

# March - April 2012 Update

## ADF Restructure

On Monday 30 April an ADF Special General Meeting (SGM) took place in Victor Harbor, South Australia, and after much deliberation, the ADF Board and ADF Members decided to postpone the vote until a new SGM takes place in the near future.

ADF President Chris Griffin said that despite this small delay, the Board along with the ADF Members are confident that the Restructure will get up.

"We are continuing to work through the detail to ensure that we get this right, as you can appreciate these things take some time".

ADF are currently in discussion with the Board and State Members in reaching consensus on the proposed ADF Constitution.

**Contact:** Natalie Collard



Australian Dairy Industry Council Inc.

## Murray Darling Basin Plan – Dairy Industry Information Cards

The ADIC Basin Response Taskforce has developed a set of information cards on the MDB draft Basin plan which have been circulated to Federal Politicians and industry stakeholders.

The cards cover detail such as facts and figures on the dairy industry in each of the four Basin States (Qld, NSW, Vic and SA) and information on the research modelling conducted on the likely impacts of the Basin plan on the large dairy region, the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District in Victoria.

*Please contact the ADF office if you would like to receive a set of information cards.*

**Contact:** Beverley Wallace

## ADIC submission responding to Murray Darling Basin draft plan

The ADIC submission responding to the MDBA's draft Basin plan was submitted to the Authority on 10 April. Considerable detail was included in the submission on the dairy industry's concerns from across the four Basin states.

The submission identified that the current draft Basin Plan is not achievable, practical and cost-effective, and it does not optimise social, economic and environmental outcomes as required under the Water Act.

Additionally the ADIC is concerned that the government's Water Recovery Program will not deliver the draft Basin Plan's proposed management outcome of communities that are better adapted to reduced water availability.

The submission can be downloaded from the Dairy Australia website or contact the ADF office.

**Contact:** Beverley Wallace



## Unsustainable Retail Milk Price

On March 9, ADF President Chris Griffin appeared before the Senate Select Committee on Australia's Food Processing Sector Inquiry.

The public hearing was held at Mooroopna in Victoria and Mr Griffin strongly made the case that the price cuts initiated by Coles on milk in January last year are unsustainable. He explained that someone has to pay for milk priced at an unsustainable price of \$1 per litre and ADF simply does not believe there is enough money in the value chain to support farmers, processors and retailers at that price.

The latest supermarket sales data available from Dairy Australia comparing February to November 2010 and February to November 2011 shows a 15% increase in home brand sales of fresh white milk and a 7% reduction in processor branded fresh white milk sales across Australia. For modified milk the figures are even worse. Home brand modified fresh white milk sales have increased by almost 30% while processor branded modified white fresh milk sales have decreased by 10%.

Processors have publicly stated that they are not making any money on home brand sales at \$1 per litre.

Farmers in Qld and NSW are having to sign contracts at three cents per litre less than last year. For many dairy farmers this means they will become unprofitable.

The dairy industry is not asking for re-regulation, far from it – but for a market that is transparent and that functions properly. The current situation is one of market failure and as such intervention is required and justified.

ADF outcomes are a result of dairy farmer membership to the six state dairy farmer organisations who are ADF's constituent members, being:



ADF is continuing its work on an enforceable and mandatory Code of Conduct for supermarkets that covers the entire value chain, from farmer to retailer.

The industry also calls for a Supermarket Ombudsman to be established to investigate complaints and strongly enforce the new code with significant financial penalties.

Mr Griffin concluded by saying that we need to focus on sustaining our critically important food producing industries not devaluing their products.

The committee will report to the Senate by 30 June 2012.

**Contact:** David Losberg



### Cross Industry Alliances – Social license

There have been discussions within NFF and with other key stakeholders about options for improving community trust and

understanding of livestock industries. The NFF involvement resulted from approaches by the livestock export sector following animal welfare issues achieving public prominence in 2011.

ADF and a number of other organisations have expressed a strong preference for these efforts to be more broadly focused on developing community trust and ensuring industries enjoy a social license for well established practices. This could include environment issues, animal health and biosecurity practices, as well as animal welfare.

Consultants are being invited to put forward proposals and the responses will be considered for a joint funding approach to the project.

