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SADA NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

Last month as we went to "press", the state election campaign was entering the home straight. Now we are at the pointy end. Tomorrow the next government will be elected although we are not likely to know the result for a number of days as pre-poll votes are counted, and deals are done. Whatever the outcome, SADA looks forward to working with the government and minister to progress the issues that matter to dairy farmers.

It was great to see the enthusiasm in the dairy industry that was on display at the Dairy SA Central Conference this week and it was excellent to again be able to meet with people. I was personally relieved that the option to dance was not taken up

Andrew Curtis CEO ■

Farmers say sourcing agricultural labour is becoming increasingly difficult

Extract from Stock Journal

INDUSTRY representatives and farmers across multiple sectors say sourcing agricultural labour, and labour in regional areas, is becoming increasingly difficult and is an issue that desperately requires long-term solutions.

Dairy is just one of the sectors grappling with how to tackle [workforce and skill shortages](#) contributed to by reduced availability of overseas workers, difficulty attracting people to live and work in regional areas and some people's unwillingness to work.

The South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association, as part of their election priorities, have called for a \$4 million skills package over four years, with chief executive officer Andrew Curtis saying the industry not only had problems sourcing workers, but also in providing appropriate training to allow farmers' to develop the workers they had.

"It's hard to attract to people to work in regional areas regardless of industry," Mr Curtis said.

"The dairy industry had good access to back-packers who were happy to milk cows, but over the last two years we haven't had that and there's uncertainty about when that will come back."

SADA is hopeful a \$4m package would enable them to recruit workers and work with a training provider to enable staff to be trained appropriately and bolster the dairy industry in SA.

"The key challenge for the dairy industry, and for most agricultural industries, is to have training that is aligned with training packages but is flexible enough to allow it to fit into the dairy business and operations," Mr Curtis said.

"A lot of the current training systems aren't aligned with competencies or qualifications, or they expect people to be away from the business for large periods of time, which doesn't work when you've got to milk cows every day."

Labour is not a new issue for SADA, which established the SA Dairy Workforce Committee last year in response to industry skills and workforce concerns. Committee executive officer, SADA's Ashleigh Pulford, said many issues had come into focus as a result of the committee's consultation.

"One of the big issues in the processing sector was that a lot of staff were going to Vic for training because there's not a dairy processing training option here in SA," she said.

"That was taking staff away from processors and it was inconvenient for people to be in Vic as well.

"On-farm it was a similar issue - they had to go to Mount Gambier or there was only limited availability of courses at Roseworthy.

"There wasn't a registered training organisation that could deliver everything a farmer wanted, and some farmers recognised some courses that other farmers may not have."

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Dairy industry's election wishes recognised

As reported in the Stock Journal, all parties have acknowledged the SADA election priorities, as set out by the dairy industry, ahead of next Saturday's election. All parties recognise the workforce issues that we have and have committed to working with us on this and other issues. [Full Story here:](#)

GOVERNMENT SAYS WORKER PROGRAMS ADDRESSING SHORTFALL

The state government said it had a bevy of regional workforce programs in place to address worker and skills shortages, including the \$200m Skilling SA program, \$145m JobTrainer fund and a Mobilising Seasonal and Regional Workforce program, which had 253 participants according to PIRSA.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone and border closures and international travel restrictions have certainly made access to a regional workforce more difficult than usual," Primary Industries Minister David Basham said.

"Our government was quick to respond by establishing a quarantine facility at Paringa in the Riverland allowing Pacific Island seasonal workers to still come to SA.

"We also set up a support package including incentives to encourage people to take up regional work.

"Industry modelling shows if there was a significant reduction in the availability of seasonal workers there could have been nearly \$1 billion wiped from our state economy. This would have been devastating for our local agriculture industry and the thousands of jobs across the state it supports.

"Thankfully, by working closely with industry to deliver these programs as well as more than \$350m in other skills programs we were able to avoid this and continue to grow our workforce."



OPPOSITION CALL FOR WIDER APPROACH TO TACKLE WORKER SHORTAGES

Opposition spokesperson for Primary Industries Clare Scriven said labour availability had been the number one issue raised with her as shadow Minister.

"The number one issue that has been raised with me as Shadow Minister is labour availability," she said.

"This includes seasonal workers for picking, packing, planting and processing, but also permanent vacancies in trades, technical and professional positions

"These challenges were evident prior to COVID but have since been magnified.

"As an MP living in a regional area, I can see that the lack of workforce across many occupations is holding back many regional economies and preventing businesses from expanding and creating new jobs. Regional areas need to attract more workers so they can thrive and grow.

"We need an approach that addresses all of the issues that reduce labour availability. That starts with training and skills for our local workforces in regional areas."

Ms Scriven said a Labor government would establish five new technical colleges, including one on the Limestone Coast and one on the Upper Spencer Gulf.

