

Members Newsletter

September 2024



From the President

Robert Brokenshire

The past week has brought its share of challenges, with the announcement of Beston entering administration. We've been in direct contact with all affected members and want to reassure everyone that all milk collected will be paid for by the administrator, regardless of Beston's future direction.

In times like these, it's crucial that we look out for one another. If you cross paths with peers who are impacted, please offer your support. Solidarity in difficult moments strengthens our industry.

This past month saw the 99th Royal Adelaide Agriculture Show at Wayville, a true highlight for the agricultural community. We were also proud to celebrate 120 years of the Stock Journal, which has chronicled the heartbeat of rural life for more than a century. SADA was pleased to continue its support of the Dairy Exhibition, sponsor the dairy

cow awards, and host the BBQ for the Junior Handlers. These long-standing traditions hold a special place in our hearts, and we look forward to their continued success.

SADA is pleased to welcome Alistair McFarlane as the new Chief Executive Officer of [Dairysafe](#). Following a national recruitment process, Mr. McFarlane officially took on the role on 18 September. He brings a wealth of experience and passion for agribusiness, food security, and dairy safety and has extensive executive leadership experience, which will help to further Dairysafe's mission of ensuring high food safety standards and protecting South Australia's dairy industry.

We face tough conditions ahead as a result of the climatic conditions across much of the State. August delivered [below-average rainfall](#) across southern South Australia, and the outlook suggests more challenges. If you

haven't already got a plan in place for the dry season, time is running out. Rainfall deficiencies remain severe across the state's agricultural regions, and soil moisture is critically low in the South East. To add to this, streamflow and water storage levels are significantly down, with some reservoirs 10% to 50% lower than this time last year. With these pressures mounting, it's more important than ever that we stand together and advocate for our future. SADA will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of South Australian dairy farmers.

On the water front, SADA continues to represent dairy farmers in a number of regions. These include in the Murray Darling Basin, the Lower Limestone Coast and the Eastern and Western Mount Lofty Ranges. We continue to highlight the importance of water for production and its sustainable use in the support of economic development and vibrant communities.

Stay resilient, and here's hoping for better conditions in the months to come.



If joining the **SADA Board** is something you're considering, there are a few ways to take the next step. You can reach out directly to the President, Robert Brokenshire, who is open to discussing the opportunities and expectations that come with being on the board. Additionally, you can review the profiles of current board members to get a better understanding of their roles and the expertise they bring.

If you're ready to express your interest or have specific questions, dropping a line to the SADA office is also an excellent way to start the conversation. You don't have to commit to the Board but may be interested in. The SADA team is available to provide information about the application process, what's expected from board members, and the **benefits** of being involved in **shaping the future** of South Australia's dairy industry. Taking the initiative to connect shows your commitment and can help you explore how your skills and vision align with SADA's goals.

Dairy Sustainability AWARD

Riverglen dairy farmer Trent Mueller believes respect for the environment, animal health and the implementation of sustainable crops is the key to successful farming.

Named as the winner of the South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association (SADA) Foodland Dairy Sustainability Award at the SA Dairy Awards in August, Trent says that sustainability is not just a goal, but a continuous journey.

The South Australian Dairy Awards were presented on Friday 2nd August to celebrate the effort and contribution of SA dairy farmers and processors who showcase their products in our supermarkets, deli counters, cafes and restaurants.

As the Premier Partner of the 2024 Awards, SADA partnered for the second year with Foodland Supermarkets to present the Foodland Dairy Sustainability Award, which honours dairy producers who deliver on the Australian dairy industry's promise to provide nutritious food for a healthier world.

Farming in the beautiful region of Riverglen near Murray Bridge, Trent is a fourth-generation dairy farmer who has continually demonstrated what it means to be a steward of the land and

a leader in sustainable agriculture. Trent's farm is a family affair, with four family members working alongside five full-time employees as well as wife Emily and their three children.

