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Seasonal Worker Programme expansion a win for dairy

For immediate release

Australian Dairy Farmers Limited
Level 2, Swann House
22 William Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Phone +61 3 8621 4200
Fax +61 3 8621 4280

www.australiandairyfarmers.com.au

ABN 76 060 549 653

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) is pleased that dairy has been included in the expansion of the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP).

ADF President Simone Jolliffe said that seasonal workers will now be able to assist dairy farmers during busy periods when local workers are not available.

“We are strongly supportive of initiatives that improve the industry’s access to overseas labour and ADF has been advocating for dairy to be included on the SWP for some time,” Mrs Jolliffe said.

“The dairy industry’s most valuable asset is the people who work in it and our first preference is always to hire Australian workers. However, despite ongoing investment in education and training, the industry is suffering a labour shortage.

“We need overseas workers for vital on-farm roles which cannot be filled locally.”

The dairy industry has a strong track record of contributing to communities in regional Australia and it is eager to similarly make contributions to communities in neighbouring countries in the Pacific and Timor-Leste.

“We congratulate Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce and Minister for Employment Michaelia Cash on this important announcement,” Mrs Jolliffe said.

“It is fantastic to see ADF’s lobbying efforts come to fruition. We will continue to advocate for programs which make it easier for dairy farmers to employ overseas workers who strengthen rural communities when local employees are not available.”

The SWP provides approved employers with access to seasonal workers from Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste for up to six months and up to nine months for workers recruited from Kiribati, Nauru or Tuvalu.

More information on the expansion of the Seasonal Worker Programme can be found here: <http://www.employment.gov.au/news/australian-government-expands-seasonal-worker-programme-further-agricultural-sector>

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For further information contact:

Sarah Chahine
Australian Dairy Farmers
Tel: 0447 161 919
Email: media@australiandairyfarmers.com.au
[@AusDairyFarmers](https://twitter.com/AusDairyFarmers)