



Your Levy at Work

WESTVIC DAIRY NEWS

WestVic Dairy Newsletter

April 2017

2017 Great South West Dairy Awards - celebrating after a tough year

After a tough year, the 2017 Great South West Dairy Awards are once again an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the quality and resilience of the regional dairy industry.

The nominations for the awards are now finalized with an impressive number of south west farmers, employees and service providers in line for well-deserved commendation.

The Awards are an annual event and are now in their 12th year, building in size and prestige over time.

There are eight major categories which include; Farm Business Manager, Employer, Employee and Sharefarmer of the Year, Young Farm Leader, Natural Resource Management and Sustainability, The Honour Board and Farm Photo of the Year.

Nominees progress through a shortlisting process and are then passed on to the judging panel for consideration. Project coordinator Liza Fahey said that the high number of nominations highlights the quality and spirit of south west Victorian dairy farmers.

"It has been a tough year for most farmers, but to receive so many nominations just goes to show that there is a lot of appreciation for the good work within the industry" she said.

"The awards are a chance to get together and celebrate the great work dairy farmers do every day of the year, during the good times and the tough times.

"There is a lot of pride in the industry and we want to celebrate that."

The Great South West Dairy Awards Gala Evening will be held on Thursday the 17th May at Deakin University Warrnambool. Tickets are now on sale now through WestVic Dairy.

For more information call 5557 1000 or email awards@westvicdairy.com.au.

"In this issue"

- Calf disbudding
- Dairying - what's the point
- Employment Essentials
- Tell us what you think
- Meet Heidi the new Regional Extension Officer

WestVic Dairy Directors

- Simone Renyard - Chairperson
- Kirsti Keightley - Vice Chairperson
- Tom Newton - Treasurer
- Gemma Chuck - Independent
- Tania Luckin - Farmer Rep
- Michael Hawker - Farmer Rep
- Mark Billing - Farmer Rep



2016 Gala night was a great success and we are looking forward to the upcoming 2017 Gala Event.

Disbudding

Dr Blair Summerville, Regional Extension Officer at WestVic Dairy

Over the last twelve months there has been many changes in the conventional way of disbudding young calves in the first few months of life. The use of hot iron cautery is still the main method, however there are a number of new approaches, including the use of sedation and local anaesthetics with or without the addition of pain killers.

Generally, instead of calves being restrained in a cradle/head bail and the hot iron used on them, each calf is injected with an anaesthetic into their rump while the calves are around a feeder. This drug takes about 5-10 minutes to act and the calves will all sit down and have a snooze for up to 1 hour depending on the dose. The hair around the horn buds is then clipped and 3-5mL of a local anaesthetic is applied to each horn bud. In addition to this a pain killer may be given to the calf either orally or as an injection. The local anaesthetic normally takes around five minutes to act, after which the calf is dehorned with the hot iron in the conventional way.

Why has this all come about and what are the reasons why some farmers are adopting these variations as common practise for dehorning their calves?

In recent times there has been a lot of research into the benefits of adding sedatives, local anaesthetics and pain relief for calves. Results indicate that dehorning calves in this manner leads to improved welfare and subsequent health and production benefits. The studies have looked at comparing the stress response or pain felt by calves being dehorned with three different methods:

- Without sedation, local anaesthetic or pain killers
- With sedation only
- With sedation and local anaesthetic
- With sedation, local anaesthetic and pain killers

These responses were measured through observing both behavioural changes and the stress hormone cortisol in their blood before and in the hours following dehorning, up to 24hrs in some cases.





Your Levy at Work

All studies have shown that the best combination for reducing cortisol levels after dehorning and therefore the calves' pain response is the full combination of sedation, local anaesthetic and pain relief. Good responses were also seen by using sedation alone and sedation with local anaesthetic, but the duration of pain relief and stress started to diminish once these agents began to wear off in the 2-3hrs after the procedure was performed. From an animal welfare point of view it would seem that the full combination of sedation, local anaesthetic and pain relief is the best way to go.

All studies have shown improved benefits from an animal welfare point of view, but are there any health benefits from adopting these different disbudding protocols? Some of the research has also looked at potential benefits in terms of feed intake and weight gains of using these new methods. Most of these have demonstrated clear advantages as indicated from the results below.

