

WESTVIC DAIRYNEWS

WestVic Dairy Newsletter

January/February 2016

Lindsay Ferguson appointed Regional Manager at WestVic Dairy



WestVic Dairy welcomes Lindsay Ferguson to the Regional Manager position.

WestVic Dairy is delighted to welcome Lindsay Ferguson as Regional Manager who commenced on Wednesday January 27, 2016.

Lindsay brings a wealth of experience and knowledge plus has a strong background in dairy-farming and farm business management. He was a senior lecturer at Glenormiston College for 14 years, leading the business management section.

Most recently, he was Business Development Manager in the Barwon South West Region with Regional Development Victoria.

Of his appointment Lindsay said it is an exciting time to be involved in dairy farming and an “enjoyable challenge” to be leading the team at WestVic Dairy.

“There are great people in modern dairying and I aim to work with the Board, staff and all stakeholders to deliver quality services that energise and improve the profitability and long-term sustainability of farm businesses in our region”, he said.

Dairy Australia, Regional Development Programs Business Manager Ross Bawden said Lindsay’s appointment to the WestVic Dairy team is very welcomed.

“Lindsay has a long history of working in the south-west region of Victoria in the food and fibre sector and is a highly commended operator,” Ross said.

Lindsay is passionate about this region and its community where his family chose to settle nearly 30 years ago.

“I am interested in making many real connections and having positive conversations with people ‘on-farm’ across the region. This is the best way to appreciate their concerns and explain the WestVic Dairy programs. I am a good listener and will be looking for a good two-way flow of information”.

“WestVic Dairy has initiated many good and innovative programs over the years. With the strong support that we receive from Dairy Australia, we will no doubt continue to do this. Connecting these ideas, programs and people will be an exciting opportunity for me,” he said.

“In this issue”

- Great South West Dairy Award nominations now open!
- GSWDA nomination form
- Farm safety visits
- Is it hot out here, or is it just me?
- Western Victoria water supply discussions prompt action
- Profit Prophet
- Focus Farm charts
- Farewell Rob Swinton



Don't forget to visit WestVic Dairy at site D3 at Sungold Field Days on 10, 11, 12 February 2016 at Allansford!

2016 GREAT SOUTH WEST DAIRY AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN!

Nominations for the 2016 Great South West Dairy Awards (GSWDA) are now open and farmers are invited to self-nominate or for individuals to nominate a worthy recipient.

The GSWDA's are designed to recognise and reward the skill, dedication, leadership, ingenuity and environmental responsibility of our farming community in south-west Victoria. Dairy farmers can be nominated in the following categories:



- Dairy Employer of the Year
- Dairy Farm Business Manager of the Year
- Employee of the Year
- Young Farm Leader
- Share Farmer of the Year
- Natural Resource and Sustainability Manager
- Dairy Farm Photo
- Dairy Industry Honour Board

WestVic Dairy Project Officer Liza Fahey urged farmers to get involved.

"Nominating yourself or someone else is really easy to do, just head to the WestVic Dairy website, complete the nomination form and return to us via email or post. It's a great way to acknowledge and support the ongoing hard work and dedication it takes to be a dairy farmer," Liza said.

"Dairy farmers can be quite humble when it comes the achievements and contributions they make to the industry. We are hoping to see a few of our 'quiet achievers' put their hat in the ring, or to be nominated by colleagues or other industry personnel," she said.

The awards program is a highly anticipated event in the WestVic Dairy farmer's calendar and concludes with a ceremony held at Deakin University Warrnambool on May 19.

GSWDA organiser, WestVic Dairy, is now distributing sponsorship packages seeking support for the program.

"We greatly appreciate the support that local businesses have shown for the awards in the past, this year there is a fantastic opportunity for sponsors to obtain extra with potential to host workshops with the winners after the awards dinner. The sponsorship packages can be tailored to meet the needs of any business," Liza said.

Nominations close 15 March, 2016. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the WestVic Dairy website www.westvicdairy.com.au or simply complete the nomination form in this edition of Dairy News and return to the office at 214 Manifold Street, Camperdown, or email Awards@westvicdairy.com.au.

