

Regional Workshop: Deloraine

Workshop Output Report



Background

The Deloraine regional workshop is one of 23 regional workshops designed to contribute to the development of the Australian Dairy Plan – a nationwide plan for a profitable, confident and united dairy industry. This report captures the discussions held at that workshop. It is intended to provide a record for workshop attendees and a basis for those who could not attend the workshop to contribute to the conversation. This report will be combined with the reports of the other 22 regional workshops in the development of the Australian Dairy Plan.

Workshop sessions

1. **The Set-Up: Why will this Plan be different?**
2. **How big is the appetite for change?**
3. **What needs to change?**
4. **What needs to be done?**
5. **What is success for the Australian dairy industry?**

Workshop details

Date: 13 June 2019

Location: Deloraine

Facilitator: Michele Konrad, Nous Group

Coordinator: Dairy Tas

Attendees: approximately 54 people including around 40 farmers.

1. The Set-Up: Why will this Plan be different?

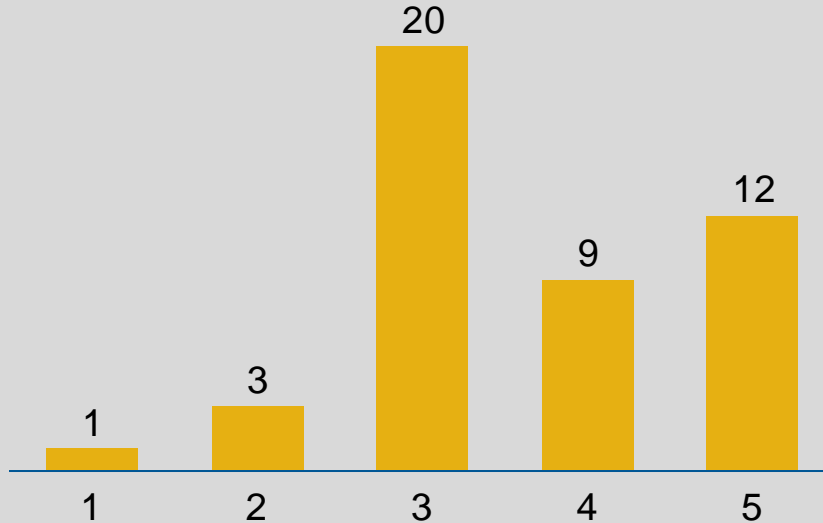
The workshop was opened by local farmer Tony Clarke

The facilitator set out the purpose of the Australian Dairy Plan and the workshop

- This is a great opportunity to shape the future of dairy by contributing to the development of the ADP
- But you've heard this before - what's different about this Plan? Why get involved?
 - The key players are working towards one national dairy plan, one set of national priorities, one voice in championing these priorities – that gives us more ability to drive change
 - This time the plan is being built from the 'bottom-up' i.e. by the people with 'skin in the game' – you!
 - The partners are committed to turning the plan into action through their individual strategic plans

2. How big is the appetite for change?

Participants voted on “how much change is required to get the industry to a better place”



N=44

1 = minor change, 5 = major change

In discussing the results, we agreed...

The change is significant because we need a change across a plethora of areas to ‘shake up’ the whole thing. We also note that this is a conservative industry so we need to call for significant change (a five on the scale) in order to get even moderate change (a three on the scale).

We noted that people won’t stay in the industry without change.

However, some of us noted that any change needs to be realistically achievable.

3. What needs to change?

Participants voted on “what needs to change?”



N=44

Top 10 ideas by percentage votes with participants voting on their top 5

4. What needs to be done?

We further developed our top prioritised ideas by thinking about what success would look like, how we might get there and what might hold us back.

Get a single strong voice in the industry providing strategic advice

There are two options here:

1. A single body for industry representation
2. A central service centre to combine the resources of DA and ADF

Revenue should be derived from broader industry stakeholders.

Getting there will require a united, shared vision and a transparent approach as to how funding is used.

Better manage our responsibilities in animal welfare and the environment

We need to implement RD&E into alternative breeding programs including looking at sexed semen, dairy beef breeds (in collaboration with MLA) and environmental management including effluent and nitrogen loss.