Three to six week old calves, 0-15 days after disbudding without sedation or local anaesthetic or pain relief had the lowest growth rates at 0.55kg/day. If given pain relief without sedation or local anaesthetic their growth rates were better at 0.65kg/day. If sedated and given local anaesthetic there appeared to be no difference in growth rates between calves when given and not given pain relief i.e. 0.63kg/day and 0.64kg/day (see table).

Growth rates were continued to be monitored 16-30 days after disbudding in these calves. There was no significant effect of administering pain relief on growth rate, but the sedated and local anaesthetic calves grew faster (0.76 kg/day) than the non-sedated, non-local anaesthetic calves (0.66kg/day).

Overall, for the first 30 days after disbudding, if pain relief was not used, calves that were sedated and had local anaesthetic grew faster than calves that were not sedated and received no local anaesthetic. However if pain relief was used at disbudding there was no difference in growth rate between calves that received sedation and local anaesthetic vs calves that received neither sedation nor local anaesthetic. Mean cumulative milk consumption for the 11 days after disbudding was greater for calves disbudded under sedation and local anaesthetic, but there was no effect when they received pain relief treatment.

These findings are important as on the back of this some milk factories are now considering that pain control for disbudding of calves (and dehorning of cattle in general) must become a minimum industry standard. It is important to know that the industry standards and guidelines currently being worked into legislation do not mandate pain relief for animals under 6 months of age. It is likely that as part of the factories' own internal welfare quality assurance programs, they will continue to work with all farmers to improve standards in regards to disbudding practice.

For more information on using these methods to disbud your calves contact your local vet clinic as most clinics in the local area have adopted and are using these practises on numerous farms in the area.

Method used	Weight gain 0 - 15 days after disbudding
No sedation, anaesthetic or pain relief	0.55kg/day
Pain relief only	0.65kg/day
Sedation with local anaesthetic only	0.65kg/day
Sedation with local anaesthetic and pain relief	0.63kg/day

References

1. Heinrich , T. F. Duffield ,1 K. D. Lissemore , and S. T. Millman,

The effect of meloxicam on behavior and pain sensitivity of dairy calves following cautery dehorning with a local anesthetic,

J. Dairy Sci. 93 :2450–2457, American Dairy Science Association®, 2010

2. Kevin J. Stafford*, David J. Mellor,

Addressing the pain associated with disbudding and dehorning in cattle,

Applied Animal Behaviour Science, www.elsevier.com/locate/applanim

Employment Essentials

The Employment Essentials Workshop, which was held on Thursday 16th March at Brendan Rea's farm near Allansford, demonstrated the importance of effective communication between employers and employees.

Brendan was the 2016 Great South West Dairy Awards Employer of the Year winner and the day was part of a series of field days following the winners on last year's Great South West Dairy Awards.

Funded by the Gardiner Dairy Foundation, the field days aim to give farmers an insight into successful farming businesses in the region and hear from other farmers about their experiences. The day at Rea's kicked off with Daryl Poole of RMCG Consultants and Brendan Rea running through the setup of the Rea farm.

Attendees heard how the farm had grown from a 100 cow farm back in the 70's consisting of 480 acres, one fence and one water trough, to the 800 cow enterprise it is today.

Over the last 30 years, the farm has undergone many changes, with one significant change being the need to bring employees into the business. A focus of the discussion was how the positive culture within the employees had been built, and how this mindset was integral to the efficiency of the business.

Some of the take home messages of the day included;

- Know your employees and what they enjoy doing and bear this in mind when structuring their role within the business
- Provide employees with areas of responsibility that build 'ownership'
- Give employees the chance to upskill and grow within the business. Utilise accredited training as much as possible
- Communication is key- have regular formal and informal conversations and involve employees in business decisions where possible
- Performance reviews are a good tool to utilise
- Safety has to be everyone's responsibility.

One of the things that came with employing staff for the Rea's, was a need to address farm safety. Brendan has policies and procedures in place to address several key safety concerns, which were open to view for the participants. He noted that most of the policies he had in place and procedures he had implemented were from the People in Dairy website.

Another part of the day was Elsi Neave, winner of the 2015 Great South West Dairy Award Employee of the Year, sharing her experiences in the dairy industry. Matthew Morrow from Murray Goulburn was on the judging panel for the award and explained to the group why Elsi was selected for the prize.

The day closed with an interview with one of Brendan Rea's employees, Barry Williams, who reinforced the importance of building a positive relationship within the farm team.

