

How Now Gippy Cow



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COMMUNITY

Gippsland Q Fever Project



By Karen McLennan, GippsDairy

Between now and the end of March 2025, GippsDairy is partnering with three Gippsland GP clinics to offer 200 subsidised Q Fever testing and vaccinations. This has been made possible through a grant received through the Victorian Livestock Biosecurity Fund (Agriculture Victoria).

If you are a dairy farm owner, employee or share or lease a dairy farm you will be eligible to access this subsidised Q Fever testing

and vaccination. Service providers can express interest in accessing, but priority will be given to farmers and workers whose role is based on farm. Accessing Q Fever testing and vaccination requires two appointments that are one week apart. The first appointment involves a skin and blood test to check whether Q Fever antibodies are already present. At the second appointment, skin and blood test results will be assessed to understand if the vaccination is needed. If the antibodies are already present, the person will have already experienced Q Fever and will not need to be vaccinated.

CONTINUED OVER

VATBUSTER

NOTMAN
PASTURE SEEDS

Base AR37, 4Front NEA, Reward Endo5, Matrix plus Clovers



Gippsland Q Fever Project

Gippsland visit – Dr Qu Dongyu, Director General United Nations Food and Agriculture

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This project is being delivered because the high financial cost (without subsidy) can be a barrier to being tested and vaccinated.

Under this project, the maximum out of pocket expense for each person being tested and vaccinated (regardless of the clinic you attend) will be \$125. This cost will be less if you do not require the vaccination.

To book into these subsidised appointments, please call your preferred clinic on the phone numbers below:

1. Neerim South Medical Centre, ph 5628 1302.

Q Fever clinic will be mornings; Appointment 1 on Wednesday 22 January and Appointment 2 on Wednesday 29 January 2025.

2. Korumburra Medical Centre, ph 5655 1355.

Q Fever clinic will be afternoons; Appointment 1 on Wednesday 5 February 2025 and Appointment 2 on Wednesday 12 February 2025.

3. Sale Medical Centre, ph 5144 5766.

Q Fever clinic will be mornings; Appointment 1 on Wednesday 22 January and Appointment 2 on Wednesday 29 January 2025.

It is extremely important to be tested and vaccinated for Q Fever when working on farm. Q Fever is a disease caused by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii*. It is spread to humans from cattle, sheep and goats and a range of other domestic and wild animals. Even people who do not have contact with animals may be infected. Contracting Q Fever can result in no symptoms or symptoms that are similar to severe flu-like illnesses. About 10% of people who are sick with acute Q Fever go on to suffer from a chronic fatigue-like illness that can be debilitating for years.

People usually get infected by breathing in air or dust that has been contaminated by Q Fever bacteria from birth fluids, urine, faeces, blood, or milk of infected animals. Cattle, sheep and goats are the main sources of infection, however a wide range of animals including domestic and feral dogs and cats, feral pigs, horses, rabbits, rodents, alpacas, camels, llamas, foxes, and Australian native wildlife can also spread the bacteria to humans. The bacteria can survive in the soil and dust for many years and can be spread over several kilometres by the wind.

The Gippsland Public Health Unit (GPHU) based at Latrobe Regional Hospital is responsible for managing this notifiable disease in Gippsland in partnership with WorkSafe Victoria. Data from the GPHU notes that Gippsland has been seeing a steady high number of Q Fever

cases over the last 10 years compared to the rest of the state. In 2023, Gippsland had the highest proportion of Q Fever cases in Victoria, 34.4% of total cases while constituting only 4.6% of the Victorian population. Where a person tests positive to Q Fever, WorkSafe and the GPHU will make contact with the person and their employer to discuss prevention strategies and workplace policies and practices to prevent any further cases.

In the past there was a national Q Fever register where a search could be completed to find a GP clinic offering Q Fever testing and vaccination, and where records were kept on Q Fever case numbers and vaccination rates. This register is no longer funded and from Monday 15 April 2024 those being Q Fever vaccinated will have their vaccination recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register.

