



# DairySA Annual Report 2013

## The Region

There are 268 dairy farms in SA clustered around the Adelaide Hills, Barossa Mid North, Fleurieu, Lower Murray and South East SA. *See page 3 for more details*

## The Role

DairySA focuses on delivering regionally focused, farmer driven, practical activities and information to support farm profitability and sustainability. *See page 4 for more details*

## Key projects

- Dairy Business Support and Advice
- Dairy Extension
- Fleurieu Forage Innovation
- LMRIA Sustainable Soils
- Smarter Energy Use
- Taking Stock
- Tasmanian Tours

*See pages 6-8 for more details*

## The Funding

Core funding allocation from Dairy Australia: \$250,690  
Other funding sources: \$2,026,010  
*See page 5 for more details*

## The Board

Dairy farmers make up the majority of the Board with industry specialists as the balance. *See page 4 for more details*

## The Team

The diverse delivery team provides on-ground activities, information and projects. Importantly they are a key link between farmers, DairySA and Dairy Australia. *See page 4 for more details*

## Chairperson's Report

2012-2013 was one of the most **difficult years of dairying** I've experienced in my 20-year career in the industry. Low milk prices forced farms to bunker down, drastically reduce input costs and in many cases increase borrowings. If we can take a highlight from this it's the simple fact of the **resilience** of today's dairy farming business and the people who run them. We **cannot predict the volatility** of the market, but we can build and manage dairy businesses that ride with the highs and lows, and come out the other end.

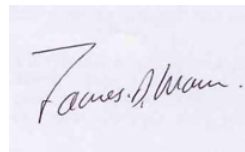
The **DairySA team worked hard to support dairy farmers** through these times by providing up-to-date and relevant information to assist in a variety of areas. These ranged from business planning and saving energy costs, to sustainably maximising pasture growth from soils. We made sure we **responded to your requests** and the interest in business planning by providing farmers with a process to review their situation, update business plans accordingly and manage the difficult financial times.

The DairySA Conference this year in the SE focused on resilience in tough times. Topics included market outlook, coping with stress and building business resilience. Following **feedback from farmers** in the Central Region, the DairySA Board committed funds for a dairy RD&E **Central Region Conference**. It was very pleasing to hear about the local input and support for the conference.

Working closely with Dairy Australia we've responded to farmers requests by giving them **opportunities to liaise with the Dairy Australia** executive through farm visits, launched **Legendairy** in SA, reviewed animal health and welfare and emergency management priorities for the State and gathered feedback on where SA dairy farmers **RD&E investment priorities** are.

Thankfully towards the end of the 2013 financial year we saw some **light at the end of the tunnel** with promising opening milk prices that are tipped to increase as we move through the 2014 financial year. As farmers work to recover from a shocking year, DairySA will continue to work hard to **deliver services that matter to farmers** that are relevant and aim to make a difference. Our plans for 2013-2014 include continuing business support and focus on profitability, working through the LMRIA assisting that region to continue to gain momentum, building the skills and network of young dairy people and supporting local on-ground work with effluent, soils, water, mastitis and fertility.

Thanks to the DairySA team and Board for their commitment to the industry and the effort, time and skills they bring. With you, we look forward to a brighter year.



**James Mann**



## The DairySA Region

The DairySA Regional Development Program covers all dairying regions of South Australia and includes the South East, Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu, Murraylands and the Barossa Mid North. These farming regions all have different issues to deal with due to differing climatic conditions, natural resources, infrastructure, processing, service industries and growth capabilities.