The Employee of the Year award has been sponsored by Murray Goulburn for three years and we would like to express our thanks for their ongoing support.



WestVic Dairy Business	
Simpson	
Date	17th February 2017
Milking Area (ha)	140
Production	
Cow Numbers	211
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.46
Litres/cow/day	17.5
Fat%	4.55
Protein %	3.81
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Profeed at 51.2c/kgDM (\$461/t)	2
Wheat at 21c/kgDM (\$190/t)	6
Turnips at 9.9c/kgDM consumed	6.2
Silage at 10.6 c/kgDM #	5.2
Pasture	1
Area in rotation (ha)	35
Rotation Length (days)	##
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	1.7
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
March Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.41
Income/cow	\$7.89
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$3.32
IOSFC/cow	\$4.57
IOSFC/ha	\$6.88
# Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from 10c - 20c per kg DM during the year	
## Semi- Containment, grazing paddocks as required for autumn clean-up	
Comments	
Herd currently transitioning from Split to Autumn Calving and includes 67 spring calves, 71 carry overs and 64 to dry off over next three weeks. 30 heifers currently calved; cows due to start calving April 5th and introduced to lead feed this week. Herd currently cleaning up paddocks with silage in the evening in preparation for autumn break with limited pasture availability, grazing turnips during day. Broadleaf weed control has commenced prior to oversowing paddocks within the next 2 weeks. Pastures have survived summer well which has reduced requirement for regrassing. Continue to monitor cricket levels and may require control over the coming weeks	



Your Levy at Work

Dairy Australia and WestVic Dairy encourage farmer feedback

Last month Dairy Australia's managing director Ian Halliday visited the south west Victorian region, together with farmer directors Jeff Odgers and James Mann, as well as Group Manager Chris Murphy.

The visit was a chance for farmers to meet with some of Dairy Australia's leading staff to provide feedback about regional issues and concerns and receive an update on Dairy Australia initiatives.

The Dairy Australia staff visited several farms, attended the Employment Essentials field day, a service provider breakfast and a Farmer Forum on 17th March in order to meet with as many farmers as possible.

WestVic Dairy's Regional Manager Lindsay Ferguson said the visit was a great opportunity for farmers to get involved in how their levy is spent. "Dairy Australia and WestVic Dairy are keen to hear from farmers about what information they need to run their farm business as efficiently as possible," he said.

"There are always circumstances in the industry that are out of our control, however, we want to make sure our priorities align with those of farmers in the region. "We want to make sure our communication is two way and I encourage farmers to contact us if they have any concerns or suggestions."



Meet our new Regional Extension Officer - Young Dairy Network: Heidi Van Es.

"I remember from a young age Dad holding my hand while walking home from the dairy on cold winter nights and Mum training me on how to feed calves from a bucket. These memories are where my passion for the dairy industry started. Since then I have worked with many dairy farmers around the south west and held positions with NCDE, VFF, the Midfield Group and most recently HICO. My passion, education and working history have always been associated with training the youth in the dairy industry and that is one of the reasons why I am "udderly" excited to be looking after the WestVic Dairy Young Dairy Network.

Feel free to get in touch with me either via email (heidi@westvicdairy.com.au) or via phone on 0459 227 337



Tell us what you think!

At WestVic Dairy we are always eager to hear what our farmers need and how they would like us to invest their dairy levy locally. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact us on

Phone 5557 1000

Email: Amanda@westvicdairy.com.au

Mail: PO BOX 174, Camperdown, VIC 3260

In Person: 214 Manifold Street, Camperdown VIC 3260



Your Levy at Work



Following a very successful first year of the Discover Dairy Student Pen Pal Program, the program will be running again in Term 3 this year, and is now taking class registrations!

Participation in the Discover Dairy Student Pen Pal Program is easy. If you are from an urban or regional primary school classroom in Australia, simply register your interest via the form at the bottom of the page and we'll set you up with a 'sister class' in Australia!

The Student Pen Pal program will run in Term 3 for 2017, so stay tuned for updates and information in the coming months.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Discover Dairy Student Pen Pal Program is an initiative of Dairy Australia that connects classrooms from different parts of country and invites students to think beyond their learning and talk about them with others.