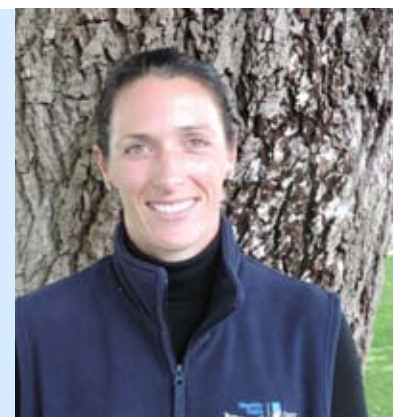
Businesses interested in sponsoring or supporting the awards can contact Liza Fahey on 5557 1000 or email Awards@westvicdairy.com.au.

NOMINATE NOW - by using the adjoining form. Remove from newsletter and return to WestVic Dairy.

Farm safety visits - Worksafe

Worksafe have indicated that they will be conducting visits in the agriculture sector with a focus on farming. In dairies they will be looking at quad bike safety training and PPE, plant guarding, emergency stop devices, cattle handling, chemical use and controls and contractor management. These are just some of the areas that may be addressed depending on the farm and Inspector conducting the intervention.

If you are interested in Farm Safety resources; Farm Safety Snapshot or the Farm Safety Scan, please contact Karen at WestVic Dairy, 5557 1000 or visit www.thepeopleindairy.com.au for additional farm safety suggestions.



Karen Hart, Workforce
Planning and Action officer.



GREAT SOUTH WEST DAIRY AWARDS 2016 Nomination Form



Nomination details

Name of nominee.....
 Postal address.....
 Town.....Postcode.....
 Telephone.....
 Mobile.....
 Email.....
 Factory supplied

Field Officer (If known or applicable).....

Please tick below which Award category you are nominating in.

Nominator Details

Name of nominator.....
 Postal address.....
 Telephone.....
 Email.....
 Nominators signature.....

Once nomination has been received at WestVic Dairy, the Awards Project Officer will be in contact with nominee to confirm their willingness to participate in the program. The nominee will also be informed of the judging process through all stages of completeness. WestVic Dairy may need to contact the Nominators to confirm any details, or discuss nomination in further detail.

Award Category	Please tick
Dairy Farm Business Manager of the Year	
Dairy Employer of the Year	
Dairy Employee of the Year	
Young Farm Leader of the Year	
Natural Resource and Sustainability Manager of the Year	
Farm Photo of the Year	
Dairy Industry Honour Board Nominations	
Share Farmer of the Year	

Nomination period closes: 15th March 2016

WestVic Dairy, 214 Manifold St, Camperdown Vic 3260

Tel: 03 5557 1000

Fax: 03 5557 1099

Email: Awards@westvicdairy.com.au



Is it hot out here, or is it just me?

Katrina Lawrence, Dairy Extension Officer, DEDJTR Ellinbank

The hot conditions over summer create many challenges including managing the herd and young stock. Helping cows maintain a comfortable temperature is well worth it though as this leads to better fertility, higher milk production, higher milk quality and healthier cows.

Growing a calf or producing milk while ruminating can be hot work out there in the paddock with no 'air con', particularly on hot or humid days. Dairy cows generate heat internally while feeding and take on heat from their environment. Like most mammals the dairy cow needs to maintain its core body temperature between 38.6°C and 39.3°C.

Cows have evolved a range of physiological strategies to off-load heat to cope in hot conditions but problems occur if temperatures and humidity are high (and remain high) and cows do not have opportunities to get rid of the heat load.

Cows are more prone to heat stress than humans because they can only sweat about 10 per cent as much as we can. The amount of heat a cow gains or loses depends on a variety and combination of factors.

Cows find it harder to off-load heat when:

- air temperature and humidity are high;
- solar radiation is high, or they haven't got access to enough shade;
- temperatures stay high at night;
- there is little air flow;
- there are extended periods of hot weather;
- they are digesting fibrous, low quality feed; and/or
- when they are stressed (e.g. while being transported).

A heat-stressed cow can often be seen (and heard) breathing more than 60 breaths per minute. She will often eat less and spend more time seeking shade. A heat-stressed cow will drink more water and often be found crowding around the water trough, or seeking shade from her herd mates.

She might be restless or agitated and unwilling to lie down. If the heat continues and she is left unmanaged, she may collapse, suffer seizures and die.

To manage your cows in the heat, try delaying the afternoon milking until after 5pm and wet the dairy yard for an hour before the cows come up to cool the yard. Use water sprinklers on the cows while they stand in the yard; bigger water droplets are better so that the skin becomes wet – the drying process helps to cool the cows.

Good air movement is also essential to help maintain milk production, feed good quality pastures at night when it is cooler as the cows will be more willing to eat.

