

Media Release

23 February 2011

Dairy guns to spark next wave of NSW industry leaders

NSW dairy farmer Melissa Bailey says effective leadership is the guiding force for innovation, adaptation and success.

Fresh from starting the industry's new Developing Dairy Leaders Program, Melissa believes such a course is vital if we want Dairy to remain a strong and unified industry in a volatile and uncertain world market.

Melissa, from Geringong, is one of three from NSW participating in the pilot program developed by Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) and Dairy Australia. She is joined by Kristen Clark from Tocumwal and Luke Micalleff from Rossmore. The pilot program, delivered by National Centre for Dairy Education Australia (NCDEA), aims to build on the leadership skills of 18-30 year-olds committed to the dairy industry.

The trio are part of a group of 17 - 10 men and seven women, who recently 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.

"The leadership training has been really comprehensive and well developed," Melissa said.

"Having the opportunity to meet current industry leaders, listen to their experiences and form a network with other like minded people who are passionate about dairy has been an invaluable experience.

"The leadership skills combined with the industry knowledge I have gained have given me increased confidence in my ability to participate in, represent and promote the dairy Industry in my region and state."

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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