Using the Discover Dairy resources, the Student Pen Pal program encourages students to go on a dairy discovery beyond the traditional classroom walls, connecting rural and urban schools together to learn first-hand how life can differ between regions, suburbs and states, while developing their writing skills, reflecting on school life and what they've learnt from the Discover Dairy program.

REGISTER FOR 2017 TODAY

Participation is easy and free. Register your interest via the website (<http://www.dairy.edu.au/discoverdairy/pen-pal-program>) and you will be contacted in Term 2, to partner you up with your sister class.



Great South West Dairy Awards

The **2017 Great South West Dairy Awards** recognise the achievements of those contributing to this \$3+ billion industry across Western Victoria. Join us for the gala presentation dinner at Deakin University Warrnambool on 17th May to celebrate the regional dairy industry.

Book your tickets NOW

For more information please contact:

Phone: (03) 5557 1000
Email: awards@westvicdairy.com.au
Website: www.westvicdairy.com.au

Supported by: WestVic Dairy; Dairy Australia; Geoffrey Gardiner Dairy Foundation; Murray Goulburn Co-operative Ltd; Warrnambool Cheese and Butter; Fonterra; WestVic Staffing Solutions; Ace Radio; Greencon Australia Pty Ltd; Cowbank; Southern Rural Water; National Centre for Dairy Education; Australian Consolidated Milk; Rural Finance



DAIRYING - WHAT'S THE POINT

By John Mulvany, OMJ Agricultural Consulting

What's the current mood in the dairying community? From recent talks it seems the "dairying motivation" rating is about 2 out of 10. Farmers generally are feeling less than enthusiastic, even pessimistic about their chosen career. That's also true for some of the people who support dairy businesses.

In this environment it's easy to slip into the attitude of "What's the point? Is there any future in dairying?"

Time for a reality check. It's not great now for three very good reasons: milk price, confidence with and trust in milk processors plus it has been incredibly demanding physically since October 2015(yes 2015!) when some of you started feeding silage.

Pastures in most areas did not start growing until June 2016 and then it was a wet tough winter (especially on grey soil farms); even though the spring was extended it was a long and expensive spring (due to the amount of fodder conserved). At the time of writing this article there has been some rain which may be the break but that has increased the pressure to get all the pasture renovation done with the underlying associated worries about black beetle and cockchafers. The mental and physical pressure has been severe. Add in talk about dropping prices at global dairy auctions, protectionist policies and a possible El Nino and it's easy to get despondent.

But this situation is not really new and doesn't really explain the current "mood". Your price will be cyclical and driven by world price, the seasons will always vary - that has not changed. What has changed are the following:

- The quality and availability of information. Now we can check the global dairy trade movement daily and stress over the fluctuations. This has always occurred but we were not as aware and only heard about large movements. For what it's worth, if the trading price reported in mid-March was converted to a Victorian farm gate price it would be about \$6.00-\$6.30, but as you know it depends on the skill and efficiency of your processor. It is very important to understand that the price a processor receives is NOT necessarily what the GDT indicates but the signs are positive.

Social media is another "source of information and communication" that we did not have 15 years ago. At times it can be almost a "frenzy" of inaccurate negative rants about the dairy industry which show a lack of understanding about various issues such as milk price. It can erode confidence. This means that everyone definitely needs to "filter" information even more than before. Ask yourself, "Is the information actually coming from someone whose opinion and knowledge you respect?"

- The trust and confidence in several milk processors has been shattered and it will take time to re-build. Even in 2016/2017 we have seen two major Gippsland processors introduce growth bonuses plus January to June milk price increases, both of which were not announced at the start of the season. These changes to milk price structure after a season has started are not equitable and do not take into account the inability of some farmers to respond. It would appear that some processors still do not understand that what they perceive as a small change can undermine the confidence built up over years. It indicates both a lack of understanding and respect.

environment. Processors are understandably more wary about making milk price predictions; we have seen the impact of overzealous predictions and subsequent price drops.

- In regard to seasonal conditions there are some farms in lower rainfall areas that seem to be having a greater number of tough years. That is putting pressure on farm profit, viability and, importantly, people.

So, these extra factors mean that the current black mood amongst farmers is to some extent justifiable, but, to keep things in perspective it's interesting to note a comment from one bank: "... The mood and confidence is not reflected in our clients' current financial position - it's tight but the mood and level of confidence is definitely worse than the financial position suggests".

