DairySA News

LATEST NEWS AND VIEWS FROM DAIRYSA

FEBRUARY 2019

DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY 6 • Barossa Mid North DDG
Details: David Kuchel 0427 006 233

FEBRUARY 7 • Mt Jagged
Dairy Discussion Group, Greg Mitchell
Details: Beck Burgess 0438 262 966

FEBRUARY 12 • ‘People in Dairy’
Dairy Discussion Group, Central region
Details: Kylie Boston 0407 231 547

FEBRUARY 19–21 • Australian Dairy Conference, Canberra
australiandairyconference.com.au

FEBRUARY 26 • Dr Nollaig Heffernan
“Being an Employer of Choice”, Mt Gambier
Details: Kylie Boston 0407 231 547

FEBRUARY 27 • Calf Rearing Workshop, River
Details: Beck Burgess 0438 262 966

MARCH 14 • 2019 DairySA Central Conference, Tailem Bend
Details: Beck Burgess 0438 262 966
dairysaconference2019.eventbrite.com.au

MARCH 15-16 • Lucindale Field Days
Lucindale SE

MARCH 15 • Calf Rearing Workshop with Dr Bob James, Mt Gambier
Details: Beck Burgess 0438 262 966

MARCH 19-20 • Herd19, Bendigo
datagene.com.au/node/1260

Further information on these events can be found at
dairysa.com.au/news-events

IN THIS ISSUE

2019 DairySA Central Conference

THURSDAY 14 MARCH, 2019
THE BEND MOTORSPORT PARK, TAILEM BEND

The 2019 DairySA Central Conference is the ideal opportunity for dairy farmers and service providers to connect with like-minded people in the dairy industry and to feel part of a greater whole in the SA dairy landscape.

After a highly successful 2018 Conference, the 2019 DairySA Central Conference is expected to attract more than 120 dairy farmers and service providers from across SA’s Fleurieu, Barossa Mid-North, River & Lakes, and beyond. They will all converge on ‘The Bend Motorsport Park’ on the outskirts of Tailem Bend in March.

Focussed on the theme of ‘Diverse Dairy: Driving Opportunities’, the Conference is designed to challenge delegates to identify opportunities to help them grow or improve current practices on farm.

According to Coordinator, DairySA’s Beck Burgess, a range of high calibre speakers will provide insights into the latest advancements in animal, energy and people management areas.

“The Conference is the result of a collaborative approach by DairySA and Central region South Australian dairy farmers, and draws speakers from key topics of interest identified by dairy farmers living and working in the region,” Beck said.

“It’s also the ideal opportunity to connect with like-minded people in the dairy industry and to feel part of a greater whole in the SA dairy landscape,” Beck added.

IN THIS ISSUE

Farm business courses tailored to farmers’ financial ‘know-how’ 2
Which course is for me? 2
Good reminders for navigating dry times 3
Experiences of a River Flats maize crop 3
Save money on energy 4
Feeling the pinch? 4
Be part of the DairySA Innovation Day! 4

KEEP IN TOUCH
Visit Instagram, Twitter or Facebook to give us your feedback

_dairysa (#dairysa)
@Dairy_SA
@dairysouthaustralia
@Young-Dairy-Network-SA
“Meet up with new people, share ideas and insights with colleagues and other industry people and enjoy some social interaction over the post-conference catch-up in the ‘Top Paddock’ and at the Conference Dinner,”.

World renowned calf rearing expert, US-based Dr Bob James will look at how ‘The best cows come from raising better calves’ and provide top calf rearing tips that will challenge traditional practices. Dr James’ years of experience and research reveals that no matter what size or system of your dairy farm, how a calf starts its life impacts the lifetime performance of that cow.

Also, hear from speakers on a diverse range of topics including:
- the true cost of alternative energy options, improving irrigation efficiencies, and creating a better workplace culture
- Sam Bailey’s inspirational journey of conquering his disability to become a successful farmer, ultralight pilot, best-selling author and role model for children
- Peers ‘doing it differently’ in their dairy business.

Farm business courses tailored to farmers’ financial ‘know-how’

Whether you’re just starting out and want to understand dairy farm finances, or wanting to ‘health check’ your farms’ performance and business drivers, DairySA has a farm business course to suit.