The 2012-2013 farm statistics from the Dairy Authority of South Australia indicate a drop in farm numbers from the previous year (-2.6%), bringing the total number of farms in South Australia to 268. Cow numbers also decreased with a drop of 1.8%

*Source: Dairy Authority of South Australia*

	FARM NUMBERS		Change from 2012 (%)	% of Farms in SA	COW NUMBERS		Change (%)
	Year				Year		
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	
<b>Central-Adelaide Hills</b>	25	26	-3.8	9%	3,701	3,890	-4.9
<b>Fleurieu Peninsula</b>	64	68	-5.9	24%	14,534	15,313	-5.1
<b>Upper South East</b>	12	12	0	4%	5,147	4,947	4.0
<b>Lower South East</b>	98	96	2	37%	40,527	40,022	1.3
<b>Murray River</b>	30	31	-3.2	11%	8,173	8,452	-3.3
<b>Lower Lakes</b>	16	16	0	6%	7,630	7,674	0.6
<b>Mid North</b>	23	26	-11.5	9%	4,984	5,873	-16.7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>-2.6</b>		<b>84,606</b>	<b>86,171</b>	<b>-1.8</b>

## Milk Statistics By Region for 2012-2013

	Milk (Litres)	Cows	Farms	Ave L per farm	Ave Cows per farm	Ave L per cow
<b>2013</b>	565,488,352	84,606	268	2,110,031	316	6,684
<b>Mid North</b>	21,814,007 (4%)	4,894	23	948,435	213	4,457
<b>Central</b>	193,797,975 (34%)	34,038	135	1,435,541	252	5,694
<b>South East</b>	349,876,370 (62%)	45,674	110	3,180,694	415	7,660

## The Role of DairySA

DairySA focuses on delivering regionally focused practical activities and information to support farm profitability and sustainability. DairySA is an example of the dairy services levy at work, locally. It is one of eight Regional Development Programs (RDPs) funded by Dairy Australia and the dairy service levy.

Some roles of DairySA include:

- Providing funding for research, development, education and extension (RD&E) activities in South Australia.
- Developing projects and workshops based on dairy farmers' feedback (what they want, when they want it).
- Managing specific RD&E projects for South Australian dairy farmers.
- Coordinating dairy farmers' events.
- Seeking leverage funds to ensure the dairy service levy is maximised in South Australia.

**DairySA's focus is RD&E and it is not a lobbying or political body.**

## The DairySA Board

A Board of Directors governs DairySA. The Board comprises a majority of farmer directors, a representative from the milk processors, PIRSA and independent skills-based directors. The Board meets bi-monthly. The role of the Board is to ensure that the funding received by the organisation is directed to regionally relevant research and development. DairySA focuses efforts on communicating research and extension to all SA dairy farmers, to increase the profitability and sustainability of the region's dairy industry.

## The DairySA Team

At DairySA we aim to deliver the best possible dairy research, development and extension services for South Australia dairy farmers. The core group of people in SA working hard to make this happen are:



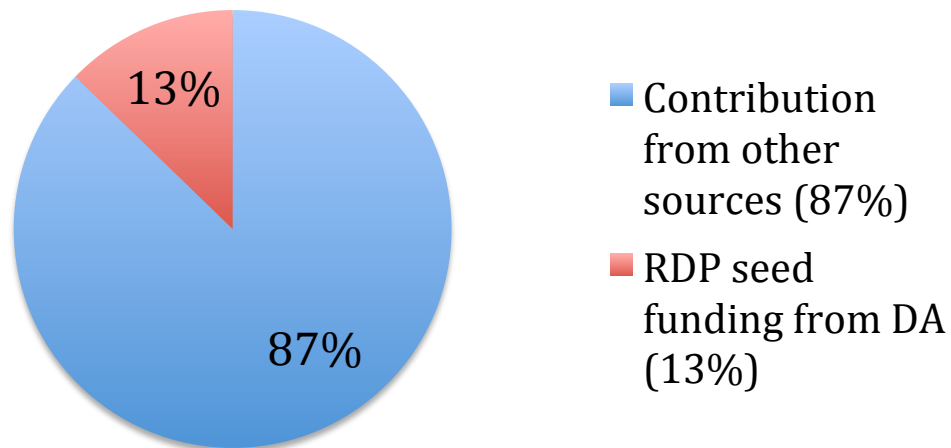
- Kylie Boston** Project and Discussion Group Coordinator
- Vanessa Clarke** Administration and Project Support
- Nerida Ewart** Extension Coordinator
- Verity Ingham** Executive Officer and Project Management
- David Kuchel** Discussion Group Network Coordinator
- Liz Rymill** Extension Coordinator
- Penny Schulz** Project Coordinator
- Louise Stock** Communications Coordinator
- Melanie Treloar** Project Coordinator
- Monique White** NRM Specialist and Project Coordinator

