



ADFC News

August-September 2015

fairness for our farmers

A note from the Chairman

Hello and welcome to another edition of ADFC News.

Firstly, a big thank you to all the suppliers who were able to attend our workshops in Allansford, Cobden, Colac and Echuca. We had fantastic discussions and covered a lot of ground. Our feature article in this edition outlines what was covered in the sessions and the next steps for ADFC – so if you missed the workshops, please read on.

In this edition we meet ADFC suppliers Sally and Barry Mitchell who live in northern Victoria. There is also a brief article promoting a new page on our website called 'dairy links'. This month we will feature a series of articles by Dr Jon Hauser. We chose his articles because we believe his message and arguments are aligned with what ADFC is trying to achieve.

Enjoy reading - Scott Sieben, ADFC Chairman

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Feature Article

ADFC farmers look to secure their future

ADFC farmers have backed a concept which could eventually see the co-operative invest in a processing facility in Victoria.

Currently ADFC farmers supply milk to Bulla Dairy Foods and Procal Dairies. They now want their co-operative to move to the next level and have thrown their support behind a concept that could bring them more long-term security and see the business become a bigger player in the Australian dairy industry.

ADFC is still a young co-operative having started its operation in 2012.



Roundtable discussion at Allansford, south west Victoria, on ADFC's next move

The co-operative is based on an egalitarian model: one member one vote - so regardless of the number of shares an ADFC farmer has, or the volume of milk he or she produces, the farmer gets just the one vote.

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ADFC farmers believe the time is right to look to the future. The next step will see the co-operative look for potential investors to see what opportunities could be born out of a joint venture with one, or more, 'like' businesses.

"It is an exciting time for ADFC," said ADFC Chairman, Scott Sieben. "Our farmers are keen to see their co-operative not only survive, but thrive. There is nothing wrong with the status quo - but we believe our co-operative has more to give and, at the very least, we want to find out what that might be."

"There is a long way to go. At the moment we have a concept: to find an investment partner to join with our dairy farmers and explore the possibility of building a spray drying plant to make the most of excess milk," Scott explained.

"We may not end up at that point - we will see what happens over the coming months. It's just great to see our farmers getting behind the concept stage," Scott concluded.



Presenters at the ADFC workshops (L to R)
Dennis Hurren, Paul Kerr and Patten Bridge

Dairy Links

Articles of interest

We have created a new page on the ADFC website called **Dairy Links**. You'll find it under the heading **News** (adfc.org.au/dairy-links/)

Every couple of months we'll feature a new selection of articles or websites that are of interest to our farmers and partners. This month we're featuring a series of articles from Dr Jon Hauser on making the most of seasonal milk.

"The message that is important here is that farmers must retain options and control of the customers for their milk if they want to be able to have an influence on the price. The other critical piece of intelligence is that control of the seasonal surplus is the absolute key to maximising the value of milk."

Dr Jon Hauser, 2013, www.xcheque.com



Focus on our Farmers

An inherent love of animals - meet ADFC suppliers Sally and Barry Mitchell



Sally and Barry Mitchell on their farm in Torrumbarry, northern Victoria

For Sally Mitchell, the decision to work with animals is not an entirely conscious one: it's in her DNA. "One of my ancestors must have been crazy about animals," explained Sally.

"We'd have Noah's Ark if we could." Sally said her two daughters, in particular, also carry the animal loving trait. The family has chooks, horses, rabbits, dogs, a cat, and of course cows. Next on the list is an alpaca.

Sally has been a dairy farmer for around 26 years. Her husband Barry has been a full-time dairy farmer for around 17.

Their farm in Torrumbarry is located near the Murray River, about 30 minutes from Echuca. It's set on around 760 acres and they milk around 550

cows. They also have another 550 acres as their turn-out, or run-off blocks – where they house their non-milking cows.

Both are first generation dairy farmers, but farming is a long-standing tradition. They bought their current property from Sally's parents, who had been running the property as a beef farm. Sally and Barry then converted it to a dairy farm – not an easy feat – and they now enjoy the spoils of a picturesque location, fertile land and a healthy herd of cows.

For the Mitchell family, dairy farming has given them a very full life. "Everything I've got, I've got from a cow," said Sally when reflecting on what dairy farming means to her. "It is a great life. We started with nothing and have built from there."

ADFC Membership

Membership Reminder

A reminder to all ADFC suppliers who have not returned their memberships forms – please return them as soon as possible. If you have any queries or if you require additional forms, please email: info@adfc.org.au

Your feedback and suggestions for the newsletter are most welcome – please email: info@adfc.org.au



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