaustralia.com.au>			
June 7-9	Farmfest Contact: Rural Press Events			
Toowoomba, Qld	Phone: (02) 6768 5800 Email: <farmfest@fairfaxmedia.com.au> Website: <www.farmonline.com.au events="" farmfest=""></www.farmonline.com.au></farmfest@fairfaxmedia.com.au>			
June 15-18	New Zealand National Agricultural Fieldays			
Hamilton, NZ	Phone: +64 7 843 4499 Email: <www.fieldays.co.nz></www.fieldays.co.nz>			
June 16-17	Dairy Research Foundation Symposium			
Wagga, NSW	Phone: (02) 4655 0631 Email: <michelle.heward@sydney.edu.au></michelle.heward@sydney.edu.au>			
February 26	SIMA and Simagena 2017			
Paris, France	Phone: Website: <http: en<="" td=""></http:>			
	event included in the diary, send information to Carlene and Alastair Dowie. nail <carlene.dowie@fairfaxmedia.com.au></carlene.dowie@fairfaxmedia.com.au>			

### think again!

# Lessons on succession



By Kerry Ryan\*

- Need clear vision for everyone's
- future Prove working relationships
- before sharing ownership
- points Understand different personality
- (ev styles

N recent months, I've been involved in a number of projects where the first steps in succession management have been put in place without a fully thought-out plan to guide the process. This has resulted in fragile relationships and ownership structures that are not as effectively aligned with the long-term strategy as they could be aligned.

This has reinforced my view that there is no room for shortcuts in this important process. Effective succession management relies on a clear vision for everyone's future and a plan built on recognition of all participants' values and aspirations.

High-risk shortcuts can include a casual approach to meetings and communication, the absence of documented sharemilking or employment agreements, insufficient consultation to establish a shared vision and lack of transparency around management decisions.

This is often complicated by a retiring generation that believes what worked for them in building the business will work for those who will own it in the future. Those entering the business can have a perception of being taken for granted or at least not taken seriously in decision-making.

In a similar way, parents find themselves making policy and capital decisions on the spot. Without forums to discuss, key decisions are overlooked and decision-makers feel pressured to make important calls.

Here are some reminders of what is needed to succeed in succession:

• First is to acknowledge the difference between "management succession" and "ownership succession". It is vital to prove working relationships before sharing ownership. It's much easier to walk away from an employment or contract management arrangement realising that shared responsibilities will not succeed than to unwind ownership structures. Getting these two in the right order is a key to success.

 Confirmation of shared values so that everyone is aware of the behaviours and outcomes that will deliver these is key to a solid foundation. Whether you are just starting out or are already involved in a jointly managed or owned operation, transparency around everyone's motives and consequent motivation is a key contributor. Communicating about and contrasting different philosophies adds significant value. Assumptions and a lack of communication risk building a flawed plan.

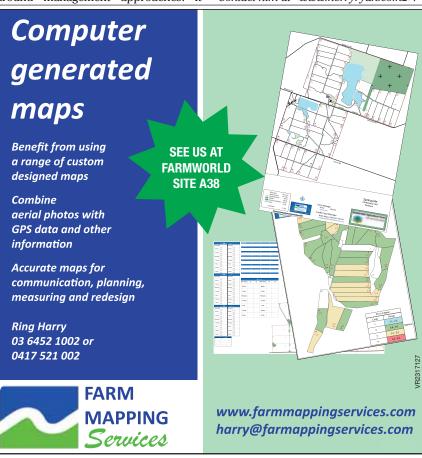
The families I am working with putting significant effort into getting these things clear. They are also putting time into understanding their respective personality styles and the impact of these on leadership, management and interpersonal dynamics.

Getting an appreciation of how everyone is wired informs conversations around management approaches. It also highlights the different giftings and talents of those involved, so responsibilities are delegated according to each individual's strengths.

It is absolutely clear to me that many succession plans suffer from too much focus on structure (often the "go to" aspect of succession planning for legal and accounting professionals) and too little time put into making sure structure follows strategy, acknowledges dynamics of the people involved and most importantly responds to their values and drives.

It's never too early to start planning around succession. This requires long-term vision, not short-term fixes. If you've realised you've got down the track and missed out some basics, it's important to pause, rebuild the plan and check in with the people. The effort to get the right vision and culture in place will pay real dividends in this highstakes process.

\*Kerry Ryan is a New Zealand based agribusiness consultant available for faceto-face or online for advice and ideas. Contact him at <www.kerryryan.co.nz>.



# Managing pink eye infection



**By Sherri Jaques\*** 

 y Use antibiotics to treat pinkeye
 Heal ulcer by using eye patches
 Implement prevention program with vaccine and fly control

### **By Sherri Jaques\***

OLLOWING on from my article in the last edition that looked at what caused pink eye, this article looks at how to manage the condition. Managing pink eye involves:

• antibiotics to kill the bacteria in clinical cases;

an ulcer healing phase — which may require surgery or patches; and
prevention or management of spread between animals (flies).

