SA specific Feed Shortage booklet now available

Recent national weather forecasts show Australia is likely to be heading into a drier than average spring in many regions. Even in regions with good soil moisture, many farmers are planning and acting earlier than usual to ensure that they grow and access as much fodder as they can. Feed and water budgeting, along with cash budgeting can assist farmers with this planning.

A new booklet recently released by Dairy Australia contains local information for South Australian dairy farmers and advisers on managing through the feed shortage, and can help get your preparation and planning underway. Topics including Managing a Fodder Shortage, and Managing pasture paddocks in dry seasons through to a Back of the envelope feed budget and Reducing Feed Wastage Costs, are covered.

Head to the DairySA website and click on the link ‘Feed Shortage 2018/19’.

DairySA Annual General Meeting

The DairySA AGM will be held at The Haus, Hahndorf on Tuesday 16 October at 10:30am. All welcome.

For further information please contact Kerry Grigg on 0408 951 695.
**Taking Stock now available!**

All SA dairy farmers can now access free one-on-one advice from experienced advisers through Dairy Australia’s *Taking Stock* program.

The sessions take place on farm and are private, confidential and personalised to address your individual situation and help you map out a plan for the season ahead, including your next steps.

A *Taking Stock* session can be held over the kitchen table or in the farm office with a trusted, skilled and trained advisor to assess your current business situation and help identify further assistance when or if required.

*Taking Stock* helps you assess your farm’s current financial and physical position including:

- understanding and managing your budget
- identifying cost saving options
- calculating pasture consumption
- managing debt and your balance sheet
- understanding additional support services that can be accessed, including counselling and health services
- creating an action plan.

*Taking Stock* is well known, with nine out of ten farmers who have done it saying they understand their situation better, feel more confident to make decisions about their farm and would recommend it to other farmers.

Call DairySA’s Regional Manager Kerry Grigg on 0408 951 695 to book in your free *Taking Stock* session.

**Gippsland Tour provides valuable insights**

In July, a Large Herds Tour of Gippsland, instigated and driven by SA’s South East Focus on Production, saw 11 farmers from SA gain insights into the processes and systems of some of Gippsland’s large dairy farms.

The three day tour began with a look at the Ellinbank Dairy and Research facility where participants were given an update around the exciting research being undertaken in highly relevant areas for the dairy industry, in particular the Feedbase Projects.

A tour of the 9 Mile Fresh Apple Production Facility at Tynong – the largest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere – allowed participants to draw comparisons between this large scale apple operation and large scale dairy businesses.

“Visiting the apple production facility was a real eye-opener,” said tour coordinator, DairySA’s Bec Walmsley.

“It was great to learn about their attention to detail in staff management, policies and procedures – we could relate to how it is also so important in any dairy business,” she added.

“There are also similarities in payment structures in the apple and dairy industry and how they are negotiated,” Bec said.

Visiting four large Gippsland dairy herds gave participants the valuable opportunity to share and discuss strategies around employment, water allocation, feed and pasture management in the region and the logistics of managing large herds of livestock.

Guest speakers at each of the two tour dinners drilled deeper into their dairy journey, with dairyfarmer Benn Thexton speaking about his equity partnerships totalling three farms and 1,150 cows under 100% irrigation.

At dinner on the second evening guest speakers Dr Richard Shephard, Dr Jakob Malmo and his sharefarmer Hans Van Wees looked at how cow fertility is a key driver of profit.

This large herd dairy operator also shared his journey of converting from Holsteins to cross breeds, and detailed the reasons behind this successful transition.

“The Large Herds Tour is always a great opportunity to visit another region and see what other regions do differently – or the same – to get new ideas, and to be reinspired about what we do here in SA,” Bec said.

“There were so many lessons to be taken away from our visits that can be applied to a dairy business on any scale,” she added.

“Al of the participants were very appreciative of having the opportunity to see first-hand how some of these large herd dairies operate, and we were thankful of the time each business invested in us during our visit.”

“We’re always open to ideas from SA Dairy Discussion Groups as to what areas and regions of the dairy industry they would be keen to visit – feel free to have a chat with me anytime about what may be possible,” Bec added.

Bec Walmsley can be contacted on 0418 951 324 or rebecca@dairysa.com.au.
Creating a 'people efficient' farm

Farms that create positive workplace environments develop a reputation in their community as being ‘good to work for’ and have a competitive edge. Not only are these farms more able to attract and retain people, the farm team tends to be more stable as it proactively deals with issues and adapts to change.

