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**Report from the Committee**

**Ruth Kydd**  
**Inland Dairy District Council**

Recent rains in the Riverina and increased allocations from flows down the Darling River from the northern floods have given farmers hope. Although most of the rain has fallen outside the growing season it has allowed some deeper moisture to remain in the soil ready for a winter crop, the first for many years.

After so many years of drought farmers are still very cash strapped and finding it difficult to manage the high costs of spraying, seed, fertilizer and water to set themselves up for the coming year. Banks are being supportive but they can only go so far.

In the Riverina locusts have been busy eating off new shoots causing some paddocks to have to be resown, but the damage occurring to the North and West of us is significantly worse. The cooler weather will slow them down but we will need to be vigilant for new hatchings in the spring time.

Although the drought has sapped the energy of the farmers in the area we are proud that so many have remained positive and see a future for the industry in the area. Time will tell if the drought has weakened but the effects will take years to recover from.

**NSW Farmers' Dairy Section Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The NSW Farmers' Association Dairy Section invites you to attend the 2010 NSW Dairy Annual Conference being held from Tuesday 1 June 2010 to Wednesday 2 June 2010, at the Novotel Sydney Olympic Park. The Dairy Section's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Tuesday 1 June 2010. This year the Dairy Section has once again teamed up with Dairy NSW to hold a combined farm industry meeting. Conference attendees will also have the opportunity to attend Dairy Industry Association Australia (DIAA) industry information sessions on Wednesday 2 June 2010. Dairy NSW and the Dairy Section will hold a farmer forum between the industry sessions from 11am and 3pm on 2 June 2010. Information on the meeting and delegate nomination forms were mailed to Dairy Members on 16 April. If you would like to attend the conference, please return the form to the Association.

**2010/11 Dairy Committee**

Nominations for the Association's Dairy Committee closed on 29 April 2010. With no elections required, please see below a list of the 2010/11 Committee:

Name	Dairy District Council	Term
Adrian Drury	Hunter	2011
Patrick Neal	Hunter	2012
Paul Weir	North Coast	2011
Terry Toohey	North Coast	2012
Michael Perich	South Coast	2011
Paul Timbs	South Coast	2012
Ruth Kydd	Inland	2011
Peter Middlebrook	Inland	2012

The Association would like to thank Jamie Drury for representing the Hunter Dairy District Council on the Committee.

**NLIS**

The Association has been successful in seeking Industry & Investment NSW to reinstate the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) Cattle Consultative Committee. Terry Toohey is representing the dairy industry on the Committee. The NLIS Committee met on the 28 April 2010 and the Association raised a number of concerns including the following:

- The removal of tags from the database eg. for a deceased cow. Members have expressed concerns that they receive an error message from the database that the deceased cow has been sold. NLIS Ltd has added the 'inactive' status to the database for tags that have been lost, damaged or associated with an animal that has deceased. Devices with an 'inactive' status remain registered to the PIC, but removed from the active device list.
- Inclusion of the purchaser's PIC on the NVD. The Review Group decided that the inclusion of the extra PIC would cause confusion and could be unreliable.
- Activation of tags once placed in the animal's ear. The Review group believed this could be unreliable as it would require an additional step by producers who would be responsible for updating the database

**If you have any NLIS issues you would like to raise, please forward to the Association.**

**DECCW Audits of dairies**

As a result from the 2009 Dairy Section AGM, the Dairy Committee is lobbying the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) seeking that they change the auditing processes on dairies with over 800 cows. Currently, dairy farms with over 800 animals in milk production need to hold an Environment Protection License (EPL), which may be subject to an annual random audit. The Committee is concerned that without prior notice, the owner or staff member may not be available to guide the auditor around the facilities and provide responses to audit questions. The Committee is asking that DECCW notify the owner of the property 48 hours prior to their intended visit.

**Q-Fever vaccinations**

As a result from the Dairy Committee meeting at Bega in March, the Committee has asked Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) to pursue the Federal Government's Q-Fever initiative that would involve free testing and vaccination for producers and industry stakeholders. The Association believes there is a need to ensure that sufficient Q-Fever vaccination is available for existing and new industry entrants. The Committee supports the progression of an initiative which would provide free testing and vaccination for producers and industry

stakeholders. The Committee will update Members on the progress of this issue.

**BJD**

The Association provided a submission into the Industry & Investment NSW Review of Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD) management in NSW in late 2009. The Review aimed to identify the next steps for the BJD program and determine whether BJD zones in NSW can be removed. The Association recommended that I&I NSW move towards a more risk-based approach for managing BJD and supported the removal of BJD zoning in NSW. The Association is waiting on the recommendations from the review to be released. Jamie Drury represents the Committee on the NSW BJD Summit Executive

**Water**

The Conservation and Resource Management (CRM) Committee has been focussing their resources on water policy, with a particular focus on the Murray Darling Basin Planning Process. The CRM Committee is concerned that, to date, the Basin Planning Process has focussed, almost entirely on the environmental needs to the Basin whilst viewing the social and economic needs as secondary. The CRM Committee is particularly concerned by this approach and has been working closely with a range of stakeholders to raise awareness of this issue and ensure that the needs of Communities in the Basin are considered as a fundamental part of the planning process. The CRM Committee is currently putting together background information documents on each of the NSW Valleys in the Basin, the documents will form an important part of our response to the draft Basin Plan which is due for release midyear. Members will have the opportunity to review the documents. For further information, please contact Richard Widows on email- [widowsr@nswfarmers.org.au](mailto:widowsr@nswfarmers.org.au) or phone 02 8251 1808

**ADF Restructure**

Australian Dairy Farmers, the national body representing the interests of Australian dairy farmers announced publicly on 17 March, its intention to look at a restructure of the dairy industry's policy advocacy and representation. The Dairy Committee intend to consult with Dairy Members on this important issue.

**Upcoming meetings**

Date	Meeting	Contact
1 & 2 June 2010	NSW Farmers' AGM and Dairy NSW Members Council	Claire Hull
3 June 2010	Dairy Industry Conference	Claire Hull