A vaccine is also available.

Firstly the bacteria needs to be killed and further enzyme damage to the cornea prevented to stop the ulcer getting larger.

*Moraxella bovis* seems to not be resistant to most of the antibiotics used for pink eye and stopping the infection is the easy part of therapy. However, in severe cases it may require injectable antibiotics and repeat treatments. Injectable antibiotics can be given into the tissues around the eye — this should only be done by a veterinarian — or under the skin/into the muscle. Secondly the ulcer needs to be healed. Ulcers heal best if the surface of the eye can be kept moist and free of 'gritty' irritants. Depending on how bad the ulcer is, it can take 10 to 14 days to heal, usually with a white scar where the ulcer was located. This scar will then shrink over several more weeks.

Treatments that support and encourage healing include patches over the eye — this can also help to keep flies off the secretions and decrease spread. I like the patches to sit off the eye, cone-shaped or 'painters masks' glued onto the hair covering the eye. I do not leave a 'gap' for gunk to get out, as the flies will get in this.

I often temporarily stitch the eyes shut (tarsoraphy) under local anaesthetic for 7-10 days. This acts as a bandaid covering the eye and keeps the eye moist and free of gritty bits to allow faster healing of the ulcer. A flap using the third eyelid can also be used.

General management for prevention involves possible vaccination and fly control. There is a vaccine available in Australia, while there are several available overseas. There are multiple strains of this bacteria and a range of seven types of 'pilli' on the outside of the strains. It is these pilli that the vaccine attacks.

The Australian vaccine covers three of the seven strains of pilli found on *Morexalla bovis* strains. The vaccine is a single dose that I recommend as a part of management if the weather is expected to be dry and hot.

It needs to be given about 3-6 weeks before the start of hot dusty conditions. For southern Australia, this usually means giving a single dose between mid September and mid October if the summer is expected to be a hot dry one.

It is important to realise that vaccination alone will not prevent every case but will decrease the number seen. The vaccine can be given annually to any cattle older than seven days of age.

Keeping fly numbers down means thinking about decreasing the number of flies using insecticides (alternate each year between a pyrethrin-based product and an organophosphate product as the flies can develop a resistance), using fly traps, and controlling manure piles, cutting grass and managing silage stacks to decrease fly-breeding sites. Spreading manure in a thin layer allows it to dry and kills fly larva. Also aim to allow dung beetles to work, and use patches to keep flies away from the infected secretions.

All of the above aspects — early identification and treatment of cases, management aimed at preventing fly breeding to decrease spread of the bacteria and well-timed vaccination — need to be considered and implemented to limit the number of cases of pink eye being seen in dry dusting weather.

Until next time, happy milking.

\*Sherri Jaques is a practising veterinarian and reproduction adviser in the West Gippsland region of Victoria. All comments and information discussed in this article are intended to be of a general nature only. Please consult a veterinarian for herd health advice, protocols and/or treatments that are tailored to a herd's particular needs.

## Practise good farm hygiene

Prevention is cheaper and easier than cure. Stop disease at the farm gate and think of biosecurity every time when planning to buy or move livestock.

Consider the time and money already spent keeping a herd healthy, then add up the investment and the steps that might be needed to prevent the introduction of disease.

Farm biosecurity means keeping disease out and preventing the spread of disease from one dairy herd to another herd. The risk of introducing a disease when buying livestock can be minimised by obtaining a good history of the animals from the vendor before purchase.

At a minimum a buyer should ask if the herd was bred by the vendor and request a declaration about the disease status of the properties where the livestock have been kept.

A quarantine period in a designated area can be a practical way of restricting the possible introduction of diseases and weeds and can give the buyer the opportunity to examine for disease and external parasites.

Maintaining boundary fences is essential to prevent the introduction of stray livestock from neighbouring properties. Having good fences is the front line of biosecurity.

Contact: a local veterinarian or Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) veterinary or animal health officer or in NSW Local Land Services.

> —Jeff Cave, DEDJTR district veterinary officer



# Taking the office into the paddock

- Good Bulls smartphone app
- released

### Allows breeding decisions to be

- points made in paddock ✓ Filters can be applied for different
- traits

OUTH Gippsland, Vic dairyfarmer, Allison Potter says the new Good Bulls app gives her the convenience of her office tool in the paddock, where she does most of her thinking about bull selection.

"I really like the Displayabull tool on the ADHIS (Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme) website to look up the details of individual bulls," she said.

"But I'm more focused on the sorts of bulls that would suit our herd when the cows are in front of me, when I'm in the paddock or bringing them in for milking. The new Good Bulls app lets me look up bulls and also create a list of bulls that might suit our breeding priorities — and it's on my phone so I can take it wherever it suits."

