DairySA Ladies Lunches
They’re on again!

Join us at a DairySA Ladies Lunch – a perfect opportunity to enjoy a delicious two course lunch and a drink, unwind amongst dairy community friends and colleagues, and share stories and experiences. Grab your group of friends and colleagues and register now for a great day out.

DairySA Ladies Lunch: South East (OB Flat)
Book tickets (South East) via Eventbrite at: bit.ly/191119LadiesLunch_SE
When: Tuesday 19 November, 11:45 for a 12pm start
Where: ‘The Apple Farm’ 77 Clarke Rd, OB Flat SA 5291
Cost: $25.00 Dairyfarmers (including farm employees and family members)
$60.00 Service Providers
Dress: For a day out!
RSVP by Monday 11 November

DairySA Ladies Lunch: Central
Book tickets (Central) via Eventbrite at: bit.ly/191126DSALadiesLunch_Central
When: Tuesday 26 November, 11:45 for a 12pm start
Where: Bremerton Wines, Strathalbyn Road, Langhorne Creek SA 5255
Cost: $25.00 Dairyfarmers (including farm employees and family members)
$60.00 Service Providers
Dress: For a day out!
RSVP: Monday 18 November
• Tickets available on Eventbrite link above or search ‘DairySA Ladies Lunch’.
• Please advise Katie Moorhouse of any dietary requirements on 0419 821 689.

DairySA Annual General Meeting
The DairySA AGM will be held on Wednesday, October 23, 11am-12pm at The Haus, 34 Main Street, Hahndorf. All welcome.

To RSVP or for further information please contact DairySA Regional Manager Melissa Hunter on 0408 358 414 or email melissa@dairysa.com.au

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New Regional Manager at DairySA helm
The DairySA Board and team are pleased to welcome its new Regional Manager, Melissa Hunter.

Melissa joins DairySA with extensive experience in natural resource management, project management and team leadership. She’s been a Team Leader of the Community Engagement Team for Natural Resources South East (SA) who were responsible for delivering diverse projects from soil and bush management to NRM education.

Melissa’s most recent role has been managing a program for Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast in workforce development for the disability sector, and she is delighted to be returning to the Agriculture sector and a team leadership focus.

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Melissa is excited about joining DairySA and is looking forward to the challenge of getting a deeper understanding of the dairy industry. Living on the family dairy farm near Penola, this is an opportunity close to Melissa’s heart.

“I am passionate about delivering practical and relevant opportunities for farmers that can assist in running a sustainable business,” she said.

“I’m keen to support and lead the DairySA team to share useful information, and build knowledge of emerging issues, to assist dairy businesses,” she added.

“I am particularly looking forward to meeting people in the industry across South Australia and hearing how we can best support them.”

Melissa enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her family and the occasional trip to the beach.

Melissa can be contacted on melissa@dairysa.com.au

Melissa enjoys learning and working with people, and the opportunity to assist dairy businesses.

For more comprehensive information, watch the video here: youtu.be/Ns_B09ixMEo

**Beware the ‘Green Drought’**

After a relatively wet Spring in some regions of the State, it can be a trap to believe there is adequate soil moisture available for pasture production.

Dairyfarmers were reminded of this at recent DairySA ‘Getting the Best from your Irrigation’ Workshops held in Mt Gambier, Mt Compass and Tailem Bend. The workshops led by James Hills from the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture and David McLaren (TIA’s Beyond Water Smart Project). For the past few years James has been working as a research fellow leading the ‘Smarter Irrigation for Profit’ project around pivots and pressurised irrigation for dairy pastures. His experiences of the 2016 dry winter and low rainfalls in Spring saw farmers begin irrigating in September and October as opposed to November.

Sound familiar? Here’s some lessons from that experience that could be relevant to farmers this irrigation season.

Pasture production in T/DM/ha reduces as the average soil moisture deficit increases. Essentially, in 2016 low irrigation water availability and poor irrigation scheduling decisions saw a reduction in the site’s pasture productivity.

James emphasises the importance of monitoring soil moisture deficit throughout the season and maintaining soil moisture above the refill point.

In short:

- Rainfall may not delay irrigation for as long as you might think
- Losing 210t/DM/ha (pasture) as a result of not maintaining soil moisture can cost $42 000 if replaced by fodder at $200/t.

Pasture needs water to grow, so:

- Regular watering is required
- Ryegrass has shallow roots 90% are in the top 30cm
- Readily available water in the South East can be quite low 6mm at Mt Shank 7.5mm at Allendale East and 13.5mm at Eight Mile Creek
- ETo over summer months usually between 7–8.5mm/day but can be significantly higher
- Irrigation interval without rain to achieve optimum growth can be 2–3 days
- Poor watering costs money.

For the latest DairySA events head to: dairyaustralia.com.au/events-calendar

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**Startup irrigation**

It’s all in the timing

James Hills stresses the value of getting your irrigation start date right to avoid the ‘Green Drought’.

James Hills, a research fellow from the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture who led the ‘Smarter Irrigation for Profit’ project, stresses the value of getting your irrigation start date right.

Using historic data from Richard Rawnsley and Mark Freeman that modelled delaying irrigation start-up by 7, 14, 21 and 28 days, James explains that pasture utilisation was found to reduce steadily with each day of delay. At 5 days delay, pasture utilised is reduced 525 kg/DM/ha, and at 28 days, 2940 kg/DM/ha. For each day delay, approximately 5t is lost and over a 50ha pivot at $200/t this is $1000 per day. If equating that to milk, 5t/DM to 5000L of milk at 33c/L$1600.
Farm Business Strategic Review

Rural Business Support together with PIRSA, SA Dairy Industry Fund and DairySA are offering thirty families the opportunity to participate in a Farm Business Strategic Review in 2019.