If we don't change there will be a big problem but there are challenges that could hold us back including access to processing facilities and limited markets for end products.

Take more responsibility to encourage young people to come through the system

In 2025 we want to be employers of choice who provide access to great training and offer a competitive financial package for young people.

Achieving this will require us to promote a positive industry, make students aware of dairy opportunities, provide incentives for training, and tap into the potential of workers from other industries.

4. What needs to be done?

Tell a more positive story about dairy so that people want to join our industry

We need to speak with a united voice and celebrate success. Our messaging is a shared responsibility. We need to start conversations about our shared values e.g. around environment and animal welfare.

We risk being held back however by negative comments from the industry, weakness within the sector, profitability challenges, and our current crisis driven approach to advocacy.

Develop a centre for excellence for dairy education to train those who want a career in dairy

By 2025 we want to have established the centre of excellence. It should have national recognition and we should be able to be confident that it will provide a good education at different levels (diploma/degree) with a strong practical component that meets the needs of the market.

Getting there will require us to help people to see the value in education and to overcome the negative sentiment among farmers.

Our industry representatives need to stand up for us and speak directly and on our behalf when we are criticised

ADF and DA need to work together using a 'Chinese Wall system' to be a united organisation. We need farm gate representation to align advocacy with the issues that matter to farmers.

Achieving a united voice that speaks on our behalf will require leaders who are willing and able to say what they really think. They also need to stand up for dairy against the big retail brands.

5. What is success for the dairy industry?

Imagining the future of the industry, we articulated our vision by developing the front page of the industry newspaper.

THE DAIRY TIMES

June 2025

In this issue, we look at dairy's journey to 2025 & celebrate the people and successes that have got the industry to where it is today.

The dairy industry has changed a lot since 2019. Now we see a better connection between farmers, processors and consumers which has allowed us to move forward with confidence

“ It's encouraging to see all the young people involved in a profitable and stable industry

”

- Dairy farmer

“ It's great to see balance in the supply chain

”

- Processor

“ It's great to see that the high-quality products that are produced here are so sought after worldwide

”

- Minister for Agriculture & Water Resources

Appendix. What needs to change? (full list of results)

Better manage our responsibilities around animal welfare and the environment – set and meet high standards and recognise the value proposition in that – social licence to operate issue	Develop curriculums in schools to teach nutrition and food and have passionate people knowledgeable of agriculture to deliver them (including experiences e.g. farm visits, tastings)
Get a single strong voice in the industry providing strategic advice	Make sure we're hearing everyone's voices including farm workers
Find a way to ensure everyone has access to new technologies and techniques	Consider establishing a national liquid milk pool (ACCC approval) for every farmer
Do some research to understand our consumers – what do they perceive when they buy our milk? What do they want to know about? What's the right message?	Transparency from the milk companies regarding their data and benchmarking their dairy-specific results (e.g. remuneration, incentives, products)
Take more responsibility to encourage young people to come through the system and become quality workers and farmers	Look at whether we're getting value for money for our levies – recognise we are in a new competitive environment
Create an environment where dairy is not so negative about itself so that people want to be part of the industry	Tell a positive story about dairy – stop being so negative as an industry so people want to join it
Educate the consumer on what really goes into making milk to the standards we expect here in Australia and correct misconceptions about where money goes when people buy it	Advocacy organisations must increase engagement with members on the ground outside of traditional structures – so that members know about the work done on their behalf
Develop a centre for excellence for Dairy Education to train those who want a career in dairy. Train people in the science of dairy so they bring new skills to the industry	Find mechanisms for small farms to get together to increase their economies of scale (ACCC approval) (e.g. in purchasing input, employment, sale of milk)
Focus more on on-farm cost structures – things we can control	Address buying behaviour that penalises small farms
Focus on practical, on-farm R&D that drives on-farm profitability	Make dairy a better job again to get more people into our industry
Our industry representatives need to stand up for us and speak directly and clearly on our behalf when we are being criticized	Make the most of data through a central information/data point so we can get better insights (like the supermarkets do)
Develop a scheme for farmers to be able to access finance more easily (maybe an equity position not a debt position) building on what exists	