Mrs Potter and her husband, Aaron, and her brother Rodney Goode and his wife, Steph, milk 500 cows across two herds at Poowong North.

"One herd is autumn calving and the other spring, but for two months of the year, we join both herds so that both families can have a holiday," Mrs Potter said.

"We make the breeding decisions collectively because we are all interested in genetics and we each approach it slightly differently. Before we order, we get together and discuss our ideas, and we also take advice from Brad Aitken, from Leading Edge Genetics.'

She said there was general agreement on the main breeding priority: production was a given and daughter fertility was the next priority.

"We also look at temperament and stature," Mrs Potter said. "We have quite large cows and we are conscious of not wanting to breed giants."

When considering potential sires, Mrs Potter looks at their indices (Balanced Performance, Health Weighted and Type Weighted) and Australian Breeding Values for specific traits. She also reviews catalogues.

Mrs Potter is comfortable with



Allison and Aaron Potter use the Good Bulls app to consider potential sires to use over their herd.

### 'I like the way the app gives me a snapshot of information and makes it easy to delve into more details.'

the computer, having looked after the herd records for many years. Although not a regular user of apps for smartphones or tablets, she volunteered to be a test user of the Good Bulls app.

"I liked the idea of having the information at my fingertips, for example, being able to look up a bull that could be useful over a particular cow when she's standing in front of me; or when I'm away from the farm," she said.

Mrs Potter said she found the app user-friendly and liked being able to filter out bulls that would not suit their herd. "We don't buy bulls that are below 100 for daughter fertility so it's handy to be able to filter them out," she said.

"I like the way the app gives me a

snapshot of information and makes it easy to delve into more details. I also like the graphic that illustrates a bull's traits so that you can easily see his strengths and weaknesses.'

She plans to use the app to create customised shortlists that can be saved and emailed to other family members or their breeding adviser.

Mrs Potter said it would also be handy to receive a reminder when it was time to start thinking about ordering straws for each joining. "Spring is such a busy time with calving then silage that it's easy to run late with ordering semen," she said. "A reminder from the app will be useful."

Sarah Saxton, from ADHIS, said the app included an expansive database of dairy bulls from Australia and overseas with the information updated twice a year with the April and August release of Australian Breeding Values (ABVs).

The app is available for both iphone and android phones and can be used on tablets.

Contact: Sarah Saxton at ADHIS, phone (03) 8621 4240 or email <ssaxton@adhis.com.au>.



# SA group uses DairyBase to benchmark

 Business discussion group uses benchmarking

- DairyBase will be used to generate data
   Online access will provide more
- Online access will provide more analysis

GROUP of South Australian dairyfarmers have been participating in group benchmarking activities for many years and are looking to DairyBase as their preferred analysis platform into the future.

The Mount Jagged Dairy Discussion Group involves member farms across the Fleurieu Peninsula south of Adelaide, and recently celebrated 30 years of group activities.

Group chairperson Rod Walker said one of those activities had been to collate, review and discuss business performance of member farms at the end of each financial year.

"For most years we have used a spreadsheet-based program to collate and present physical, financial and efficiency statistics for each member business," Mr Walker said. "Members have really valued the group benchmarking, equipping us to better track dairy performance over time because we can 'This has been really valuable in helping each of us better understand the key performance drivers on our own farms.'

compare trends on our farms over time with trends on other local farms.

"This has been really valuable in helping each of us better understand the key performance drivers on our own farms. It has also been a great platform on which to support group discussions when we meet and visit individual member farms."

Building on this, group members recently decided to continue this benchmarking work using DairyBase, a new web-based business analysis tool developed by Dairy Australia.

Mr Walker said Mount Jagged Group members were excited about utilising DairyBase's national data. "We will be looking to compare trends in farm performance against other key farming areas to gain new insights into better farming practices," he said.

Agronomist Greg Mitchell is facilitator for this farmer group and agrees with the potential for DairyBase to add value. "There's no doubt that the DairyBase analysis is more comprehensive than our existing benchmark program," Mr Mitchell said.

"But we are even more excited by farmer members being able to access their own farm data online. This will allow farmers to more easily interrogate their own data, drill down and explore particular issues of interest, and even use their actual performance figures as a basis for future budgeting work."

DairyBase is a free online tool that will help dairyfarmers to:

• compare their own farm business over time;

• create annual reports;

• identify opportunities to drive profit and manage risk;

• make more informed business decisions; and

• generate comparative analysis according to farm size, region and production system.

For more information go to website <www.dairybase.com.au>.

## **Better decisions with new Standard Chart of Accounts**

**R**URAL accountants say dairyfarmers will benefit from Dairy Australia's new Standard Chart of Accounts with higher quality information for analysis leading to better-informed decisions made on-farm.

Developed by Dairy Australia in response to requests from farmers and service providers, the Standard Chart of Accounts will also drive consistency in how the dairy industry reports and discusses farm business performance.