According to DairySA’s Beck Burgess, the Farm Business Management suite of courses (Farm Business Fundamentals and Farm Business Analysis) cater for a specific level of financial and business knowledge and confidence.

“We recognise that there are different entry points for farmers when it comes to financial acumen,” Beck said.

“By completing a simple checklist it’s easy to see which course is the best match for you,” she added.

Facilitated by leading dairy industry business consultants the courses will use handy dairy business tools and real dairy case studies. DairySA is now taking Expressions of Interest for the two courses, to be held according to demand over the coming year.

“Kicking off with a Farm Business Fundamentals course to be held on April 10 and 17 in the South East, we are also keen to hear from farmers as to their interest in either the Fundamentals or Analysis courses and potential dates that fit with the majority – both in the South East and Central regions,” Beck said.

Expressions of interest are now being sought for upcoming farm business courses.

To register your interest in any of these Farm Business courses, please contact Beck Burgess at beckburgess@dairysa.com.au

Which course is for me?

**Farm Business Fundamentals**
(2 x 4 hour sessions)
I want to:
- Start with DairyBase
- Learn about budgets and cash flows
- Begin with financial reports
- Get bank ready.

**Farm Business Analysis**
(3 x 4 hour sessions)
I want to:
- Interpret my financial data
- Use DairyBase as a business management tool
- Measuring my farm’s performance
- Benchmark and compare data.

This course assumes foundational knowledge
Good reminders for navigating dry times

Being decisive early is the key to feed budgeting, and procrastination could lead to costly and undesirable outcomes, according to Anthony Pearce from Mt Barker’s Hills Farm Supplies.

Anthony, an animal nutritionist with Hills Farm Supplies based in Mt Barker along with agronomist Greg Mitchell from FPAG, recently presented a range of tips on navigating dry times to dairy farmers in the Central dairy region.

“In a season like we’ve had, it’s essential to keep talking to those around you about planning for feed – don’t wait until the last bale is in the shed,” he said.

“Feed budgeting is an essential tool in a year like this when stocks are limited and competition from other regions and states – and producers – is high,” Anthony said.

Anthony stressed that it’s important to be aware of the bigger picture across Australia, as weather outcomes in other regions will have an effect on where the market goes. Monitoring the overall situation will help improve feed accumulation decisions.

“By now, farmers should have a good handle on feeding requirements, and have made the early decision to accumulate feed, or adjust cow numbers to meet feed stocks,” he said.

Other tips include:
1. Factor in wastage of feeds into any decision making process – what may seem cheap could be expensive if it can’t be handled appropriately to get the expected value from the feed. Refer to Dairy Australia’s study on feed wastage http://bit.ly/DAFeedWastage

2. If securing hay, consider coming to payment arrangements that may be favourable to both parties as often grain growers are not looking for a lump sum and prefer regular cash flow just like a dairy farmer.

3. With less dry feed on paddocks and some unseasonally late rains lowering standing feed quality, it may be wise monitor the body condition of dry stock now and adjust feeding regimes accordingly. Consider the use of non protein nitrogen supplements (Liquid. Block or Loose) to best utilise what feed may remain and to improve feed utilisation of any low protein hay/silage/haylage that may be being fed to dry stock.

4. Plan to grow early feed next season with a heavy emphasis on annual ryegrasses, forage cereals and brassicas to achieve home grown feed as soon as possible after the break.

For a comprehensive range of resources on managing feed, head to Dairy Australia’s website at bit.ly/DAFeedmanagement

Experiences of a River Flats maize crop

Over thirty dairy farmers and Service Providers converged at Ian and Julie Mueller’s property “Glenbrook” near Murray Bridge on a hot day in January to gain an insight into the process of planting and growing maize on the River Flats.

Agronomist Matt Howell, who is assisting the Muellers (as well as a handful of other farmers on the River Flats) explained the process of planting River Flats to maize, detailing the key elements required to grow a successful crop – particularly for the first time.