It has been and draining and intense period, particularly the period since April 2016. By the end of the financial year, some farms in Gippsland will have both positive cash and profit, and on other farms both will be negative - for a whole range of reasons.

But, for a skilled dairy farmer who manages to achieve a profit more often than not (yes there are a considerable number that do) the fundamentals of dairying are still sound. They are prepared for the usual fluctuating milk prices and variable seasons. They know some milk processors will continue to try and get them to produce milk when they want them to rather than when they should, and will not be tempted to change systems. They are wary of those processors promising the world but remain confident that there is money to be made in dairying. They will sensibly "file away" predictions of El Nino but the actions they take will just be normal common sense management when and if it occurs.

Possibly those skilled farmers are also spending less time checking their phones for the latest information and spending even less time on social media texting and listening to negative, confidence sapping, uninformed rants.

To end on a positive note, in late March OMJ Agricultural Consulting contacted six of the major exporting milk processors in Victoria and asked: "Can you provide a GUIDE to the closing price in 2016/2017, opening 2017/2018, and closing 2017/2018 for your typical supply pattern?"

Remembering that they talk in terms of an average milk price, not necessarily yours, all indicated \$4.85 - \$5.20/kg MS finishing 2016/2017.

One could not provide a guide for opening 2017/2018 and the other five indicated \$5.00-\$5.40 opening, were hesitant about closing but perhaps another \$0.40 per kilogram.

We know that milk price varies by \$0.40 and \$0.80 between farms depending upon which processor you supply, and the use of an average price is dangerous. However, based on this guide information next season there is likely to be a 5 year average milk price - not fantastic but certainly better than \$4.50 which is where some of you started last season. So, current predictions are a move up in your individual price by 10% - a bit of positive news to focus on.



What's on in April/May

APRIL 12th

EVENT: Advances in calf disbudding and management

WHERE: Terang **TIME:** 11am - 2pm

APRIL 20th

EVENT: Talking Farm Business Management with John Mulvany

WHERE: Heywood **TIME:** 10.30am-2.30pm

APRIL 20th and 27th

EVENT: Cups on Cups off

WHERE: Colac

TIME: Day 1 9.30am - 2.30pm
Day 2 9.30am - 1.30pm

APRIL 24th and May 1st

EVENT: Cups on Cups off

WHERE: Terang

TIME: Day 1 9.30am - 2.30pm
Day 2 9.30am - 1.30pm

APRIL 24th and May 11th

EVENT: Getting into farm data

WHERE: Warrnambool **TIME:** 10am - 3pm

APRIL 26th and May 10th

EVENT: Getting into farm data

WHERE: Cobden **TIME:** 10am to 3pm

APRIL 26th

EVENT: Lameness and Foot Trimming

WHERE: Kirkstall **TIME:** 11am - 2pm

MAY 3rd

EVENT: Advances in calf disbudding and management

WHERE: Colac **TIME:** 11am - 2pm

MAY 10th

EVENT: Downer cows

WHERE: Kirkstall **TIME:** 11am - 2pm

MAY 10th

EVENT: Glenelg Bull Night

WHERE: Macarthur **TIME:** 7.30pm

MAY 17th

EVENT: Great South West Dairy Awards

WHERE: Warrnambool **TIME:** from 6pm

MAY 24th, 31st and JUNE 6th

EVENT: Getting into Farm Business Management

WHERE: Warrnambool **TIME:** 10am - 3pm

MAY 25th, 30th and JUNE 14th

EVENT: Getting into Farm Business Management

WHERE: Cobden **TIME:** 10am - 3pm

Contact Us

Editor: Alexandra Lenehan
media@westvicdairy.com.au

WestVic Dairy

241 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

WestVic Dairy Staff Contacts

Regional Manager:

Lindsay Ferguson
0418 545 580

Extension Officers:

Laurie Hickey
0439 833 484

Peter Gaffy
0438 345 712

Blair Summerville
0438 336 500

Michelle Muir
0428 675 477

Heidi Van Es
0459 227 337

For all events please RSVP to Amanda at
WestVic Dairy 55571000 or email amanda@westvicdairy.com.au



Making smarter fertiliser decisions with Fert\$mart

by Graeme Ward, Land Water and Carbon Consultant



What is Fert\$mart?