Phillipsons Accounting Services Director, Colin Wright, said a standardised way of recording income and expenditure was of great value to the dairy industry. "It's a really positive move across the board," Mr Wright said. "It will make it easier for the accountant to provide information to farmers that will allow them to compare their business performance over time, versus other farms and assist in the budgeting process. "Accountants generally go through lists of farmer expenses from A-Z without knowing the detail on key items. That makes it hard to interpret and compare year-on-year progress or performance versus other farms. The Standard Chart of Accounts should make this much clearer."

Mr Wright said the fact the Standard Chart of Accounts also linked with the farm business management tool Dairy-Base was another positive enabling comparative analysis and information sharing valuable to farmers.

Kyabram, Vic, accountant Pete George said the new Standard Chart of Accounts, which drew heavily on Murray Dairy's *Financial Records Guide for Dairy Farmers*, would also assist consultants analysing financial data for their clients.

A partner at M&S Group Accounting, Mr George works with 150 dairyfarmer clients and three Dairy Business Network (DBN) groups in northern Victoria. "The consultant-led DBN groups I am involved in will find this new Standard Chart of Accounts very useful because they will receive better and higher quality information to help them make decisions," Mr George said.

"They are interested in their financials and sharing information and seeing how others in the group have dealt with certain issues. This Standard Chart of Accounts will make it easier than it is currently to compare year on year, with themselves or with others in the group."

Mr George said farmers he dealt with had an increasing focus on farm business management due to volatility in milk price and water costs and the new Standard Chart of Accounts played an integral part in the process.

To download the Standard Chart of Accounts visit website <www.dairyaustralia. com.au> or <www.dairybase.com.au>.



# Simple herd management lifts fertility

 Strictly seasonal calving herd
 Simple management system including once-a-day calving
 Calving induction no longer used

S IMPLIFYING herd management with a once-a-day (OAD) milking regime, keeping good records and rearing most of their heifers allow Veronica and David Penfold to maintain good fertility in their Gippsland dairy herd.

The Penfolds have leased and managed their farm at Willow Grove, Vic, since 2000. After starting off with 130 cows, they now milk more than 500 cows on a milking area of 235 hectares. This area is supported by an additional 98ha, which is used for replacements and fodder production.

A feature of the farm operation is OAD milking, which started during the drought of 2006 when the farm ran out of water. Converting to OAD milking significantly reduced water requirements for the herd and farm.

Calving starts on July 10 and continues for 13 weeks. The herd is dried off completely for four weeks from the end of May.

The Penfolds have maintained a strictly seasonal calving herd, despite that fact that they ceased using calving induction in 2010.

Reproductive performance in this herd is equal to or above InCalf targets. Features include:

• both the heifers and the adult herd calve quickly, giving them a greater opportunity to get back into calf in 'On their farm getting in calf is not optional.'

the next mating period; andhigh six-week in-calf rates reflect the high fertility of the herd.

## How is reproductive performance managed?

The Penfolds have a well-planned transition cow program where springers are allocated a new strip of grass daily, which is back-fenced, and fed hay, which has been made on the farm. Each afternoon, the group is brought back to the dairy and fed two kilograms of pellets containing 40 grams of magnesium oxide. Any cows that have calved are pulled out of the springer group. Springing heifers are run as a separate group and are allocated a fresh strip of grass daily. Once the numbers in this group are depleted, any remaining heifers are added to the adult springer cow group.

A feature of this herd is a high replacement rate. In most years nearly 200 heifers are reared, as well as up to eight bulls, which are used across the heifers and also on the cows in the years after their use in the heifers.

Heifers start calving at the same time as the adult herd. They are run with eight bulls of different breeds for 10-11 weeks. Not all pregnant heif-



The Penfolds have high levels of herd replacements available.

ers are kept — the later conceiving heifers are sold. More heifers are culled once calved due to poor temperament and likeability scores.

Heifers are reared in one group and joined in two groups — dependent upon their sire to avoid close breeding with their brothers. The Penfolds aim to feed the heifers well with grass, but will use supplementary pellets and hay when pasture runs short.

Artificial insemination is used over cows for three weeks, and then bulls are used for 10 weeks. Cows are inseminated as they are observed on heat using adhesive heat-detection aids, and no synchrony is used in the milking herd. In all, a team of 15 bulls is used, which is divided into two groups. Early in the mating period, the teams are rotated every two days, and later on every five days. The herd is pregnancy tested 7-8 weeks after the end of the mating period. Any empty cows are sold and later-calving cows preferentially culled.

When it comes to calving time, any cows observed with a retained afterbirth or that are unwell after calving are treated with antibiotics. Difficult calvings are tended to quickly, leading to improved outcomes for cow and calf.

## Selection for fertility and production

All female calves from heifers and cows are kept until the calf shed is full, but the Penfolds are selective about which calves are kept as replacements. Each year a number of heifers are sold to the export market. All later-born heifer calves are sold to local farmers as replacements at about one week of age.