Follow these three steps for more management ideas:

1. Go to www.coolcows.com.au or google 'Cool Cows'
2. Click on the 'Actions Generator'
3. Answer each question by clicking in the relevant circle on the scale.

As you go through the questions, the Actions Generator will provide feedback on how you can better manage your cows in the heat. It will compile a printable list of improvements to management and/ or infrastructure you can make on your farm. Some of these are cheap and simple changes which can be made quickly.

Others might require a little more thinking, money and some infrastructure changes, such as installing a water trough at the dairy exit, or building a roof over the dairy holding yard. Use your final actions list to progressively improve heat stress management on your farm.

Western Victoria water supply discussions prompt action

Western Victorian industry representatives including United Dairyfarmers of Victoria (UDV), WestVic Dairy, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR), Southern Rural Water, Wannon Water, Corangamite Shire and The Victorian Farmers Federation have met to discuss the potential water shortages facing parts of the region in the coming months.

UDV President Adam Jenkins said "with the continued dry conditions we are seeing on farm water storages becoming a particular concern with farmers in certain areas."

The lack of surface water 'run-off' has led to a critical on-farm water shortage.

The UDV along with the WestVic dairy team and the South West Regional Extension Committee have instigated a stakeholder meeting to get a sense of the situation of water shortage in these areas.

The issues were raised via the Western Victoria Regional Extension Committee, which prompted the consolidated industry approach.

Mr Jenkins said "we want to map out a number of possible action plans to ensure we minimise the possible impact these conditions could have on South West dairy communities."

Regional Extension Committee Chairman, Andrew Duynhoven added, "We encourage all farmers to plan their water use carefully over the coming months and remember to look out for your neighbours as these dry conditions continue".

A survey is being conducted to gauge the capacity of stored water, support needed and potential future requirements to water stock levels over the summer and autumn period.

Currently, strategies are being devised amongst industry representatives, and in conjunction with survey results, will provide farmers with an action plan to conserve water, manage on-farm shortages and investigate the potential to source any available ground water. WestVic Dairy Extension Coordinator, Laurie Hickey is the regional contact for further enquiries. Laurie can be reached on 0439 833 484 or Laurie@westvicdairy.com.au



Profit Prophet Tips for February

Despite the heat and lack of rain it is time to start preparing for the pasture season ahead. The first thing to do is walk the farm and score each paddock according to the pasture density. An easy check is to place your hand flat out on the ground with your fingers spread, and then see if you can touch ryegrass plants all around.

If you can't, it is time to consider over-sowing that paddock. This will help determine which paddocks are the highest priorities for planting and will help determine your seed requirements so that you can ensure the seed is on-hand when you need it. This is a great year for crickets so make sure you control them to give the new pastures the best possible chance to get away. This may mean baiting them more than once but it will definitely be worth it.

Don't forget to do some soil tests over the next month or so too and use them to build a fertiliser plan that delivers what is required, rather than what you normally put on each year. You need pasture and you need it fast so it is important to put on what is most limiting production.

It is also important to monitor cow performance relative to feed costs and make some tough decisions regarding which cows to cull or dry off early. You might find that 10% fewer cows in the milking herd saves grain and purchased forage costs without necessarily affecting the milk vat all that much. If you sell some cows and use the money to pay off some short-term debtors it may also give you the breathing space you need for the next few months until the pasture arrives.

Regional extension update

Counting every drop. During recent weeks, regional extension has been focused on a shortage of stock water that some farmers are experiencing.

A meeting was called to determine the current situation regarding stock water supply on dairy farms in the Heytesbury Settlement, Irrewillipe, Kennedys Creek, Princetown, Port Campbell and Scotts Creek region and the immediate area serviced from the Otway basin. Stream, river and ground water slowed to a trickle with the Curdies River flowing less than 1 mega litre per day. The Carlisle River has almost completely stopped and there is very little storage remaining in farm dams.

Many agencies are involved in investigating the on-farm situation. Survey work is currently being conducted and distributed to a number of farms that potentially affected. The information will be used to develop an action plan to assist farms where possible.

Currently research is being conducted on the capacity to supply water from existing water sources, with consideration of how to minimise impacts on existing customers. Including alternative sources of supply, raw water basins, bores, and unused infrastructure.

Discussion Group Support: Planning days have been conducted with the ANZAC and Port Campbell groups.

The Port Campbell Group marks the 50th year of operation with a very successful dinner on January 3. Fifty years in operation is an amazing achievement for one group and there will be plenty of stories shared of good times past.