She said Labor would invest \$8.7m in courses where there were specific trade shortages and address issues that discouraged people from moving to regional areas like housing availability, access to services and transport, as well as spending at least \$100m to improve SA's regional health system.

Women in Agriculture Leadership Facebook Group



Women in Agriculture Leadership Facebook Group

Private group · 246 members

Join group

Future women agriculture leaders program launches on IWD

To celebrate International Women's Day, the National Farmers Federation is opening applications for its flagship Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program.

The program is designed to increase the representation of women in leadership positions in Australian agriculture and achieve the NFF's goal to double the number of women in agriculture's leadership ranks by 2030.

NFF President Fiona Simson said the organisation was proactively working towards narrowing the gender gap and the Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program was instrumental in achieving this.

"International Women's Day is the opportune time to open applications to our program, which aligns with this year's theme #BreakTheBias," Ms Simson said.

"The agriculture sector employs more than 300,000 Australians and it is important we contribute to gender equality.

"Now in its fifth year, the Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program boasts an alumni of 41 graduates, who have gone on to pursue high profile and impactful leadership positions and to be change-makers within their community."

The program matches successful applicants with a mentor to explore leadership goals and strategies.

Mentees meet for a two-day retreat in Canberra at the start of the program and again at its completion for graduation. Mentees meet regularly with their mentor and take part in online inspiring speaker webinars throughout the program.

The program is supported by leading agriculture-focussed organisations who have joined with the NFF in committing to make meaningful change towards gender diversity in our sector. Partners report annually on their progress on gender equality.

To apply for the 2023 Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program click [here](#). Applications close 17 April.

In the meantime, connect with a like-minded community on the [Women in Agriculture Leadership Facebook group](#).

Around the grounds

- John Hunt, together with Andrew and Elf over two days attended the PPSA strategic planning session to provide a strategic position for PPSA and was well attended by the commodity groups who are members of PPSA.
- Elf attended a Department of Agriculture Water and the Environment webinar on the management of Foot and Mouth disease should there be and outbreak in Australia. The webinar was also well attended by farmers and representative organisations from around the nation.
- Andrew attended an NFF Workforce Committee meeting. Key items for discussion included COVID workforce shortfalls across agriculture, the Dedicated Ag Visa and Farm Safety. The Ag Visa is still a live issue with an expectation that initially, early candidates will be from ASEAN countries. The Visa will be able to expand to other countries in time.
- Andrew met with Melissa Hunter (Dairy SA) and Geoff Raven (Dairy Safe) key topics for discussion related to DairySafe new accommodation progress, development of the on farm business continuity tool and a future focus on supporting South Australian dairy processors to move towards being export ready.
- Ash and Andrew attended the Barossa – Mid North discussion group where the focus of the day was the unveiling of the big shed at Donava Dairies. During the discussion that followed we had the opportunity to discuss the upcoming election, Levy Poll and the SA Dairy Industry Action Plan
- Andrew met with Peter Appleford, Executive Director at PIRSA and discussed the current state and future aspirations of the industry. Opportunities to work together were also discussed.
- Elf attended the NFF Water Committee meeting on behalf of PPSA. Meeting was address by both the MDBA and the regulator to update the NFF on the progress of their respective organisations.
- Andrew and Gary Zweck attended the Rural Media and Communications / PPSA hosted State Election Debate between Minister Basham, Shadow Primary Industries and Regional Development spokesperson Claire Scriven and Greens Spokesperson Robert Simms. During the discussion, each party outlined their credentials and commitments to regional South Australia.
- Ash, Andrew and Elf together with Gary Zweck attended the Dairy Australia AOP planning session in Melbourne. This session was designed to advise the operational focus for DA in the year moving forward. Members of the ADF Board, National Council and PAGs attended the meeting.
- Elf held meetings regarding a potential methane pilot project in South Australia which as arisen out of some preliminary work which was conducted in tandem with SADIF over the past 12 months.
- NFF launched its Regional Development Precincts and identified Mount Gambier as one of 20 bush centres in blueprint for regional renewal – The fate of agriculture and regional communities is inextricably linked. For agriculture to thrive, it needs strong regional communities. For regional communities to be strong, they need agriculture to thrive.

This "Q and A" update is about Work Health and Safety and Workers Compensation.

Workers' compensation claims can be complex, especially if decisions are appealed, you are encouraged to contact us as soon as you can for advice.

If you have any queries, please contact the SADA office on 8293 2399 or email: sada@sada.asn.au

[The full update can be access here](#)

South Australian Livestock Biosecurity Summit

Livestock SA is excited to be hosting the inaugural event at the **Bridgeport Hotel in Murray Bridge on Thursday 7 April 2022.**

The day will feature keynote speakers and a facilitated strategy session to identify the biosecurity and animal health priorities of the red meat and wool supply chains. From the Summit, Livestock SA will develop the Blueprint document to provide industry with a clear vision on how we can bolster biosecurity capability and culture in South Australia.