The most important sire selection criterion used is daughter fertility. A Genetic Progress Report for the herd shows that this has resulted in a high Australian Breeding Value for fertility for Friesians and crossbreeds, and a slightly above average ABV for fertility in the Ayrshire component of the herd. Other key criteria are temperament and cell count, while udder conformation and feet and legs are ►



 also important considerations. Sires used over the herd are 38 per cent Ayrshire, 62 per cent Friesian and occasionally a New Zealand crossbreed.

Mrs Penfold keeps detailed records for the herd, which allows for decisions on culling to be made based on good information. For example in 2015, 34 cows were culled for mastitis, 30 for low production, 15 for age and 11 for poor temperament.

Sometimes up to six empty cows are carried over, and they are usually milked in another herd while the Penfolds have a break from milking. The normal empty rate is 4-6 per cent. Cows with poor temperament are culled, as are cows with poor udder conformation.

### Reasons for a no induction policy on this farm

The Penfolds haven't used calving induction since 2010. They found that induced cows did not calve well and most did not get back into calf early in the mating period.

Before 2006 early induction was used and the Penfolds found this increased the workload unreasonably at an already busy time. Then until 2010, the tail end of the calving group was induced and the calves reared. Now later-calving cows and heifers are sold as replacements to other dairyfarmers, and this provides a revenue source for the farm opera-



One of the keys to the Penfolds operation is that they keep most of their heifers. One of their cows will be 15 years old in July and will start her 14th lactation, she has been joined 16 times in her whole life.

tion. As they have excess replacements and achieve good reproductive performance in their herd, there is no reason to use calving induction.

The Penfolds said they had decreased their workload by ceasing calving induction. There is one less group of cows to manage, and less time involved in organising veterinary visits and associated paperwork. They have had fewer calving problems and believe that the calves are healthier because they are not being fed milk from induced cows.

### Why does their system work?

The farm operates with a relatively uncomplicated system, which is further simplified by using OAD milking. Their system works because they

keep every heifer calf until a designated date for that calving season enabling a high replacement rate. They aren't super fussy about which cows are kept and are happy to keep older cows if they still milk well. On their farm "getting in calf is not optional". It is important to pregnancy test early to make sure there are no passengers.

The Penfolds suggest that to reduce or eliminate the reliance of calving induction in other dairy herds, the bulls need to be taken out early and every heifer calf kept. To maximise herd fertility, artificial insemination technique, heat detection and bull health are all important. If calves are reared well, there will be fewer losses and heifers will be better grown and easier to get back in calf.

### Future plans

The Penfolds are committed to the dairy industry. Despite some loss in production potential with the use of OAD milking, they are satisfied that it is well suited to their farming operation

OAD has the advantage of lower running costs and is less labour intensive than conventional milking routines. They also have a strong connection to their local discussion groups which allows them to discuss important industry issues with other farmers.

## Healthy Hooves lameness scoring system

New lameness resources

- points developed
- Simple scoring system for
- Australian herds é
- Videos and posters available

AMENESS is estimated to cost farmers at least \$250 for each cow that develops the problem and can significantly reduce cow comfort and longevity. To help farmers prevent and detect lameness in their herds, Dairy Australia has launched a new website with a range of practical and easy-touse resources developed under the Healthy Hooves project.

Dairy Australia's new website <www. healthyhoooves.dairyaustralia.com. au> features the Healthy Hooves lameness scoring system, which enables dairyfarmers to monitor the number 108 The Australian Dairyfarmer March-April 2016

of lame cows in the herd. Dairy Australia's program development manager, Erika Oakes, said that by regularly scoring their herd, farmers would be able to assess their current lameness level, and set a target for the herd, while assessing what changes need to be made on farm to reach the target.

"Lame cows are harder to get in calf, have reduced milk production and lower body condition scores," Ms Oakes said.

"Putting effort into preventing lameness is far better than waiting until cows need treatment.

"We have developed a simple lameness scoring system for our Australian conditions to help farmers prevent lameness and detect issues early."

The Healthy Hooves four-step lameness scoring system uses different aspects of the cow's movement to detect levels of lameness including stride length, walking speed or evenness, back position and head position.

The website features a series of short videos that show how to lameness score, including some examples to test how well to score different cows. Further videos cover others aspects of prevention, treatment and management of lameness such as tracks, cow flow, examining lame cows and treatment of common foot problems.