The Feed Based Challenge continues to roll along with the groups seeing significant upward trends regarding home grown feed and milk solids improvement. The financial scrutiny continues as these groups are becoming more familiar with the functions of DairyBase and are able to make simple industry comparisons of their enterprises.

Business Focus Farms: The Focus Farm Fields day are currently being planned, with insight into the developments being undertaken on these farms.

The Timboon Focus Farm Field Day will be held on March 9, with further details available from the WestVic Dairy Office. Everyone is invited to attend these days and become part of the activities. The production and feed costs of the Focus Farms are detailed in this issue.

Farewell to Rob Swinton

It's with much sadness that we farewell Rob Swinton from the WestVic Dairy Team.

Rob came to WestVic in August with a strong background in Agribusiness. He has used his skills to develop and grow the WestVic Dairy Young Dairy Networks, as well as facilitate the Profitable Feeding Systems steering groups to deliver strong feed based outcomes.

We would like to formally wish Rob all the best in his new endeavours, and thank him for his contribution to the industry.



DairyBase UPDATE To sign up for DairyBase head to dairybase.com.au, or to commence registration or for support contact dairybasesupport@dairyaustralia.com.au

DairyBase registrations at 1 January 2015 in the WestVic Dairy region – 188



Focus Farm Data

WestVic Dairy Business



Heathmere	
Date	25 January 2016
Milking Area (ha)	305
Production	
Cow Numbers	450
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.26
Litres/cow/day	15.1
Fat%	4.86
Protein%	3.46
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 43.9c/kgDM (\$395/t)	4.5
Silage Cereal/Pasture Mix	10
Costing 12c/kgDM (\$120/t)	
Pasture/Lucerne (kgDM) approx.	0
Area in rotation (ha)	291
Rotation Length (days)	0
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	Semi-sacrifice
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
Jan Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.27
Income/cow	\$6.64
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$3.18
IOSFC/cow	\$3.46
IOSFC/ha	\$5.11

Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year

The herd is getting fed silage ad lib on sacrifice paddocks with no grass or lucerne in the diet now. There has been a big hatching of crickets in the last week and these will be baited. 24 R1 heifers have been sold to export leaving 110 as replacements and 104 R2 heifers. The irrigation pump broke down and the maize is wilting but will recover with water in the coming week with a new pump getting installed now. The dryland maize on the swamp is still looking good. Soil testing has been done and the autumn blend planned. P and K levels were reasonable but S a little low. No lime required this year.

Timboon	
Date	18 January 2016
Milking Area (ha)	303
Production	
Cow Numbers	450
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	2.05
Litres/cow/day	26.1
Fat%	4.40
Protein%	3.45
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Grain 40.9c/kgDM	9.0
Pasture silage (approx. 0.15c/kgDM)	5.0
Pasture(kg DM appx)	1.0
Cereal Hay (23.5 cents/kg as fed)	4.0
Turnips (15 cents per kg DM)	3.0
Area in rotation (ha)	288
Rotation Length (days)	35
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	8.2
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
Jan Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.14
Income/cow	\$10.54
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$6.10
IOSFC/cow	\$4.44
IOSFC/ha	\$6.59

Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year

Milk price is current announced total package and inclusive of productivity and quality.

About 200 fresh cows in now. Some incidence of milk fever in first 150 calved. Corrective actions to transition management have been taken. Production level increasing daily. This means an accurate IOSFC is difficult to calculate. Just on 100 calves in the shed now with minimal problems. Work is about to commence on a new large dam on the western side of the farm to ensure adequate water supply in the future.

Barongarook West	
Date	9 January 2016
Milking Area (ha)	249
Production	
Cow Numbers	351
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.69
Litres/cow/day	21.5
Fat%	4.47
Protein%	3.35
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 39.8c/kgDM (\$362/t as fed)	6.3
Silage 8.4cents kgDM	7.0
Oaten hay 27.3c/kgDM	2.4
Pasture (kgDM) approx.	0.5
Rape 12.2c/kgDM	3.0
Area in rotation (ha)	219
Rotation Length (days)	49
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	4.5
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
Jan Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$4.90
Income/cow	\$8.28
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$4.08
IOSFC/cow	\$4.20
IOSFC/ha	\$5.88

Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year

Milk price is current announced total package and inclusive of productivity and quality.