DairySA employs other contractors from time to time for specialist expertise and to ensure timely, relevant and professional delivery of projects.

## DairySA funding

In 2012-2013, Dairy Australia allocated \$250,690 core funding to DairySA. This was an increase of just under 8% from the previous financial year. DairySA continued to develop and deliver programs and significantly leveraged cash and in-kind contributions from other sources.

**Dairy Australia's investment in DairySA was leveraged to attract an additional \$2,026,010 from co-investors for South Australian dairy related projects.  
Total investment in dairy related programs through DairySA totalled \$2,276,700**



*Note: This pie chart does not include DairySA reserves or funds from Dairy Australia that are additional to seed funding.*

Major sources of external funds were accessed through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), PIRSA, NRM Boards and various businesses.

**In-kind contributions continue to be of significant value to DairySA. The highest contributors of in-kind support are attributed to dairy farmers across the state contributing time and resources within major projects, such as the *LMRIA Sustainable Soils and SoilsSA*.**

# DairySA in action!

The Fleurieu Young Dairy Discussion Group travelled around the Roseworthy region visiting the Uni of Adelaide Vet Centre, Wilson's dairy and for something different...a free-range egg farm!



The Mooving Forward project saw this savvy group of dairy industry women develop their leadership skills and run a conference for regional and rural women in SA.



Dairy Australia launched Legendairy nationally with South Australia dairy farmers having input into local initiatives. Thanks to the six SA farming families gave up their time for Legendairy photo shoots!



The LMRIA Sustainable Soils project saw some new fodder crops trialled with great success. This project has led onto Linking the LMRIA skilling up new landholders and developing an agronomy network.



The SE Young Dairy Network had a big year of extension and social activities. Harrimar's winning bowls team is pictured!

Some of SA's hardest dairy industry workers!



The growing Tassie dairy region was visited by 2 groups of SA dairy farmers. Among the tour highlights were innovative farms, production facilities (milk and other beverages!) and research farms.

## Summary of DairySA Projects

DairySA undertook a variety of projects in 2012–2013. The organisation’s role in projects varies, ranging from project development and management through to funding support. A summary of projects follows. This is not an exhaustive list of all projects DairySA was involved in, but describes major projects and depicts the key range of focus areas over the past year.

Details of the projects outcomes and activities can be viewed in the project library on the DairySA website [www.dairysa.com.au](http://www.dairysa.com.au)

Project	Project Supporters	Coordinators	Overview
The DairySA Extension Program	Dairy Australia DairySA	Liz Cotton Nerida Ewart	Two extension coordinators are engaged to ensure efficient and effective serving of all dairying regions in SA – one servicing the South East of SA and the other servicing the Fleurieu, River and Lakes, Adelaide Hills and Barossa Mid North dairying regions. The coordinators communicate, connect and coordinate for maximized uptake of dairy extension in SA and on-farm change.
Tactics for Tight Times	Dairy Australia DairySA	DairySA ProAdvice	This project focuses on supporting dairy farmers through the milk price downturn by providing forums to discuss current management decisions around cost effective production. Financial management will be a core theme at all events with a linkage to on-farm management decisions. Farmer events planned for SA with event attendees obtaining information on milk price, monitoring/modifying input costs, business planning and counselling (financial and personal).
Taking Stock	Dairy Australia	21C Agribusiness Schulz Livestock	Taking Stock delivered one-on-one support, over the kitchen table, to assist dairy farm families in identifying their current issues, where they are now and what the next, most important decisions are for them.
Fleurieu Forage Innovation	DairySA Dairy Australia	Greg Mitchell	Evaluation of and demonstration that spring sowing may be a more cost-effective way to reseed pastures and improve seasonality of forage production in the Fleurieu region.