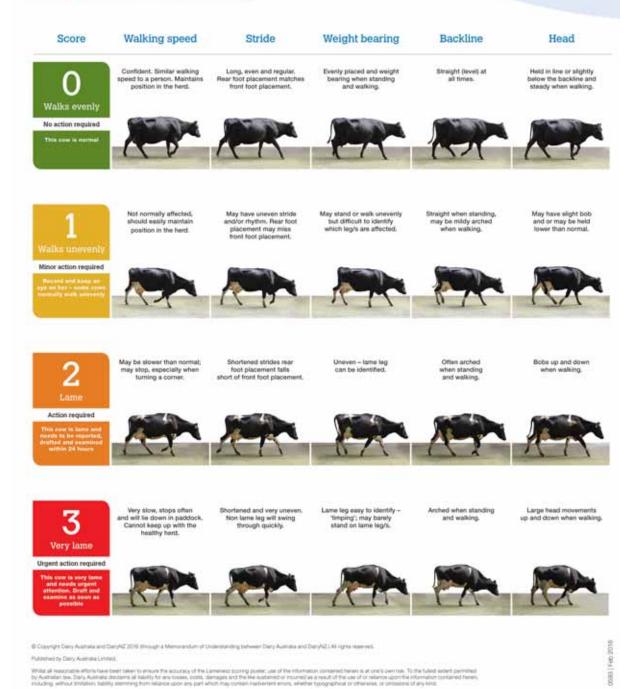
A full colour lameness scoring poster is also available to assist with training staff to use lameness scoring and can be downloaded online or ordered via the website.

Visit website <www.heathyhooves. dairyaustralia.com.au> for more information.





## Lameness scoring





# Getting pastures productive after the dry

 Assess all pastures and divide into three groups

### Oversow thinned paddocks

- without other problems Be aware of nutrient levels in
- sacrifice paddocks

points

) ev

A FTER another dry summer in south-eastern Australia, dairyfarmers are going to be faced with pastures that have opened up and will be in need of attention to ensure they are producing enough feed in the coming year. While the summer dry is always going to result in pastures thinning out, there is a range of other factors, such as soil type and fertility, grazing management and the condition of the pasture going into summer, that influence how they are look at the end of the summer period.

As there may be a number of paddocks that will require attention, it is a good idea to assess all of the paddocks on the farm and develop a plan for each paddock based on its current condition. The first step is to assess the condition of each paddock in terms of its potential to remain productive through the coming autumn and winter.

## Deciding which paddocks need attention

The main thing to assess is the density of desirable, productive species that have survived the dry period. If 'The main thing to assess is the density of desirable, productive species that have survived the dry period.'

the break is early enough, this is easily done after the pastures have begun to regrow.

However, with a later break, pasture assessments will need to be done on the dry pasture. Having a closer look at individual plants and tillers, assessing if they are still alive and anchored to the ground will give an idea of the number of plants that have survived. Other things to consider are the level of weed invasion, if it is pugged, if it is an old pasture that needs attention anyway or a newly sown productive pasture.

Once paddocks have been assessed they should fall into one of three broad categories and can be dealt with accordingly. Paddocks will either still have a reasonable density of surviving plants, have thinned out over summer but have no other issues or have thinned out and have other issues such as weeds or soil problems that need addressing. Sacrifice paddocks should be considered separately and will most likely need attention. So how do farmers determine if a paddock has enough desirable plants surviving to remain productive? A common rule of thumb is if there is more than a hand span of bare ground between plants (about 60 plants/ square metres) its productivity is likely to be compromised. Paddocks that have less than a hand span of bare ground between plants have the potential to remain productive and therefore will be the lowest priority for renovation.

## What to do with the paddocks that need attention

For paddocks that have thinned beyond this point (the hand-span measure), the loss in pasture production will likely be greater than the cost of renovating so allocating money on these paddocks makes sense — as long as there is enough money in the budget. The number of paddocks targeted for renovation will depend on how many paddocks need attention and what funds are available to spend on pasture renovation.

Paddocks that have thinned but have no other issues are the easiest and quickest to deal with. These paddocks can be easily and relatively cheaply thickened up by over-sowing with perennial ryegrass. Over-sowing improves pasture density and provides greater competition for weeds and giving these paddocks the best



Sacrifice paddocks should be considered separately and will most likely need attention.



chance of remaining productive in the longer term.

Paddocks that have a lot of weeds are not as easy to fix and will need to be renovated in the next year or two regardless of how they are managed this autumn. Depending on the type and level of weeds they may suit oversowing with a short-term Italian or annual ryegrass to provide quick growth and good winter and early spring feed. These paddocks will then need to be renovated next spring or autumn.

Where there are too many weeds present, over-sowing is unlikely to result in a successful establishment. In this case, the best option will be to spray the paddock out and start again. As long as these paddocks don't have any other soil issues, such as pugging damage, then spraydrilling, that is, spraying out the old pasture and sowing new seed without cultivation, is a good option. If there are other issues that need addressing (pugging damage, soil pH) then a full cultivation may be required. What is sown in these paddocks will depend on the timing of the break and when feed is needed.

If the break is early enough or the paddock can be irrigated in time to allow existing plants and weeds to start growing, be sprayed out and then sown before conditions turn cold and wet, then sowing perennial ryegrass is an option. If the break is later, then faster-establishing species such as short-term ryegrass, forage brassicas or forage cereals may be a better option. These species will provide feed relatively quickly and produce more feed through winter and early spring.