Production YTD is 12% ahead of last year (12.215kgMS) and 312kgMS behind budget. Little grass present. Twenty days of rape crop left. Crops have averaged approximately 310DM/ha yield. Silage costs include depreciation and labour. 27 cows dried off so far with another 67 due to be dried off in the next week. Fifty six autumn calving heifers back from agistment on 27 December. Aiming to calve 270 cows this Autumn. 18ha of slotted pipe and mole drainage planned for February.

DemoDAIRY Terang	
Date	1 January 2016
Milking Area (ha)	140
Production	
Cow Numbers	290
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.27
Litres/cow/day	16.7
Fat%	4.21
Protein%	3.36
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 37c/kgDM	5.2
Pasture	3.5
Silage 0.14c/kgDM	6.8
Pasture damand kgDM	5.6
Rotation length (days)	40
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	3.5
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
Jan Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.40
Income/cow	\$6.85
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$3.01
IOSFC/cow	\$3.83
IOSFC/ha	\$5.72

Silage being offered at 6 bales per day, mostly on the feed pad. The grazing rotation has been extended by using sacrifice paddocks, aiming to reach a 40 to 45 day rotation over summer and autumn. Autumn 2016 calves will be fed on farm with 3 to 4 kg DM of silage and 1.5 kg DM of pellets



What's on Feb 2015

FEBRUARY 4,11,18,25

EVENT Supervise Work Routines and Staff Performance (from AHC40110 Certificate IV in Agriculture)
TIME 10am – 3pm
WHERE Terang
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437 or 0407 552 011

FEBRUARY 10, 17, 24

EVENT Farm Chemical Users Course (Short Course) SAFARMCHEM1
TIME 10am – 3pm
WHERE Colac
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437 or 0407 552 011

FEBRUARY 10, 11, 12

EVENT Sungold Field Days WestVic Dairy - Site D3
TIME 9am-4pm daily
WHERE Allansford
CONTACT (03) 5557 1000

FEBRUARY 17

EVENT Summer/Autumn Q&A Session
WHERE Allansford Football Netball Club Rooms, Ziegler Parade, Allansford.
TIME 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start until 9.30pm (including BBQ dinner)
RSVP Monday 15th February to Amanda on (03) 5557 1000

FEBRUARY 17, 24

EVENT Cups on Cups off (Short Course) SACOCO
TIME 10am – 2pm
WHERE Simpson
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437 or 0407 552 011

FEBRUARY 18

EVENT Summer/Autumn Field days
WHERE:

- SIMPSON
- HAWKESDALE
- BOORCAN

TIME 11am—2pm
RSVP Monday 15th February to Amanda on (03) 5557 1000

FEBRUARY 22, 29

EVENT Provide First Aid (SCHLTAID003)
TIME 9am – 3pm
WHERE Terang
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437 or 0407 552 011

MARCH 7, 8

EVENT Effective use of compost and organic fertilizers on farm
TIME 11am-2pm
WHERE - Cobden, Monday 7th March
Koroit, Tuesday 8th March
CONTACT Graeme Ward 0428 573 280

MARCH 9

EVENT Timboon Focus Farm Field Day
TIME 11.00am—2.30pm
WHERE: Whitehead Dairy 531 Boundary Road Timboon
CONTACT: for more information contact Laurie Hickey on 0439 833 484

Contact Us

Editor: Verity Davis
WestVic Dairy
214 Manifold Street
Camperdown VIC 3260
(03) 5557 1000
media@westvicdairy.com.au

Visit us on the web at
www.westvicdairy.com.au



Like us on Facebook

Lets be friends and stay in touch. Head to Facebook and 'like us' to be kept in the loop with real time information.
www.facebook.com/Westvicdairy



Prefer to receive Dairy News via your Inbox?

To register to receive this electronically visit:

<http://eepurl.com/bpoWqP>

Simply register your email and you will automatically receive DairyNews via your inbox. Or - email

media@westvicdairy.com.au to be added to the list.

Feeding Pastures for Profit Expressions of Interest

WestVic Dairy are seeking expressions of interest for participants in a 'Feeding Pastures for Profit' course.

Feeding Pastures for Profit (FPFP) program is aimed at helping farmers to gain the skills and confidence to make decisions regarding how much feed is needed to maximise profit.

The course would most likely start early April - mid April depending on the level of interest.

To indicate interest in participation please contact Amanda on Amanda@westvicdairy.com.au or phone the office on (03) 5557 1000.

For more information on this course visit: <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/dairy/pastures-management/feeding-pastures-for-profit>