To help inform and drive discussions on the day, we are also asking all industry members to participate in a [biosecurity priority survey](#).

2022 CENTRAL CONFERENCE

LEADING THE FIELD

The video recordings of all the sessions are available for viewing [here](#).

Here are some Highlights

- [Dairy Australia Situation and Outlook](#)
- [Journey into robotics – panel discussion](#)
- [People – building from within - Dr Nollaig Heffernan](#)
- [Navigating the rock and the hard place](#)

SA Dairyfarmers' Association president John Hunt urged farmers at the Central Region conference to vote in the dairy levy poll before its closing date on 31 March 2022.

"The LPAC committee was formed because the industry wanted a committee of farmers to review the levy," he said. "We back their process and their recommendation which after 10 years of no increase, was for an increase of 20 per cent in the dairy levy."

Two of the LPAC committee members were SA Dairy Farmers.

dairypoll.com.au





Farm Business Continuity Tool (BCT)

Dairysafe has created a FREE tool for farmers with the support of the SA Dairy Industry Fund, SA Dairyfarmers Association, and local dairy farmers - the Farm Business Continuity Tool (BCT).

The BCT is a 15-minute self-assessment to identify actions and activities that can reduce exposure to business disruption and assist in prompt recovery, and reduce potential negative productivity and financial impact that a disruptive event can have on a farm business.

Business disruption on farm is associated with factors such as loss of critical infrastructure, unavailability of key staff, equipment breakdown, biosecurity impacts, key stakeholder access

and support, farm communication and culture, financial management and risk management.

The BCT assesses how well your farm business is prepared for disruptive events through a series of 8 questions. By answering the questions the BCT then automatically generates a report tailored to your business.

The report includes recommended opportunities and links these to existing farm-based tools and resources.

Business Resilience

Resilience planning can have a positive financial impact for a business as it decreases the potential negative productivity and financial impact that a disruptive event can have. A resilient business is less likely to be exposed to business continuity breakdown and has a better chance of delivering positive and consistent milk safety and quality outcomes.

Access to the tool [here](#)

The BCT can be accessed through the Dairysafe website for both desktop and mobile users.



New open milk market set to empower dairy farmers, drive growth, investment

A breakthrough in milk price transparency and buyer competition was made today, according to Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF), when the Australian Milk Price Initiative (AMPI) ran its first regional milk spot markets.

The market was launched today on the Mercari platform, which is owned and operated by Mercari Pty Ltd. Various bids across the three regions of Victoria were made with prices exceeding \$9.00kg/ms for the spot market. Individual months in the new season traded above \$8.00kg/ms. "These are very positive signs," ADF president Rick Gladigau says.

Regional spot markets deliver the monthly price transparency necessary to enable a forward hedging market like those seen in New Zealand, the US and Europe. Such markets enable dairy farmers and processors to lock in prices up to three years forward for some of their milk.

"There is no more transparent price signal than an open market price," says Mr Gladigau. "AMPI will improve risk management across the supply chain with back-to-back pricing from customer to processor to farmer, providing the ability to lock in margins across the chain. Better margin and risk management enables better planning, which, in turn, drives investment and growth

across the supply chain. More investment in the supply chain means a strong dairy industry."

In 2019 the Morrison Government provided ADF with an election pledge of \$560,000 towards the development of a milk trading platform. This initiative was key to the Australian Dairy Plan's commitment to deliver new measures to increase transparency and help manage market risk, including the establishment of a functioning milk price market.

"While the launch of the AMPI is an important step, the work is not over yet," says Mr Gladigau. "Effort is required in the future to ensure appropriate governance and operations and there is a well-designed education or extension program delivered to farmers and processors on how to participate in this or other trading initiatives and how this makes a difference to their risk management and bottom line. Ongoing investment and innovation are key to the future of the dairy industry. With an open market where farmers can choose who they sell their milk to, at what price, and on what terms the future is looking brighter." The dairy market will be available 2.00-2.30pm AEST on two Thursdays of each month. Information and access to the market can be found at: <https://riemann.com.au/products/>.

Mercari provides trading venues for both non-financial and financial products and is also the holder of a Tier 1 Australian Market Licence pursuant to s795B of the Corporations Act.

Isolation requirements reduced from 10 to seven days From 12.01 am, Saturday, 12 March.

The isolation requirements for people who test positive for COVID-19 will be reduced from 10 days to seven days. Current requirements for mask wearing and close contacts will remain unchanged, including the 14-day isolation period, where people are unable to isolate appropriately within the same household.

Update to the Activities Direction The 50-person cap on home gatherings and density limits for public activities, including hospitality venues, will be lifted. Restrictions on dancing and singing will also be removed. QR code check-in will no longer be required for recreational transport, public transport, taxis and rideshares, auction and inspection of properties for sale or rent, and education facilities. The requirement to check-in will remain for most other public activities. Masks will still be required indoors.

More information, including the new Direction, will be available soon at www.covid-19.sa.gov.au