

Media Release

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Dairy processing passion drives northeast Victorian trainer

The health of Victoria's dairy manufacturing industries and where the industry is heading is not only top of mind for key dairy leaders, but it's what drives Industry Training Consultant Donna Jack.

Based in Beechworth working for the National Centre for Dairy Education Australia (NCDEA), Donna hopes to be one of the industry's key leaders one day to ensure the manufacturing sector has a solid future – and participating in the Developing Dairy Leaders Program (DDLP) takes her one step closer to achieving this.

"When I originally heard about the program, I wanted to make sure it was open to the processing side of the industry," Donna said.

"Ensuring the health of processing is a passion of mine – without farm or processors, we have no industry.

"The program is helping me understand where my strengths and weaknesses are and how I can use them to my advantage when dealing with people. It is also teaching me how to communicate my point to be understood, even if someone doesn't agree with me."

Donna is one of 10 people from across Australia's dairy regions participating in the DDLP, which has been developed by Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) and Dairy Australia. Delivered by the NCDEA, it follows on from the successful pilot program run in 2011.

Participants learn how to articulate, present and debate ideas, provide advocacy and representation, participate as a member of a board, participate in a media interview or presentation, lead and manage community or industry organisations and manage personal work priorities and professional development.

The program kicked off with a five-day residential stint in Melbourne. The next phase will involve a regionally based project with the support of an industry-leading mentor. It will conclude with a two-day residential policy and media development program in Canberra in September.

ADF President Chris Griffin said the program was a key activity in supporting the development of the dairy industry's leaders.

"The participants of the Developing Dairy Leaders Program are from all the dairying regions of Australia and bring a great cross section of experience and fresh ideas," Mr Griffin said.

"It is great to see such energy and commitment from people across Australia and across the industry."

"Dairy is an industry we should be proud of and it is very exciting to see the potential in leadership that is out there," Mr Griffin said.

Dairy Australia Managing Director Ian Halliday said the course had attracted an enthusiastic group of people, already working in the industry, to become the next round of dairy leaders.

"While the course has just started, participants are taking this opportunity to develop a range of vital leadership skills and are on the way to becoming the next wave of dairy industry representatives such as managers, presidents, directors and board members," he said.

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