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REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE



**Adrian Drury
Hunter
Dairy District Council**

As we head again into the NSW Farmers' Association annual conference at

Homebush next week I think it's a good chance to look at the achievement of the Dairy Committee over the last year.

Our support for the dairy industry services levy helps secure the future of Dairy Australia for the next three years with the highest voter participation in any agricultural sector.

The Committee support for the BJD assurance score will also see the beginning of a market based approach for a disease that is a threat to the dairy industry across NSW and Australia. I would like to remind our members that the BJD program will be reviewed in the next two years and if some aspect is not working please let us know so it can be fixed for the benefit of all.

The main focus of your Committee has been to promote sound arguments for a sustainable price for milk for dairy farmer in NSW with rising on farm costs and loss of milk supply in drought affected areas the Committee supported a strategy calling for a 20% increase at the farm gate, this call at the time seemed ambitious but with the growing demand for dairy products globally we believed it was a realistic goal. With the latest price announcement by our respective processing companies it appears most farmers should now expect to receive payment of around 20% higher than last year.

I have been asked by many farmers why didn't we receive the reported 35 to 40 % increases announced by the Victorian milk processors and I agree maybe we should have set our goals higher but it is important to look more closely at the southern price announcement for what they are.

Firstly you need to take into consideration that last year the opening prices in Victoria were 5% lower than the year before and the projected payout this year with step ups will only be around 20% if the normal pattern for step up payments is followed. With the A\$ predicted to reach 90cents this might prove to be difficult this year.

I am certainly not suggesting that we don't have a case for higher increases into the future but would like to promote well researched arguments that see our farmers receive long term sustainable prices in the coming years that encourage the type of investment and confidence farmers deserve. We will continue to keep the pressure on.

DAIRY COMMITTEE FOR 2007/08

The new Dairy Committee for 2007/08 has been decided.

In May nominations were called for the four positions on Dairy Committee up for reelection. Nominations were received for each of the Dairy District Councils with an election required in the North Coast Dairy District Council.

Following the election the four new Committee members for the 2007/08 year are Paul Weir for the North Coast, Adrian Drury for the Hunter, Michael Perich for the South Coast and Ruth Kydd for the Inland.

They will join the existing Committee members Terry Toohey, Rod Williams, Paul Timbs, and Janet Moxey.

I would like to congratulate all those on their selection and I look forward to working with them over the coming year.

I would also like to thank Lloyd Chesworth and Barry Paff on the work and time they put into the Committee over the last three years. There is a significant commitment required of Committee members over and above running their own farm operations and this is appreciated.

HUNTER FLOODS

Who would have thought that one moment you can be talking about drought and the next you are talking about floods. That's what happened following the storms that swept through the Hunter Valley on 12 June. Our drought teleconference became a flood teleconference.

It was impressive to see the local community, DPI dairy staff and Dairy Farmers jump in to help. By the time we all had a chance to speak together on the Tuesday there was already action taken to ensure power was being restored, milk was being collected, fodder was available and stock were safe.

The State and federal Government's have a range of assistance available to farmers

"Together we're a force to be reckoned with"

Annual Meeting Report

July 07

member service centre 1300 794 000

www.nswfarmers.org.au

affected by the floods and the Association has put together a fact sheet which lists all the assistance and how farmers can access it. It is available on the Association's website
http://www.nswfarmers.org.au/home/hunter_valley_flood_assistance.

The Association has also been successful in arranging through the RTA a simple mechanism where by farmers can obtain Unregistered Vehicle Permits to allow them to take unregistered vehicles on the road. These permits can be obtained by directly contacting the RTA officer responsible for the permits on 4925 1822.

ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A record number of farmers will converge on Sydney Showground next week for the NSW Farmers' Association's Annual Conference – *Global Warming: Opportunities for Agriculture*.

Almost 500 farmers from around NSW will debate more than 80 motions, tackling issues such as Federal peak grains representation, drought assistance, telecommunications, the Genetic Modification moratorium, national water management planning and renewable energy incentives.

This year the NSW Farmers' Association will webcast Annual Conference live for interested groups and the media. You will find the webcast link on the front page at www.nswfarmers.org.au

MILK PRICE CAMPAIGN

At the March Dairy Committee meeting it was decided that there needed to be a concerted campaign in the lead up to processor pricing announcements this year. The aim was to create public profile of the issue and thereby influence the decisions of processors. With the Woolworths contract also open for tender the message would also serve to ensure the responsibility of the retailers in the supply chain.

Over a 4 month period in June, the Committee put out 3 press releases. With a progressive message calling starting with a call for processors to increase farmgate prices by 20% and finishing with welcoming their price adjustments and the notice that the pressure would be maintained for sustainable prices in the future.

As a result over 20 radio interviews and stories were broadcast across the state. There was also a running feature in the Land newspaper. Some of the press even featured in the metropolitan newspapers and television.

Although it is not possible to claim that the publicity campaign was solely responsible for the price increase, the message from the farming community and the public pressure definitely contributed to the movement and demonstrates what the Association can achieve.

Kyogle Drought Meeting for Beef and Dairy Producers

Speaker: Brad Granzin on Nutrition and Managing the Fibre Shortage

Rural Financial Counsellor will be in attendance and will speak on available drought assistance.

When: Wednesday 25th July 2007

Where: Kyogle Golf Club - Fleming Room

Address: Summerland Way, Kyogle

Time: 9:30 for 10:00 am start finishing at 2pm

Morning tea and lunch will be provided

This meeting has been arranged for drought affected farmers to hear all the latest information on available subsidies and drought assistance and also make appointments with a professional to help with any applications and other assistance.

FOOD FIBRE FUTURE WORKSHOPS

Following the feed fibre future nutrition workshops organised by Dairy Australia last month there is now a follow-up one on one free nutrition consultation being offered to dairy and beef farmers. Please see following advertisement.

NEED HELP FEEDING YOUR HERD THIS WINTER?

feed.FIBRE.future

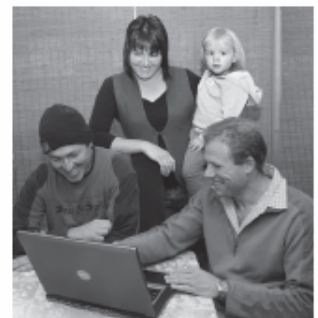
Free 1-on-1 consultations

Experienced consultants are available to help dairy and beef producers facing the challenge of feeding their herds this winter.

A free, confidential, 90-minute 1-on-1 session with a consultant can help you:

- work out if you've got enough feed to get through
- choose options and strategies to close the fodder gap
- consider the short and long-term implications of your plans and decisions on your business.

The session will focus on the issues most important to you.



Contact your Regional Co-ordinator to register

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