The Farm Business Strategic Review helps family businesses identify and adopt proven practices in business and production to improve productivity and profitability, with plenty of support along the way.

In 2016 and 2017, fifty families participated and reported significant economic and emotional benefits.

And according to past participant, SE dairyfarmer John Hunt, there is no downside to undertaking it.

“I believe all businesses should take up this opportunity – dairy or otherwise,” John said.

“It provides another set of eyes over your business, and whether you’re going well or if you’re struggling, RBS can offer solutions that you may not have thought of to improve your bottom line,” he added.

Working with the family on-farm, the Farm Business Analyst collects and enters the key physical and financial information using web review and planning tools.

This will include creating or updating your DairyBase account and reviewing the current Dairy Farm Monitor data. Farm performance can then be compared with industry and bank benchmarks.

The on farm meetings assist your family to identify opportunities to improve productivity and profitability. The process is secure, private and confidential.

“It’s so important to know where you are in your business, and this program offers independent and strategic advice,” John added.

The program is equivalent to $7,500 of consulting support for your family with PIRSA, SA Dairy Industry Fund and DairySA covering the majority of costs.

The cost for new families to “connect” is $1,000 and for families to “reconnect” (those who participated in 2016 Or 2017) is $750 – with a 50% deposit required upon confirmation of your family’s registration.

To reserve a place for your family please complete and lodge the registration form: bit.ly/2019RBSStrat_Review

To participate, family members need to attend a regional briefing and three on-farm meetings with a dairy farm business analyst who will help you develop your family action plan.

“As a participant in the pilot I recommend this to all dairy families,” John said.

If you have any questions please contact Rural Business Support’s Nigel Robinson on 0499 556 488.

Timely irrigation essential

After reasonable rainfall in some areas of SA during the winter and spring, ‘Why a story on irrigation management?’

Irrigation is a significant cost to the farm business but also brings great benefits. It is important to manage irrigation to maximise potential crop production and avoiding delays in commencing irrigation is the first important step to take. The key to success is applying the right amount of water at the right time, and with improved irrigation management comes increased productivity and profitability.

Applying the right amount of water at the right time, results in:

- increased yields
- improved quality
- reduced disease incidence
- minimised waterlogging
- reduced nutrient run-off
- reduced leaching below the root zone

Therefore it is useful to know how much water the different soil types in paddocks will hold. Soil texture – determined by the proportions of sand, silt and clay in the soil – determines how much water is available to the plant. Soil structure impacts both the amount of water available to a plant, and the bulk density of the soil – the weight of soil in a given volume. Bulk density is an indication of the quantity of pore spaces and therefore influences the amount of water that can be held in the soil.

Good soil structure for any given soil type can potentially hold more water than a poorly structured soil of the same type. Compaction (high soil bulk density), may have been increased by wet soil conditions during winter. The conditions experienced this season mean that paddock conditions are not ideal – timely irrigation is a strategy that can help overcome these and improve crop yield and quality.

To get some more ideas on pre-season start up checks, head to DairySA’s ‘Start Up Irrigation Check’ video here: bit.ly/DSAStartupIrrigationTips
Taking care with antibiotics in the milking shed

Do you have strategies in place for keeping antibiotic residues out of the milk vat?

The best defence against antibiotic residues entering milk vats is the written word. Having a well-developed plan of how to deal with cows under medical treatment will ensure that antibiotics are kept well away from the milk tanker.

The small investment of time and money needed to develop a manual and appropriate signage could save thousands of dollars if it prevents cross contamination of milk vats with antibiotic residues.

Mastitis is by far the most common reason that milking cows are treated with antibiotics. While prevention of mastitis is the best option for you, your hip pocket and your herd, there will always be cows that require treatment, so carefully managing the use of antibiotics is critical.

All farms should have a written plan for treating mastitis, which must be communicated to all milking staff and regularly reviewed. The plan should include approaches to managing residues, when, what and how to use the right drugs, using the correct technique for treating cows successfully, cleaning cups, and how to manage waste milk.

For more details on how to set up your antibiotic management plan in the milking shed, head to bit.ly/Antibioticsplan

What’s new on the People in Dairy website?
The People in Dairy website has been recently updated to reflect the changes to the Pastoral Award by The Fair Work Commission as part of its Modern Award Review, particularly around the area of ‘Termination Entitlements’.

The changes apply from the first full pay period starting on or after 6 September 2019.

The changes have been outlined here thepeopleindairy.org.au/announcements/termination_entitlements and include the following ‘The People in Dairy’ webpages:

• Termination page
• ESKI termination page
• ESKI landing page
• State Industrial Law pages (Tas, NSW and SA with timelines)
• Understand an employees’ final pay PDF (note: is in the ESKI folder)
• PA marked up.

If you would like further information or have any questions, please get in touch with Kylie Boston on 0407 231 547 or email kylie@dairysa.com.au

Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Report now available

While the Australian dairy industry has navigated difficult market and environmental conditions in recent years, South Australia farmers are setting their sights on a sustainable future.

Now linked to both the Paris Agreement and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the latest Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Report has been released and is available online, featuring revised targets to a 2030 timeline.

The latest report shows 81 per cent of farmers are safeguarding some of their land for conservation and biodiversity (up from 45 per cent in 2015). More than one third of farmers have created a formal biodiversity plan for their farm.

To access the latest Sustainability Report head to sustainedairyoz.com.au