**Contacts:** Terry Toohey 0428 663 636 ADF AH&W Policy Advisory Group Chair  
Kevin Shiell 0413 800 349

### Calf Time off Feed - Industry Standard

In October 2011 the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) meeting could not reach agreement on a standard for the maximum time off feed (TOF) for bobby calves during road transport.

Following in December 2011, a meeting of representative organisations involved in the calf supply chain met and agreed to seek the support of their organisations for implementation of an industry standard for a maximum 30 hours TOF.

The ADF AH&W Advisory Group and the ADF Board have since endorsed a draft Implementation Plan for the national industry maximum TOF standard

The implementation plan is essentially a roll-out that commenced in March 2012. There will be areas where

infrastructure or existing systems are inadequate to handle an immediate implementation, and this will be an ongoing process.

The National Standards for the Land Transport of Livestock were endorsed by PIMC in May 2009. These are likely to be regulated by 1 July 2012 in most states.

**Contacts:** Terry Toohey 0428 663 636 ADF AH&W Policy Advisory Group Chair  
Kevin Shiell 0413 800 349



### Johnes Disease – International Colloquium

(prepared by Robin Condron)

Some 300 delegates from 40 countries attended the 11<sup>th</sup> International Colloquium for Paratuberculosis in Sydney in February 2012. This meeting is held every 2-3 years

bringing researchers, veterinarians and representatives of livestock industries and governments from around the world to discuss the latest findings on the control of Johnes disease.

The dairy industry was represented by David Basham, Roma Britnell, Kathryn Davis and Robin Condron. They also participated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> ParaTB Forum (an initiative of International Dairy Federation) which was a separate one-day meeting of government and industry representatives responsible for coordinating and managing national Johnes disease programs.

**Contact:** Robin Condron (Dairy Australia) 03 9694 3831

### Mathew's Review of Australia's preparedness for FMD

In October 2011 DAFF released a report on Australia's preparedness for the threat of FMD. The review was conducted by Ken Mathews in response to a request from DAFF. The report acknowledges the many strengths of Australia's biosecurity continuum but due to the enormous costs and disruption, an outbreak of FMD would involve, the report recommended action in a number of areas:

1. Australia's national capability to anticipate an FMD outbreak and translate warning intelligence into action.
2. The standard of assurances that exporting countries' Competent Authorities are operating to Australian biosecurity requirements.
3. The possibility of illegal importation of animal products.
4. The effectiveness of swill feeding prohibitions.
5. Australia's capacity to sustain a large scale FMD response.
6. Traceability arrangements in the sheep industry.
7. Policy on FMD vaccination and associated difficulties in preparing for a short –notice vaccination campaign.
8. Preparation for the known challenges of carcass disposal.

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9. The possibility that FMD may not be detected readily and speedily.
10. A lack of clarity about responsibility and accountability for national FMD planning processes.
11. Planning for community recovery.

An industry government working group has been set up to respond to the report's findings.

**Contacts:** Terry Toohey 0428 663 636 ADF AH&W Policy Advisory Group Chair  
Kevin Shiell 0413 800 349

### Meetings that have taken place over March & April

#### ADIC Basin Response Taskforce Meetings

In March, ADIC Basin response Taskforce members have held a number of meetings in Canberra with federal ministers, staff and opposition spokesman to discuss the dairy industry position on the MDB draft Basin plan.

Meetings have included:

- Minister for Regional Australia, Simon Crean
- Shadow Minister for Climate Action, Environment and Heritage, Greg Hunt
- Sean Halse, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Tony Burke, Minister for Water
- Rondda Dickson, CEO of the Murray Darling Basin Authority

**Contact:** Beverley Wallace

#### Dairy Industry representation at Water Meetings

In March Daryl Hoey (ADIC Basin Response Taskforce Chair) and Beverley Wallace (ADF Policy Manager) attended an NFF Water Committee meeting. At the meeting the committee members discussed the development of the NFF's response to the draft Basin plan.

**Contact:** Beverley Wallace

#### NFF Biosecurity & Animal Management Meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012

Issues discussed at this meeting included:

- DAFF Biosecurity reforms
- Mathews report
- FMD policy review

#### Biosecurity Roundtable Meeting

14 March 2012

DAFF held a Biosecurity Roundtable meeting on 14 March to report on progress on biosecurity reforms, and to seek views on current and future activities.