Fert\$mart is the Australian dairy industry's national nutrient management framework. It was developed to improve the efficiency and profitability of fertiliser use on Australian dairy farms. Fert\$mart provides tools to help dairy farmers and advisors to get the best results from fertiliser. These resources are available on the Fert\$mart website: fertsmart.dairyingfortomorrow.com.au (or simply Google 'Fert\$mart').

Why do I need Fert\$mart?

We still see quite a lot of blanket applications on dairy farms, where fertiliser use is not tailored to the specific areas on the farm. This is not only a potential waste of money, but can have negative environmental impacts. Driven by broader dairy industry, Fert\$mart was developed to improve the efficiency of fertiliser use and hence farm profitability. Before Fert\$mart there were no national fertiliser management guidelines for the Australian dairy industry. There was, and still is, a clear message from the dairy industry that the guidelines are important to the industry's future. Not only are they needed to support improved fertiliser use efficiency and farm profitability, but there is also an increasing need for factories to demonstrate that they are sourcing milk from environmentally sustainable farms; Fert\$mart gives the industry a framework to provide assurance around sustainable nutrient use.

When will it available to farmers?

Fert\$mart was launched in Western Victoria at the start of this year. We have completed a course for advisors in January and February to train group of consultants in the Fert\$mart program. There will be several farmer courses offered later this year in partnership with the Catchment Management Authorities, which will provide farmers with a better understanding of soils and fertilisers, as well as help develop fertiliser plans.

What are the benefits for dairy farmers?

Farmers will benefit from more efficient use of fertilisers on-farm. Firstly, they will save money by use fertilisers more economically. Secondly there will be less nutrient loss, which will limit the environmental impact of fertiliser use. There is a strong focus within the industry on increasing homegrown feed and optimising fertiliser management is a good way to produce more feed at no extra cost. The key is to using the Right Source of fertiliser, at the Right Rate, in the Right Place and at the Right Time (the 4Rs). A Fert\$mart Plan helps farmers to get these things right through strategic and targeted planning.

Dairy Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Dairy Kindergarten Fee Subsidy will provide access to free or low cost kindergarten, up to 15 hours per week, in the year before school for eligible dairy farming families.

Eligible families that have already paid kindergarten fees for 2016 can seek reimbursement or offset, where appropriate from their local kindergarten service for some or all of their fees.

Contact your local kindergarten or contact kindergarten.funding@edumail.vic.gov.au

For more information about available grants, loans and financial support, please visit www.dairyfarmercentral.com.au

You have to measure it to be able to manage it

Laurie Hickey, Regional Extension Officer at WestVic Dairy

Why analyse your business?

Dairy businesses operate in a volatile and complex environment. Running a farm is rarely plain sailing and we know each year will be different. Sound farm business decisions rely on evaluating a wide range of financial and physical information to understand all the facts and the impacts that different seasons and decisions have on your business. Business analysis usually starts with a review of past performance, looking back at what happened last year. From there you can determine the strengths and weaknesses of the business and the opportunities and threats for the year ahead. You can then use this information to plan what you need to do to meet the challenges and work towards achieving your business and personal goals.

What is DairyBase?

DairyBase is a web-based tool supporting dairy farmers and their advisors to monitor farm business performance. You can use DairyBase to take your farm's physical and financial data and produce reports detailing the physical, cash, profit, and wealth position of the business.

DairyBase helps you to:

- compare your own farm business over time;
- identify opportunities to increase profit and manage risk;
- compare your farm to others, according to farm size, region and production system.
- see dairybase.com.au to access the tool.

Farm Business Skill Development workshops

WestVic Dairy is conducting workshops where you can be guided through the fundamentals of Farm Business Management (FBM) (see dates in the box). Dairy Australia has developed some key resources providing useful information and tools to analyse your farm business and DairyBase reports.

These include:

- Farm Business Management factsheets
- Cashflow Budget Sheet
- Standard Chart of Accounts.

These can be picked up at the WestVic Dairy offices or downloaded from <http://www.dairyaustralia.com.au/Business-and-financials.aspx>.

Please contact WestVic Dairy on 5557 1000 or email laurie@westvicdairy.com.au for more information about our Farm Business Management resources.

