

Dairy farmer representatives on the ADF Markets, Trade and Value Chain Policy Advisory Group (PAG) gathered in Melbourne this week to discuss a range of measures to establish a fairer, more transparent dairy market.

Simplifying supplier contracts and agreements featured heavily and methods to make them simpler and more transparent. Further to this the lack of transparency regarding milk pricing, and its ability to be retrospective is unacceptable and must be addressed.

The PAG also reviewed the methods to give clear, independent and credible market and price signals to dairy farmers and how this might be practically applied to the Australian dairy market.

Providing farmers with the right tools and resources to manage the opportunities and risks associated with a fluctuating dairy market was also a focus to help bolster the industry's resilience in the long term.

Significantly, the meeting agreed upon the need to modernise the Australian industry's pricing structures and contracts to recognise the complex operating environment that farmers face, to better balance financial risk along the supply chain. ADF is working with all state members, levels of Government and industry to achieve these endeavours.

ADF continues to press for the release of the full dairy support package as soon as possible and will update farmers as soon as this information is released.

We have had a couple of operational changes at ADF in recent weeks, with the resignation of ADF CEO Benjamin Stapley announced yesterday. The ADF Board has already taken steps to ensure that the role of CEO is well served in both the short and long term.

Contact has already been made with former ADF CEO John McQueen, now an industry consultant, to step into this important leadership role on an interim basis while the recruitment process is completed. Mr McQueen steps into the role as early as Monday morning and there will be a smooth, effective transition so no time is lost in fulfilling ADF's mission to lobby for a stronger future for Australian dairy farmers.

These are unprecedented times and we need to ensure we have the right leadership balance to effectively address these issues, while not losing sight of other priorities important to building farmers long term sustainability.

The small team at ADF, remains committed to driving strong policy to transform the way our industry operates for the better.

Many farmers have been calling our offices in recent weeks seeking advice, assistance and information on what ADF is doing on their behalf. We encourage you to keep connecting with ADF to ensure we effectively represent your interests.

**David Basham**

**Acting ADF President**