Those vaccinated prior to 15 April 2024 are able to approach their vaccination provider to request that their vaccination is added to their Australian Immunisation Register. This means that when you print your vaccination schedule (through Medicare) it will include Q Fever.

This vaccination schedule will help those looking to work on farm to show evidence of vaccination and can be requested by employers as proof of vaccination. For those who have had Q Fever and do not require vaccination, a proof of antibodies document/card can be requested from your GP clinic to show as evidence that despite not being vaccinated you are not at risk of contracting Q Fever.

MORE INFORMATION

The GPHU is working with the Victorian Department of Health to provide a webpage with the list of GP Clinics offering Q Fever testing and vaccination in Gippsland and across Victoria. More details will be shared when this is available. For any further questions on Q Fever, please contact the GippsDairy office on **03 5624 3900**

By Karen McLennan, GippsDairy

On Friday 1 November, a delegation from the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (UNFAO) visited Gippsland to learn more about Australian dairy. The delegation was made up of Dr Qu Dongyu – Director General (based in China), Ms Beth Bechdol – Deputy Director General, and representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and UNFAO.

Dr Qu's extensive agricultural experience was evident in the questions he asked about dairy farming in Gippsland. His warm and curious manner resulted in many diverse conversations and the highlight after lunch was being able to observe the afternoon milking at the farm of Simon and Lauren Finger in Yannathan.

Dr Qu is in his second four-year term as Director General of the UNFAO. Before this role, Dr. Qu served as China's Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) where one of his achievements was to promote inclusive and innovative development and make sure information and communication technologies (ICT) were available in rural areas. This meant that more than 400 million farmers could use their smartphones as a new farming tool. Another national initiative led by Dr. Qu was to improve reporting of wholesale prices for agricultural products in China, and foster the establishment of more than 100 specialty production areas geared to making local comparative advantages work to the benefit of local farmers.

Dr. Qu has strongly advocated for the transformation of agrifood systems to make them more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable and promote the Four Betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind with the ultimate goal of helping members to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Dr. Qu says he represents the combination of an "Asian soul" and a "global mind". His motto is "Simple life, but not simple work."

The UNFAO visit to Australia over three days included: meeting with CSIRO's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, a visit to a low emissions sheep and cattle farm, meeting with First Nations representatives, dinner with the Future Farmers Network, meeting representatives from the University of Melbourne School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences, a visit to Ellinbank Smart Farm, a visit to Lauren and Simon Finger's dairy farm, and dinner with the Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations.

The final day was in Tasmania visiting Biosecurity Tasmania, farm visits – beef, sheep, cropping, seed production, and cherry – and meeting with Hon Julie Collins, MP Minister for Agriculture (Tasmania).

It is not often that important international opportunities arise to showcase the Gippsland dairy industry. Thank you to all involved in both dairy farm visits in Gippsland, we have a lot to be proud of in our region.



Colleen Bye 0467 533 003

Steve Fallon 0427 352 231

Wayne McKay 0419 486 282



- DIRECT TO ABATTOIRS WEEKLY, PICK UP ALL AREAS ● CULL BEEF & DAIRY COWS, BULLS AND MANUFACTURING STEERS ● STORE CATTLE WEEKLY
- CURRENT EXPORT ORDERS AVAILABLE, BEEF & DAIRY ● PADDOCK SALES
- CONTACT FOR CURRENT HOOK PRICES ● PAYMENT 7 DAYS
- EXCELLENT PRICES FOR FRIESIAN AND DAIRY X STEERS 500KG +

By Shanky Sungroya, GippsDairy

From 2022 to 2023 GippsDairy has awarded four grants to projects that benefit Gippsland dairy farmers, guided by GippsDairy's grants policy.