#### Industry Forum Meeting

19 March 2012

The AHA Industry Forum met on 19 March, with a Members Forum the following day.

**Contacts:** Terry Toohey 0428 663 636 ADF AH&W Policy Advisory Group Chair  
Kevin Shiell 0413 800 349



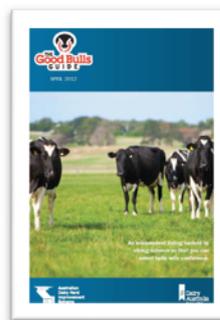
### Udderly Fantastic Update

Since Udderly Fantastic begun, there has been a large increase in members joining the site.

With currently over 1,100 members and over 2,400 photos, you too can get involved in the "facebook" of our dairy industry by uploading videos and photos or even your own blog!

There is an array of information with over 140 videos, over 240 blog posts and plenty of different discussions taking place daily. Udderly Fantastic is secure website and a great way to share your stories, photos and discuss the many different issues currently facing the dairy industry.

**Contacts:** Natalie Collard, Sarah Chahine



### New release Good Bulls Guides coming your way!

The new release of the ADHIS Good Bulls Guide has arrived.

Sire selection is an absolutely key decision for all dairy farmers, but it can also be quite complex.

The Good Bulls Guide simplifies the selection process by allowing you to identify the best bulls for your breeding objectives.

This fourth edition has been updated with the latest ABVs reflecting the improvement in genetic evaluation through the addition of genomics. Dairy Farmers can select bulls from the Good Bulls Guide with confidence that the information is independent and backed by strong science.

You can expect the print version to arrive in the first week of May but in the meantime you can view the latest top bulls via the [ADHIS website](http://adhis.com.au).

**Contact:** ADHIS office 03 8621 4240 or email [abv@adhis.com.au](mailto:abv@adhis.com.au)



### Appointment of a new team member

The Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme (ADHIS) has appointed Sarah Saxton as an extension officer to support farmers in improving genetic gain in their herds.

Sarah said she was excited with her new role which involves helping farmers and advisors to make better use of Australian Breeding Values (ABVs).

ADF outcomes are a result of dairy farmer membership to the six state dairy farmer organisations who are ADF's constituent members, being:



“The reliability of ABVs is improving rapidly with the inclusion of genomic data in recent years. We want to help farmers get the best value from this leap in genetic technology,” Sarah said.

An animal science graduate, Sarah has specialized knowledge in genomics, having spent time at Genetics Australia and the Dairy Futures CRC.

Daniel Abernethy, ADHIS general manager welcomed Sarah to the team. “Sarah has a strong passion for the dairy industry and the right skills to help farmers make better breeding decisions. We look forward to seeing the fruits of her efforts,” Mr Abernethy said.

**Contact:** Michelle Axford (ADHIS) 03 8621 4240 or email [maxford@adhis.com.au](mailto:maxford@adhis.com.au)

### **ABVs released and are of greater reliability**

*More data, more reliability, more confidence*

On April 11<sup>th</sup> ADHIS released the most recent edition of the Australian Breeding Values (ABVs). Dairy farmers can have more confidence than ever in this new release as their evaluation is based on more data than ever before.

Daniel Abernethy, ADHIS General Manager said the reliability of ABVs had steadily improved since they were first introduced almost 30 years ago.

“The amount of genomic data available has doubled in the past year, due to the addition of DNA samples from more proven bulls and the Dairy Futures CRC 10,000 Holstein cow genome project. More data means improved reliability and that means farmers can have more confidence in ABVs,” Mr Abernethy said

The increase in available data means a bulls April 2012 ABV is a more accurate reflection of his genetic merit. As a result some bulls will move in their rankings, particularly young bulls. The reliability of ABVs based on genomic testing – ABV(g)s – for young bulls will increase on average by 8% for production traits and 4-7% for other traits in the April 2012 ABV release.

As well as an increase in data the April release of ABVs includes a number of improvements. A new fact sheet outlining the changes, an explanation of why we are making them and the impact they will have on ABVs is accessible on the ADHIS website.

**Contact:** Sarah Saxton (ADHIS) 03 8621 4240 or email [abv@adhis.com.au](mailto:abv@adhis.com.au)

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