Operating a 15-acre herringbone dairy, supplying the Beston Global Food Company Trent manages three diverse farms that focus on cropping, young heifer rearing, and dairy production. His core philosophy of leaving the land in better condition than how it was found speaks volumes about his approach to farming.

Trent's respect for the environment, cow health, and overall productivity has not only ensured the sustainability of his operations but has also driven significant benefits in production and profitability. He places immense importance on animal welfare. His proactive approach to cow health is exemplified by regularly walking through the herd with nutritionists with this early detection system for sick cows is a testament to his dedication to the well-being of his livestock.

Trent sees immense opportunities in the sustainable space, particularly in water efficiency which has already yielded surprising and impressive results. With a comprehensive three-year plan for best practices in land and water use efficiency, Trent has ensured that his farming methods align with the highest standards of environmental planning for instance, growing maize crops when the season requires it, striving for self-sufficiency, and reducing market volatility underlines his strategic approach to farming.



Living close to town and neighbouring vegetable farmers, he is ever mindful of his impact on the community. Trent's careful land management practices, guided by expert arborist advice, and his prudent use of chemicals and irrigation reflect his deep understanding of the delicate balance between agriculture and the environment.

Looking to the future, Trent has ambitious plans to transition to a fully housed barn system with a methane capture system. During his recent visit to the Netherlands, he witnessed a tractor running wholly on methane,

which has inspired him to push the boundaries of sustainable farming even further.

The Foodland Sustainability Award is presented to a dairy farmer demonstrating excellence in four key areas: enhancing economic viability and livelihoods, reducing environmental impact, improving the wellbeing of people and providing best care for their animals.

sada.asn.au



SA Dairy Sustainability Award

Mr Mueller was recognised for his commitment to sustainability, which shined through his operations at Riverglen near the Murray. Trent prioritises environmental health, cow welfare, and productivity.

His plans for a fully housed barn system with methane capture and efficient water use underscore his dedication to sustainable farming practices.

Trent is driven by the principle of leaving his farm in better condition than he found it, ensuring a positive impact on the environment and future generations.

SADA were a premier partner in the events and the awards align with the objectives of the SA Dairy Action Plan, which focuses on driving growth, sustainability, and innovation within the industry.

Sustainability has become a critical focal point for industries worldwide, with the dairy sector being no exception. SA's dairy industry exemplifies how agricultural practices can align with environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

This commitment is encapsulated in the South Australian Dairy Industry Action Plan and the broader Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework, setting a benchmark for future agricultural practices.

Sustainable dairy farming in SA balances economic viability with environmental protection and social responsibility.

This holistic approach ensures the industry's resilience and productivity while safeguarding natural resources and supporting local communities.

The South Australian Dairy Industry Action Plan outlines strategic goals for sustainable growth and innovation. It emphasizes reducing environmental impact, enhancing animal welfare, and ensuring economic stability for dairy farmers.

By promoting efficient water usage, waste reduction, and renewable energy adoption, the plan underscores a commitment to a sustainable future.



Basham's service to dairy sector recognised with industry award

Fifth generation dairy farmer and politician David Basham has been recognised for his contribution to the dairy sector with the Brenton Higgins Award.



**AgriFutures[®]
Rural Women's
Award**



We need rural leaders with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about the future of their enterprises and industries. We also know the unique challenges faced by rural women and how important grants for women are. That's why we created the [AgriFutures Rural Women's Award](#) – Australia's leading award empowering and celebrating the inclusive and courageous leadership of women involved in

Australia's rural and emerging industries, businesses and communities, now and into the future.

[Applications close on Wednesday, 9 October 2024](#)



WoTL's Stepping into Leadership Program

After working in retail for most of her life, Shannon Pearson never imagined she'd become a fulltime dairy farmer. It was a transition that started off small.

At first, she helped her mother-in-law with the business bookwork. Then there was a season helping out with calving on the property near Mt Gambier in SA's South East. The more she did, the more she realised she enjoyed farm life. The only thing holding her back from taking on more was a lack of confidence in her skills. Now, thanks to WoTL's Stepping Into Leadership Program, Shannon has found the confidence and a network of supportive connections which led her to embrace fulltime farming.