Project	Project Supporters	Coordinators	Overview
Smarter Energy Use on Australian Dairy Farms	Dairy Australia and Dept Climate Change and Energy Efficiency	Monique White and DairySA	This project aims to unlock the potential for energy savings on dairy farms.
SA soil nutrients	DAFF Caring for Our Country	Monique White Greg Mitchell Kylie Boston	This project aims to reduce soil acidity on dairy farms in the South East and Mt Lofty Ranges. Dairy farmers are undertaking strategic soil sampling of their property, partnering with local agronomists to identify develop management strategies to reduce acidity and maintain fertility while reducing the risk of leaching of nutrients.
LMRIA Sustainable Soils	DAFF (CFoC)	Martin Philcox Steve Scown Monique White	This project investigates management practices to reduce subsoil acidity in the LMRIA region. New management practices are required to reduce the current acid leaching problem and reduce the risk of future events.
Plasback on the Fleurieu	AMLR NRM Board	Monique White	This project provides 'Plasback' recycling bins and liners to be supplied to rural livestock producers (primarily dairy farmers) located on the Fleurieu Peninsula, in order to facilitate recycling of agricultural plastics associated with feeding livestock.
Mooving Forward!	PIRSA	Melanie Treloar	A leadership program for women in SA's dairy industry including a rural women's conference in April 2013.
Dairy Careers SA	Dairy Australia DairySA	Kylie Boston Melanie Treloar	Careers Coordinators operating in the SE and Central regions are working to increasing the dairy presence in the SA careers sector.



<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Supporters</b>	<b>Coordinators</b>	<b>Overview</b>
GPS cows	DairySA Dairy Australia	Les Sandles Dairy Australia	Application of precision technologies to describe large-herd behavioural adaptations to aid in the nutritional management and rumen health of the grazing dairy cow.
Tours and sponsorship	Dairy Australia DairySA	Various	Two Tasmanian tours with over 45 SA farmers involved headed to Tassie to check out their farming systems and what's driving industry growth in that region. Other tours included Fleurieu Young Famers tour to Roseworthy, Don Campbell trip to Tassie and the Australian Dairy Conference.
Cows Create Careers	DairySA, DA and sponsors	Kylie Boston Perrin Hicks	Cows Create Careers is a national project that operates in four DairySA regions. It promotes dairy careers and education opportunities for students (years 7-11) in the dairy industry by introducing the dairy industry to secondary schools.
Dairy Innovation Day	DairySA and sponsors	Kylie Boston	DairySA has supported Dairy Innovation Days for the past 10 years. Theme for 2013 was 'Tight Times and Tough People'.
DairySA Discussion Groups	DairySA and group members	Various	DairySA supports discussion groups across the state through co-funding coordination and group activities. These groups are farmer-driven and the group sets the topics/agendas and plans on an annual basis. Coordinators provide the framework and process for successful group interaction and learning.
DairySA Young Dairy Network	DairySA	Liz Cotton	YDN SA is a statewide network group established by DairySA in 2010 as part of the Moovers and Shakers project. YDFN SA is gaining momentum with activities for young people in dairy planned for the 2013-2014 year.
Other workshops	DairySA and various	Various	Includes Dairy Australia farm production workshops such as Heifers on Target, Healthy Calves, Lameness, InCalf, Cool Cows etc

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DairySA gratefully acknowledges the following organisations for their support:

Dairy Australia

South Australia Dairyfarmers' Association

Government of South Australia Primary Industries and Regions SA

B-d Farms Paris Creek

Parmalat

Lion

Murray Goulburn Cooperative

United Dairy Products

Warrnambool Cheese & Butter