### What about sacrifice paddocks

Any areas that have been used as sacrifice paddocks will likely have thinned significantly during the summer and were probably selected as sacrifice paddocks because they needed renovating anyway. These paddocks will have had a large amount of nutrients dumped on them in dung and urine so should be a priority for re-sowing to ensure these nutrients can be captured by a productive pasture rather than lost. The high nutrient load also needs to be considered when grazing these paddocks as there will be potentially high levels of nitrogen and potassium, which can lead to problems with nitrate poisoning and milk fever.

As the herd should be held back in autumn to allow enough paddocks to be eligible for grazing to support the grazing rotation, sacrifice paddocks may not be available for re-sowing until late autumn so drilling with a shortterm ryegrass may be the best option.

If purchased hay has been fed on the sacrifice paddock, or other paddocks, there is potential for weed seed to have been brought in with the hay and spread on the paddock. While all newly sown pastures should be closely monitored for weeds and weeds controlled early, these areas deserve extra attention.

# Tail docking to be banned

✔ Routine tail docking of cows

banned ✓ Not acceptable for animal welfare ✓ Use alternative methods to

ƙey

 Use alternative methods to prevent mud problems

TAIL docking is already outlawed in some states, and the incoming Animal Welfare Standards for Cattle will make docking of cows' tails for management purposes illegal in all states. Farmers docking their cows' tails, except on veterinary advice and only to treat injury or disease, will be breaking the law. They will also be jeopardising the dairy industry's reputation for good animal welfare practices.

In wet conditions, a cow's tail can become muddy and this can pose problems for people working in the milking shed. Also, in the past, there was a misconception that shortening cows' tails may help prevent the spread of mastitis. However there is no scientific justification for tail docking on animal health grounds and it is now recognised that tail docking reduces cow welfare in two ways.:

1. The tail docking procedure is painful and may cause infections or lasting nerve damage and chronic pain in some cows. 'If you take off a cow's tail, you remove her ability to defend herself against flies.'

2. Tails also serve important functions for cows, deterring biting insects, communicating motives and moods, and providing structure for the tail muscles.

The vast majority of dairyfarmers are using alternative measures to safeguard milking staff from any occupational health and safety risks caused by muddy tails. Attention to farm tracks and yards to reduce the buildup of mud, improved design of railings and guards in the milking area, using fly control in the dairy and regular trimming of the long hair on the tail switch will help improve milker comfort and safety without compromising cow welfare. Having a calm and consistent routine to bring cows to and from the dairy and handling them gently through milking, will go a long way to ensuring cows are quiet and easy to handle, which will also

help to reduce milking times and keep the milking area clean.

Andrew Lester, a dairyfarmer in north-east Tasmania and president of the State's Dairy Council, actively promotes at farmer events and information sessions alternatives such as regular switch trimming.

He admits it's not pleasant to get hit in the face with a muddy tail in the dairy, but says tail docking is not acceptable.

"If you take off a cow's tail, you remove her ability to defend herself against flies," Mr Lester said. "From a comfort perspective, it's much better just to trim the switch. At our farm, we do this about three times per year. The electric tail trimmers work well, but sometimes it's better to use hand shears. It's easier with some cows than others"

For more information on alternatives to tail docking go to website <dairyaustralia.com.au/Animalmanagement/Animal-welfare/Cows/ Switch-trimming-not-tail-docking. aspx> where three Dairy Australia fact sheets can be downloaded:

- Myths about tail docking;
- Alternatives to tail docking; and
- How to trim a cow's tail.



# Fert\$mart Mobile App trialled

- Fert\$mart App makes developing plan easier
- Right nutrient use lifts farm
- points profitability
- App allows for high-level reporting

AIRY Australia is trialling a mobile App to streamline and boost the adoption of sustainable nutrient management practices on dairy farms around the country.

The Fert\$mart App Project has been jointly funded through Dairy Australia and the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

A trial of the Fert\$mart App was completed in February with 20 nutrient farm advisers across six dairy regions.

Dairy Australia's land water carbon program manager Cathy Phelps said many farmers were now finding that when they got soil and fertiliser management right, they could produce more feed at no extra cost.

'This comes with good planning and more targeted use of fertiliser,

'The key is to use the Right Source of fertiliser, at the Right Rate, in the Right Place and at the Right Time (the 4Rs).'

she said. "The key is to use the Right Source of fertiliser, at the Right Rate, in the Right Place and at the Right Time (the 4Rs). A Fert\$mart Plan helps to get these things right through improved targeted planning and the app will aid in take-up on-farm."

### What is FertSmart?

Fert\$mart is the Australian dairy industry's national nutrient management framework developed by Dairy Australia in collaboration with farm nutrient advisers and farmers.