The Muellers have sown approx 25ha of Maize and a further 15ha Sorghum on their River Flat bays. Matt discussed the decision process – from soil testing multiple sites throughout the bays (to determine nutrient requirements and acidity levels) – through to seed bed preparation and sowing particulars. Soil test results showed that there was no major soil limitations in the Murray Riverflats, so a crop specific program was implemented for the two different crop types based on projected yields and crop removal rates. Limitations encountered so far have been different to expected, with water logging and traffic ability being bigger issues than expected.

Paul Jenke from Pioneer Seeds went on to explain the suitability of chosen varieties for maize (at Mueller’s) is based on CRM (Comparative Relative Maturity) ratings, with 107–111 CRM varieties being best suited to this system due to earlier maturing without comprising yields.

Lastly attendees heard from Trent Mueller who explained how he was impressed with how the maize has been performing.
“I’ve been surprised by how water efficient maize has been on the flats, but have discovered that the timing of water – and particularly the drainage – is key,” Trent said.

Both Trent and his father Ian agreed they would not be able to adequately irrigate and ensure optimal drainage if they hadn’t made changes to their irrigation system.

“The recent changes to our system, to pipe and riser, has ensured better control and timing of irrigation events as well as saving far more water than we initially anticipated,” Trent explained.

Trent highlighted the importance they see this crop being to their system, and the inherent value that maize silage will add to their ration, and ultimately, cow production.

In what was very warm conditions DairySA would like to thank the support from Platinum Ag (Coorong and Murray Bridge) and Pioneer Seeds. For those interested there will be a follow up pre-harvest maize walk early March. Please contact Beck Burgess on 0438 262 966 for more details or to register your interest.

Save money on energy

Dairy Australia’s recently revamped *Saving energy on dairy farms* booklet is a comprehensive guide to smarter energy use on farm.

Updated in December 2018, it is a step-by-step introduction to better understanding power bills, identifying leaks, reducing demand, improving efficiency and considering options for renewables.

With hot water, milk cooling and milk harvesting accounting for a combined 80% of on farm energy use, the new booklet breaks down how to achieve savings in each of these key areas.

Head to the following link to download the *Saving energy on dairy farms* refreshed fact sheet.


Feeling the pinch?

Help is available for rural families who may need a hand during tough times.

Farm Household Allowance (FHA) is for farmers and their partners facing financial hardship. You do not need to be in a drought declared area to have access to this allowance.

It’s important not to self-assess – please make contact with Rural Business Support on 1800 836 211 and one of their analysts will assist you to determine your eligibility and application requirements.

For more information you can also head to www.humanservices.gov.au/farmhouseholdallowance

Be part of the DairySA Innovation Day!

The *2019 DairySA Innovation Day* held in Mt Gambier is designed to showcase an exciting program, securing insightful speakers who will inform and challenge delegates.

Sponsoring the *DairySA Innovation Day* provides the ideal opportunity for your business to align itself with the SA dairy industry’s most anticipated events.

To find out more on how you can get involved, please get in touch with DairySA’s Sponsorship Coordinator Kylie Boston on 0407 231 547 or kylie@dairysa.com.au

We’d love you to be part of our annual showcase event and look forward to your support of the dairy industry and SA dairyfarmers.

And the results are in!

The SA Dairy Farm Monitor Project Report for 2017/18 is now available on the DairySA website.

In 2017–18, the data was drawn from nineteen participant farms. The data collected through the *Dairy Farm Monitor Project* is now stored in DairyBase and provides the high quality data that allows for comparison of farms, which can be used to identify areas for improvement.

For all the results, head to: dairyaustralia.com.au/farm/farm-business-management/dairy-farm-monitor-project

DairySA Contact:
Katie Moorhouse
Communications Coordinator
T 08 8769 6008
katie@dairysa.com.au

WARRNAMBOOL CHEESE AND BUTTER FACTORY, BEGA CHEESE, MURRAY GOUldbURN CO-OP, PARMALAT, and B.-D. FARM PARIS CREEK kindly support the distribution of the DairySA newsletter.

DairySA is a Regional Development Program of Dairy Australia and provides strategic direction and support for dairy research, development and extension for the South Australia dairy industry.

To receive this newsletter via your email, please contact katie@dairysa.com.au or view online at www.dairysa.com.au

And the results are in!