

This week the agricultural industry recognised National Farm Safety Week – held by Farmsafe Australia to raise awareness of safety issues on farm. This occasion only comes once a year, but the health and safety of our people must always remain front of mind.

Family farming continues to be the backbone of the Australian dairy sector, with over 90% family owned. This model of business is a source of strength and stability around which the dairy industry has persevered and will ultimately grow stronger.

Workplace injury and stress costs families, industry and the wider community dearly. As the Australian Dairy Industry Council highlighted at our April 2016 Business Breakfast - protecting the health and wellbeing of our farming families will help us to safeguard the workforce and help us work toward a stronger future.

A safe work environment ensures accidents are minimised, productivity is enhanced and the full benefits of farm and manufacturing facilities realised.

In times where we must tighten our belt to get through the challenges, many start to take a view that with farming comes an acceptable level of risk.

Frequently this mentality sees owners developing formal occupation health and safety plans, but not adhering to them personally.

While we are great at managing volatility in terms of the practical implications from our cows to our farmland, we often forget about ourselves and that our social and emotional wellbeing directly impacts our physical health. We cannot let this culture prevail.

The current situation serves as a reminder that we must prioritise ourselves and our families.

On our end, we are continuing to progress work to streamline farmers' access to the Dairy Support Package and accelerate changes to improve the transparency and balance of market power in the dairy supply chain.

With the Turnbull Ministry now locked in, we are continuing to work with the Government to review the Australia dairy market and how we can better balance risk throughout the sector. This work is essential to protecting the long-term future of our industry.

It is equally important that as an industry we take care of each other and safeguard our wellbeing.

David Basham

Acting ADF President