Shannon met her husband Adrian, a third-generation dairy farmer, in the late 1990s and the couple built their home together on his family's farm in 2003. "I'd worked in retail forever and when I moved onto the farm people asked if I'd be milking cows soon and I always said 'no thank you I have my own fulltime job'," she said. "I had my own job in retail management, and then I took time off when I had my two boys, but I went back parttime afterwards. Every year my husband asked if I wanted to help with the calving, and I always said 'no thank you'. "After about six or seven years of him asking, I said yes. I went out and helped the woman we had doing it back then and I found I really enjoyed it. After a couple of seasons, she left and I was thrown into it. "Around that time, I also took on a bigger role with the books as my mother-in-law was wanting to do less."

When her husband needed shoulder surgery, Shannon took on more farm work, helping out in the dairy with milking cows. With every new farm challenge she took on, Shannon looked for ways to upskill. She completed online training with Dairy Australia, but wanted to build on her knowledge further.

Please [contact us](#) to express your interest in the 2025 Stepping into Leadership Program.



**NFF CEO
to depart for
Energy Infrastructure Commissioner Role**



Mr Mahar's efforts have resulted in NFF's growth from a small team to a staff of over 40, with a broader membership base and a consolidated and stable financial position. His ability to build and maintain relationships across the industry has established NFF as a key stakeholder for both government and industry bodies.

[FULL MEDIA RELEASE HERE](#)

**20 INNOVATE
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A grants program that's designed to support regional and remote businesses.

Businesses throughout regional and remote Australia often face numerous challenges. Whether it be related to their relative isolation, or simply finding ways of promoting themselves – finding a path to success can be hard.

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Customizable The user handles site-specific plumbing, making it a flexible, safe storage investment for your farm.

We support Food On The Table - FOTT charity receive a \$10 donation from Garden Master for every quote in 2024. Our target is 1,000 quotes. "NO ONE GOES HUNGRY"



National Drought Agreement

The Australian Government, in partnership with the South Australian Government, is offering resources to help farmers facing challenges due to the lack of rain. Through the [National Drought Agreement 2024-2029](#), various support programs are available, regardless of drought declarations, so farmers can access aid when they need it most. Support measures include:

- Rural financial counselling
- Tax and income support
- Low-interest loans

These resources are designed to provide assistance before, during, and after droughts, ensuring that farmers don't have to wait to seek help. To find out more about the Australian Government programs, visit drought.gov.au. Additionally, the South Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regions (DPIR) also offers essential drought resources, which can be explored on their website.

It's important that farmers don't face these challenges alone. We encourage open conversations with farm advisers, agronomists, accountants, suppliers, bankers, and even local community groups or charities. Everyone has a role to play in supporting each other during tough times.

By working together and connecting farmers to the right resources, we can help ease some of the burdens that come with dry conditions. Reach out to your fellow farmers, share this information, and let's make sure no one is left struggling in silence. Stay safe.


Dairy Australia - Managing during drought and recovering from drought



WFI SADA Partnership:
If you take out a policy with [WFI](#), SADA receives a commission from WFI of 7.5% of the policy premium.

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Make sure when your next speaking with WFI that you mention your a SADA Member to get the discounts.



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Growing farmers'
wellbeing



Helping farmers to focus on the present moment



FaB Mentors

The PIRSA initiated Family and Business (FaB) mentor service is available to help primary producers.

It is a free service in South Australia, identifying assistance specific to your situation.

Fleurieu and Lower Murray
Beck Burgess: [0438 262 966](tel:0438262966)
Colleen White: [0409 388 649](tel:0409388649)

Limestone Coast

Sally Klose: [0427 829 143](tel:0427829143)

FAT FARMERS
RURAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Get Involved

Encouraging farmers and those living in rural communities to get active, connect with others and have some fun!

Welcoming farmers and friends of all ages and fitness levels.

Check for your nearest group.
Or contact us to start a new one!