The four projects that have been funded are:

1. Newry Regenerative Agriculture Demonstration Project - funding for soil and pasture testing from 2023 to 2025 to understand performance of conventional and multispecies pastures and impacts on soil health.
2. 2025 Gippsland Jersey Farming Conversations calendar – sponsorship support for the 2025 calendar. The 2025 calendar was launched on Friday 6 December and is available from: <https://gippslandjersey.com.au/pages/mental-health>
3. Upskilling of local dairy people – Yarram community. Sponsorship support for dairy farmers to achieve up to date qualifications in Chemical Use, First Aid and Accidental Counselling.
4. Engaging with farmers and farm workers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds – funding to support a 12-month program of events, to be run like a discussion group to support skills development in participants.

This article provides an update on Project 1. Newry Regenerative Agriculture Demonstration Project.

All other projects are in progress and outcomes from these projects will be shared as they are completed. To hear more about any of these projects, please call the GippsDairy office on 03 5624 3900. Due to funding constraints in the 2024-25 financial year, no additional grants will be allocated this year. This will be reviewed when the 2025-26 GippsDairy budget is prepared.

Newry Demonstration Site – Five years on

On 19 November 2024, the Newry Regenerative Agriculture Demonstration project hosted a successful open field day, drawing an enthusiastic crowd of almost 50 farmers, service providers, and agricultural enthusiasts. Discussions revolved around innovative regenerative agriculture practices and their outcomes on soil and pasture. Held at Peter Neaves and Kate Mirams' farm, this event celebrated five years of exploration into regenerative agriculture techniques within the Macalister Irrigation District (MID) region.

Field Day Insights

The open field day included interactive sessions and live demonstrations, offering attendees a first-hand look at the impact of regenerative agriculture practices on soil health, pasture productivity, water efficiency, carbon sequestration, and enhanced biological activity. Key highlights from the event included:

1. Comparison between regenerative and conventional system and the shift in agricultural practices

Kate and Peter provided insights into their journey so far and their passion about the project comparing regenerative multispecies pastures with conventional ryegrass. Discussions around the data collected so far explored differences among regenerative and conventional bays in plant root depth, water use, soil chemical, and biological properties.

They also shared their journey of reducing nitrogen use, discontinuing fungicides and pesticides on seed, and transitioning to multispecies crops. They emphasised the importance of strategies like maintaining green



plants and living roots year-round, encouraging nitrogen fixation in soil by the leguminous plants in the multispecies mix, and minimizing herbicide use to support soil microbiology. This was achieved by letting the fungus grow and capture a bigger surface area to harvest nutrients with the fungal hyphae.

2. Soil Health Assessment Techniques

Visual soil assessments were conducted by Southern Cross University students, showcasing the physical differences in soil health between conventional and regenerative systems.

3. Nutritional Strategies

David Huggins of Huggins Nutritional Services detailed the role of corrective nutrient applications, including soil drenches and foliar feeds, supported by soil and plant tissue test results from the demonstration project.

4. Practical Demonstrations

Attendees engaged with tools like penetrometers, Brix meters, and microbiometers to assess soil health and crop performance directly on-site.

Key Findings from the Demonstration

Since its inception in 2019, the Newry Regenerative Agriculture Demonstration has explored the potential of regenerative multispecies pasture in enhancing the soil structure and productivity post-laser grading. Early results from the data collected so far have shown:

- Higher dry matter production and fodder quality in regenerative bays compared to conventional.
- Improved soil moisture infiltration and utilization in regenerative systems, with deeper water penetration and reduced runoff.

Looking Ahead (the next 12 months)

As the demonstration progresses, the next phase of the project will explore:

- The sustainability of production levels as perennial crops age.
- Advanced monitoring methods for soil water and microbiology.
- Refining fertilization strategies to optimize nutrient use efficiency.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Kate Mirams and Peter Neaves for hosting the event and sharing their invaluable experiences. A special thanks to Peter Huggins, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), Agriculture Victoria, Maffra and District Landcare Networks, and Newry Demonstration Project steering committee for their continued support of this project, and Wellington Shire for sponsoring lunch and facilities for the field day.



