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ADF calling for a resolution to the backpacker tax

For Immediate Release

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Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) is calling for an immediate resolution to the backpacker tax.

ADF President David Basham said after 18 months of continued lobbying, the agricultural sector needs a decision that ensures certainty for backpackers and employers.

“The Labor Party promised that the issue would be resolved before the end of this year,” Mr Basham said.

“Compromises have already been put on the table and it is crucial for the industry that this is resolved.

Dairy farmers and small business owners need to know that they will continue to be able to rely on backpackers for vital on-farm and off-farm roles which cannot be filled locally and to complement our existing workforce during peak times,” Mr Basham said.

The impact of months of indecision has been felt across the dairy sector and, for every day this issue remains unresolved, it affects the dairy industry and rural Australia.

"Along with other agricultural sectors, we have consistently said that we believe it is reasonable for backpackers to pay some tax, but the government’s initial proposal was too high," Mr Basham said.

The decision to reduce the proposed tax rate from 32.5 per cent to 15 per cent tax maintains Australia’s status as a competitive destination for working holiday makers, while ensuring they pay a fair level of tax.

“We believe that backpackers should not pay less tax than those on the seasonal worker program, which is primarily an aid program.

We need the message out there now that backpackers are welcome on our farms and to do this we need a fair tax rate,” said Mr Basham.

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Australian Dairy Farmers Limited (ADF) is a not-for-profit organisation representing the interests of Australian dairy farmers. We are a strong collective voice to Government and the community on national issues affecting dairy farmers and their profitability.

The ADF has a long history of successfully lobbying for the rights of dairy farmers on many fronts – including trade, value chain, water, carbon and animal health and welfare issues.