Teams work best when they are clear about what is expected of them. They are more able to deal with difficult issues if they feel the values of the organisation are supportive of them.

For a workplace culture to be positive, the direction and actions of the business must be consistent with the core values of the people on the farm. The people must trust each other and be able to openly express and exchange ideas.

The trends in the industry are increasing herd sizes and more people being employed. If the industry is to attract and retain good people it must be competitive with other industries. Although remuneration plays a part, there are other factors that make a business attractive to work in.

So, what do ‘people efficient’ farm businesses have in common?

Good farms are efficient in every aspect of the business operation. There will be some fundamental strategic issues that are right on these farms. The business:
- has a well thought out strategic vision
- is adequately resourced in terms of infrastructure and capability to match the strategy
- has well defined roles and appropriately appointed responsibilities.

“People efficient” farms will be productive, smoothly running farms where people want to stay and growing the business is an attractive option. These farms:
- have invested wisely in technology
- have efficient work practices
- are well laid out and in good order
- have simplified farming systems to accommodate people’s needs.

There are also a number of management principles that are common to any well managed employment program, regardless of the size of the business. These include:
- effective recruitment and selection processes
- clear and unambiguous contracts and agreements for all staff
- documented position descriptions
- documented standard operating procedures
- documented and practiced safety protocols
- induction programs
- regular performance appraisals
- exit interviews
- flexible work rosters where people are working reasonable hours
- documented strategic plans
- documented plans for the future of people working in the business
- training programs
- regular meetings
- effective team work

At this year’s DairySA Innovation Day in Mt Gambier, presenter Lee Astridge from New Zealand’s Human Resource company No8HR captured the audience’s attention with her top tips for recruiting, and how to keep employees. Watch the videos here.

bit.ly/DID18LeeAstridge
and
bit.ly/KeepingemployeesLeeAstridge

For more information on how to create a people efficient farm, head to thepeopleindairy.com.au or contact DairySA’s Kylie Boston on 0407 231 547 or kylie@dairysa.com.au

New Regional Manager at DairySA helm

Following the departure of Verity Ingham, Kerry Grigg has been appointed as the new Regional Manager/Executive Officer for DairySA.

Kerry joins DairySA with extensive experience in the agricultural sector, having worked in the cropping industry as the manager and executive for farmer led a, Victorian No Till Farmers Association.

Kerry is excited about joining DairySA and is looking forward to the challenge of getting a deeper understanding of the dairy industry.

“With my many years in the cropping industry, and a strong focus on regenerative agriculture in the last three years, I am looking forward to translating some of those learnings into the dairy industry,” Kerry said.

“I am passionate about creating healthy soils which naturally translate into healthy, nutritious feed for cows, resulting in quality milk,” she said.

“I am particularly looking forward to building on my knowledge of the dairy industry and getting out to meet dairy farmers across the State,” she added.

Based in the Adelaide Hills, in her spare time Kerry enjoys the outdoors and time near, on, or in lakes, rivers and the sea, and is keen to get to know the South Australian wine regions.
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 hear stories from an inspirational guest speaker. So grab your group of friends and colleagues and register now for a great day out with the ladies!

MON NOV 19
Central
(Langhorne Creek)

Ancient grains: new horizons
- Emily Salkeld, Small World Bakery Langhorne Creek

When
Monday 19 November
11:45 for a 12pm start

Where
Oasis Gardens & Function Centre
697 Langhorne Creek Road
Belvidere SA 5255

Cost
$20.00 Dairyfarmers (inc. farm employees and family members)
$50.00 Service providers

Dress
Smart casual

RSVP
Monday 12 November


TUE NOV 27
South East
(Yahl)

From little things, big things grow
- Terry and Helen Strickland, Caroline Hills Winery

When
Tuesday 27 November
11:45 for a 12pm start

Where
Caroline Hills
489 Norman Road
Yahl SA 5291

Cost
$20.00 Dairyfarmers (inc. farm employees and family members)
$50.00 Service providers

Dress
Smart casual

RSVP
Tuesday 20 November


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Bec Walmsley (SE Lunch) • rebecca@dairysa.com.au • 0418 951 324

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WARRNAMBOOL CHEESE AND BUTTER FACTORY, BEGA CHEESE, MURRAY GOULBURN 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

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