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Dairy Farmers call on all parties to look to an agriculture based future

For Immediate Release

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Australian dairy farmers are calling on all political parties to see agriculture as the new economic powerhouse for the nation.

The dairy industry is highly valuable to Australia, contributing over \$13 billion to Australia's economy and employing over 140,000 people on farms, processing plants, and wider industry support services. And dairy is just one of the many agricultural sectors that have been key contributors to the Australian economy for many years.

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) President Noel Campbell is calling on all parties to place dairy firmly on the national agenda.

"The Australian dairy industry is constantly investing, adapting and innovating for a sustainable future. We are proud of our industry and confident in its future."

"Given that all sides of politics seem to be looking for the next big thing that will lead to economic certainty and boost prosperity it seems only logical that dairy takes-up this baton."

"Australian dairy is one of the few agricultural sectors that fully integrate from the farmgate to manufacturing to produce to a wide range of high quality, value-added products which we sell in the Australian market and throughout the world," said Mr Campbell.

"This Federal election, we call upon all parties to announce, and then deliver, policies that will help our industry to grow and prosper and achieve our goal of helping Australia become a world leader in innovation, sustainability and food production," said Mr Campbell.

Key policy priorities for the next federal government should be:

- **Markets and trade:** Establish a mandatory Supermarket Code of Conduct and appoint an Ombudsman with teeth to ensure compliance; modify the ACCC Collective Bargaining to provide balance in market power to dairy farmers; sign Free Trade Agreements with key markets China, Japan and South Korea.
- **People and workforce:** Help farmers staff their properties and extend the duration of 417 and 462 visas from six to 12 months as well include dairy on the list of eligible industries for the Seasonal Worker Scheme and on Schedule 1 of the Skilled Occupation List. Encourage people into careers in agriculture by including related courses under the National Priority Band for compulsory HECS-HELP repayments.
- **Sustainability:** Commit funding for grants to assist dairy farmers in undertaking energy efficiency assessments, and to transition to renewable energy technology and energy efficient equipment on farms under an Energy Efficiency Package; level the international playing field and accord dairy processors Emissions-Intensive, Trade-Exposed (EITE) status until all major dairy competitors are subject to similar emissions schemes.

To obtain a copy of the ADF election policy platform go to: www.australiandairyfarmers.com.au

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