It was developed to improve the efficiency and profitability of fertiliser use on Australian dairy farms. The Fert\$mart framework prescribes the recommended steps to help dairyfarmers and their trusted advisers develop a Fert\$mart Nutrient Management Plan

The plan considers factors affecting the movement of nutrients into, around, and off the farm when making decisions about the source, rate, timing and placement of fertiliser to most benefit pasture productivity and profitability.

### Why has the Fert\$mart App been developed?

Ms Phelps said the Fert\$mart App made it easier to bring together the information required to create a Fert\$mart Plan that complies with all elements of the national nutrient framework.

The App Project has established partnerships with data input providers, such as soil-testing laboratories, so that results can be uploaded directly into the system.

The App also integrates best practice industry tools such as the Dairy



Matt Thompson of MNC Agronomy, with Michael and Paula Gray, Rollands Plain, NSW, has used the App to prepare 15 Fert\$mart Plans for farmers of the Kempsey Dairy Discussion Group.





Kylie Boston, of Agriculture Projects & Management, trialled the App and thinks it will work for her clients that have the potential to improve their planning and tracking of nutrients across farm.

Self Assessment Tool (DairySAT). The outcome for farm nutrient advisers is a more efficient platform on which to gather, analyse and make recommendations on nutrient management at a Farm Management Zone (FMZ) level and generate a report for the farmer which can be easily updated," Ms Phelps said.

"For the famer directly, the App

provides a location for them or their advisers to record actual fertiliser applications that correspond to their Fert\$mart Plan. This can aid ongoing improvements in the efficiency and profitability of nutrient application.

"Additionally, farmers can use the App to participate in high-level industry sustainability reporting. This

## What's in a Fert\$mart Plan?

The Fert\$mart Plan is created by agronomists and must address a checklist derived from the Fert\$mart framework. Agronomists who follow this approach and fulfil all elements of the checklist can use the 'Fert\$mart Tick' on their plans.

When dairyfarmers receive a "tick" approved Fert\$mart Plan, they can be confident the recommendations are based on the dairy industry's national nutrient framework and, hence, industry best practice.

The Fert\$mart website <www. fertsmart.dairyingfortomorrow.com. au> has been specially developed to support dairyfarmers and their advisers in making planned nutrient decisions. Fert\$mart resources are freely available on the site.

allows the industry to promote the efforts being made on dairy farms to properly plan and track nutrient use against the fertility requirements of their soils and farming system."

Ms Phelps said most advisers were positive about the use of the Fert\$mart App and their feedback was an integral part of the final iteration that is now available.

## Discussion group gets boost from Fert\$mart

**N**EW South Wales mid-north coast dairy farmer Mike Jeffery says that Fert\$mart has been an excellent learning experience for farmers in his discussion group that should yield cost savings and productivity gains on-farm through improved soil nutrient management.

Mr Jeffery milks 350 cows year round at his farm at Austral Eden near Kempsey. The group consisting of 15 farms based in the Macleay and Hastings Valley's heard about Fert\$mart after completing the Feeding Pasture for Profit course with consultant Phil Shannon.

"We had learned a lot through Feeding Pasture for Profit and thought that Fert\$mart was a natural progression that we would benefit from," he said.

"We then approached Dairy Australia to get us started. Currently we are part way

through the process but we have already gained a lot of knowledge and benefit from being involved."

Workshops and soil testing have been completed with draft reports for each farm circulated.

"Everyone in the group has a degree of understanding when it comes to soil testing, but I think we have benefited from the independent interpretation of the soil tests and improved our understanding and application of the information," Mr Jeffery said.

"We are far more knowledgeable about soil fertility now, and each farm has a customised nutrient management plan to work on that is specific to their farm.

"Moving forward I am sure there will be changes in the way the group applies fertiliser and there will be costs savings and productivity gains made with changes in what we apply, the application rates and the timing of application."

Agronomist Matt Thomson of MNC Agronomy has been facilitating Fert\$mart with the farmers.

"One of the great things about doing this within the discussion group rather than individually is that some farmers have questions for the agronomist that others may not have considered so we all benefit from the discussion and sharing of ideas about what might work on each other's farms," Mr Jeffery said.

"It is certainly a reflection on the value of Fert\$mart that there is already interest within the group to do further workshops on top of what has already been agreed on. It's definitely seen as valuable and I would recommend Fert\$mart to other farmers." **Regional Development Programs** 



# What's happening in your region?

Contact your Regional Development Program

Dairy Australia	Dairy NSW Ph: 02 9351 1737 dairynsw.com.au	DAIRY DAIRY DAIRY Dairy Australia	Murray Dairy Ph: 03 5833 5312 murraydairy.com.au
Dairy DairySA Dairy Australia	DairySA Ph: 08 8766 0127 dairysa.com.au	Dairy Australia	Subtropical Dairy Ph: 0431 197 479 dairyinfo.biz
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