Workshop Dates - Getting into farm data

Warrnambool	Monday April 24 th - Day 1	Cobden	Wednesday April 26 th - Day 1
	Thursday May 11 th - Day 2		Wednesday May 10 th - Day 2

Workshop Dates - Getting into Farm Business Management

Warrnambool	Wednesday May 24 th - Day 1	Cobden	Thursday May 25 th - Day 1
	Wednesday May 31 st - Day 2		Tuesday May 30 th - Day 2
	Tuesday June 6 th - Day 3		Wednesday June 14 th - Day 3

2017 public holiday - employment

With Easter fast approaching, employers need to be aware that the Easter public holidays vary from state to state:

- Good Friday and Easter Monday are public holidays in all states and territories
- Easter Saturday is a public holiday in all states except WA and Tasmania
- Easter Sunday is a public holiday in NSW, Victoria, ACT and Queensland only

For detailed information about public holidays in your state, visit the Fair Work Ombudsman

Entitlements for working on a public holiday

If your business operates on a public holiday, employees in the dairy industry who are covered by the Pastoral Award 2010 must be paid penalty rates at the rate of double time if they work on that day. Non award employees (managers) are not entitled to penalty rates for work on public holidays. Read more about public holiday pay rates (inc. casual rates)

Entitlements for not working on a public holiday

The National Employment Standards provide for employees who do not attend work on public holidays to receive the base rate of pay they would have received for ordinary hours of work as follows:

- Full-time employees are entitled to a paid day off for public holidays
- Part-time employees are entitled to be paid for the hours they would normally work on public holidays. If they do not normally work on the day of the public holiday they are not entitled to pay
- Casual employees are not entitled to pay for public holidays unless they are rostered for work on that day

Can I require my employees to work on a public holiday?

You can request an employee to work on a public holiday, as long as the request is 'reasonable'. An employee can refuse your request if the request is not reasonable or if the refusal is reasonable. To decide whether a request or refusal is 'reasonable', you need to consider a number of things including:

- the nature of the business and its operational requirements
- the employee's personal circumstances, including family responsibilities
- the employee's expectations about a requirement to work on the public holiday
- whether the employee is entitled to penalty rates or other compensation for working on the public holiday
- employee status (whether they're full-time, part-time, casual or work shift work)
- the amount of notice you gave them when asking them to work on the public holiday
- the amount of notice given by the employee if they do not want to work on the public holiday
- any other relevant matter



Rural Financial Counselling Service Victoria -
Wimmera South West Inc.



Your Levy at Work

Fodder Reserve

The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides free and confidential financial counselling to a range of rural clients, including dairy farmers, who are suffering financial hardship. Rural financial counsellors can:

- help identify your financial and business options
- help negotiate with your lenders
- help you develop an action plan
- help support you to access the Farm Household Allowance (FHA)
- give you information about government and other assistance schemes
- refer you to accountants, agricultural advisers and educational services
- refer you to Department of Human Services and to professionals for succession planning, family mediation and personal, emotional and social counselling.

Vince Thorne, Rural Financial Counsellor with Wimmera South West Rural Financial Counselling Service has some tips about fodder reserves this autumn

“After one of the better spring growth periods the western Victorian district has experienced, it is now time to consider the fodder requirements for autumn and winter. The extra fodder many farmers conserved earlier is starting to look like it may not be enough to get through a dry autumn. Cash flow, for many, has been lower than desired, while fodder conservation costs have been higher. Now is the time to calculate how much, if any, extra hay is required. At the moment there is significant hay reserves stored in the open which can be purchased at a lower price than if you wait until winter time. Much of the hay stacked in the paddock will be inaccessible in the winter so the hay seller is generally willing to sell at a lower price to clear the paddocks. Most qualities of hay are available from hay/straw suitable for dry cows through to high quality hay which could be included in the milker’s diet. The hay is mostly available in big squares that range between 400 to 700kg in weight. Big squares generally allow a truck to carry maximum weight so cartage is more cost effective. The drawback is you need a way to feed them out. Generally, farmer to farmer sales require payment at delivery.”

If you need help with a fodder budget or a financial budget, please contact Vince Thorne on be on 0429406761.

DAIRY FARMER CENTRAL

The central source of information in Victoria for programs, initiatives and events available for dairy farmers
and their communities.

www.dairyfarmercentral.com.au

Proudly supported by: Victorian Farmer Federation - UVF, Dairy Australia, Victoria State Government, Gardiner Foundation, Australian Dairy Farmers, Australian Dairy Products Federation Inc. and Monash University.