

Media Release

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Opportunity knocks for next generation leaders

For Sally Pate the dairy industry is all about opportunities for everyone involved or wanting to enter the sector and the Leongatha North girl is grabbing them with both hands.

In her fifth year of a double degree in Agricultural Science and Communications at Melbourne University and about to start work with Irwin Stockfeeds, Sally is also part of the new Developing Dairy Leaders Program developed by Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) and Dairy Australia.

“I love the dairy industry; I’m passionate about the present and future,” Sally said. “There is so much opportunity to grow your own business with your own influence and methods and there are so many different career paths.”

The pilot program, which is being delivered by the National Centre for Dairy Education Australia (NCDEA), aims to build on the leadership skills of people aged 18-30 who are committed to the dairy industry.

Denise Jones from Inverloch is also participating in the program and the Gippsland pair are part of a group of 17 (10 men and seven women) from across Australia. Recently, the group spent four days taking part in a skills development section of the program in Melbourne where they interacted with current industry leaders from various state and national organisations.

Sally has recommended the program to any young person striving for a leadership role at a regional or national level.

“I applied for the course for personal development reasons, networking, to explore other opportunities out there and to learn as much as I can about communication,” she said. “So far it has challenged a lot of thought and opened my thinking pattern.”

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 next phase of the program 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 May. The end result being formal accreditation.

The program has been developed in response to the Australian Dairy Industry Council (ADIC) Dairy Leadership – An Industry Blueprint 2010-15, which identified 200 leadership roles are required across the industry - 40 new people each year.

ADF Vice President Adrian Drury said the program was a key activity in supporting the development of the dairy industry’s state level leaders.

“I have met the participants of the Developing Dairy Leaders Program and believe them to be a group of young people who are more than capable of responding to any challenge thrown at them, leading our industry and staying true to themselves,” Mr Drury said.

Dairy Australia managing director Ian Halliday said the course had attracted a group of enthusiastic and passionate young people from the industry.

“It is very encouraging to see a group of young people so keen to build on their dairy careers, which just goes to show the future of our industry is in extremely good hands,” Mr Halliday said.

“While the course has just started participants have taken hold of the opportunity to learn from current leaders with gusto and are already taking the necessary steps to become the next wave of dairy industry representatives as managers, presidents, directors and board members.”

The Developing Dairy Leaders Program is one of the many examples of the dairy service levy at work. Farmers receive a benefit of \$3 for every \$1 invested by Dairy Australia on their behalf. For more information on this and other levy investments visit www.dairyaustralia.com.au

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