Brown's
fertilisers
service first

Koo Wee Rup
(03) 5997 2203
Leongatha
(03) 5667 3100
Maffra
0427 220 127
Merton
(03) 5778 7490



SERVICES

- Agronomic advice
- Fertiliser and Lime/Gypsum spreading and bulk deliveries
- Soil & plant tissue testing

Women in Dairy Ladies Lunch 2024

By Belinda Griffin, GippsDairy

On Friday 29 November, Moe Race Club was full of inspirational women from across Gippsland to celebrate our dairying community.

The event is organised by the Gippsland Women in Dairy Working Group and GippsDairy and aims to provide Gippsland ladies with an opportunity to come together to network and hear from a panel of dairying women that have 'been there, done that.'

Around 180 people registered to take part in the annual lunch, meeting new people and greeting familiar faces. The key theme of the day was 'Wise Words' and the farmer panel swapped stories and answered questions about their lives as dairy farmers, wives, mothers, and community members. Dairy farmers Thelma Hutchison (Poowong), Lyn Hornby (Monameith), and Chris Anderson (Denison) proudly recalled moments of highs and lows throughout their dairy careers. The panel session was facilitated by GippsDairy's Farm Engagement Lead, Kim Price.

This year's event was made possible by major sponsors Gardiner Foundation and DLL Financial Solutions, with additional sponsorship from Bulla, GEA, and Daviesway DASCO. Local businesses and industry service providers also supported the day with generous gifts donated to raffle prizes.

The Women in Dairy Ladies Lunch, now in its third year, continues to grow and is fondly anticipated by the Women in the Dairy community across Gippsland.



Workforce support for farmers

Tania Ketteringham has recently moved into the role of People Experience Lead with Dairy Australia.

For the last two years, Tania has supported NSW farmers to find employees as part of the Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program. In her new role, Tania has extended her ongoing support to include Gippsland dairy farmers with a strong focus on:

- Building awareness of the dairy industry as a place to establish fulfilling careers.
- Attracting talent through targeted pipelines.
- Retaining employees by developing a compelling Employment Value Proposition.

Tania can help with job advertising, information about what documents are needed when employing new staff members, support with the induction process and access to Dairy Australia's online training platform.

MORE INFORMATION

If you are a farmer looking for staff or seeking support in workforce related areas, you can reach Tania at:
M: 0412 040 504 E: tania@dairynsw.com.au



GippsDairy Muster
 Farming into the future
 Imagine | Inquire | Innovate

Wednesday 30 April 2025
Federation University, Churchill

Hoofing around Gippy town



SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday 12 February – Friday 14 February 2025	Australian Dairy Conference 2025	Gold Coast
Wednesday 12 March – Thursday 13 March 2025	Herd '25	Bendigo

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Fall Armyworm
Understanding and detection

DairyPod Podcast | Nutrien Ag Solutions

DELIVERING for DAIRY

In this DairyPod episode, Dairy Australia's Dr Brenda McLachlan sits down with Nutrien Ag Solutions Principal Agronomist, Dr Ross Pomroy to discuss how to identify and manage Fall Armyworm. They look at the impact that FAW can have on crops and pastures grown for dairy cattle, and the importance of monitoring and reporting if it has been found on farm.

Scan the QR code to listen or go to <https://tinyurl.com/5n6u4bpj>

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Upcoming events

To view and register for any of our upcoming events, visit the GippsDairy events calendar:

<https://bit.ly/GippsDairyEventsCalendar> or scan the QR Code.



Hay and Grain reports

Scan the QR codes or visit the Industry Statistics page of the Dairy Australia website to view the most recent hay and grain figures.

Hay Report



Grain Report



Contact us

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