

WESTVIC DAIRYNEWS

WestVic Dairy Newsletter

October 2015



WestVic Dairy's newest board member, industry service provider Dr Gemma Chuck

Welcome to Gemma Chuck

It's with much excitement that we welcome Dr Gemma Chuck to the WestVic Dairy Board. Gemma joins us as an industry service provider and will replace Paul Clarke.

WestVic Dairy is run by a Board of Directors, which is made up of six farmers and two industry service providers who meet eight times per year.

Gemma graduated with a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine degree from The Royal Veterinary College in London, UK, in June 2006 and has held various veterinary positions since. In November 2010, Gemma was appointed as one of three Dairy Residents at the University of Melbourne. Gemma fulfilled this role at The Vet Group in Timboon, Victoria. Her job comprised teaching of undergraduate students on farm and in the classroom, along with clinical dairy work and the undertaking of a Masters of Veterinary Science research project.

"I am looking forward to working alongside like-minded people to progress the dairy industry for a sustainable future. My experiences in the veterinary industry and university roles have allowed me to provide extension services to dairy farmers in this region. With the WestVic Dairy team, I would like to build on these experiences to really make a difference.

My aim is to 'build the bridge' between best practice and practicality on farm. Animal welfare is high priority along with dairy farmer welfare. To achieve these goals we must have an active presence in our dairy community, to listen and communicate with our dairy farmers" she said.

Gemma is currently working part-time at The Vet Group while completing her PHD studies.

"In this issue"

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Nominees announced for Dairy Australia Board roles

Dairy Australia has announced nominees to stand for election to its Board as Non-Executive Directors at the Annual General Meeting in November.

There are three vacancies this year, one for a director with agribusiness and strategy skills, one for a director with dairy manufacturing and processing skills and one for a director with milk producer skills.

James Mann, Dairy farmer and Chair of DairySA, and David Mallinson, Executive General Manager – Business Operations for Murray Goulburn Co-Operative Co. Limited are standing for election for the first time.

Mr Mann is the owner of Donovan's Dairying Pty. Ltd. at Wye, South Australia, which is one of the nation's leading dairy businesses, from a green-field site in 1998. The business has pioneered innovative grazing and production systems for dairy in southern Australia and continues to explore leading edge opportunities for business sustainability. James has been the Chair of DairySA since 2002 and has also performed other dairy industry leadership roles.



Mr Mallinson is the Executive General Manager – Business Operations for Murray Goulburn Co-Operative Co. Limited (MGC). He has had a range of roles across both MGC and other processors (Fonterra, Bonlac Foods, Cadbury Schweppes) and has extensive operational experience (including his current responsibility for MGC's manufacturing sites (including China) with over 1600 employees). He is also a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Snapsil Corporation.

John McKillop, who was first appointed to the Dairy Australia Board in 2012, has also been nominated for re-election as a Director, to fill the agribusiness and strategy vacancy.

Dairy Australia invited applications for the vacancies earlier this year. An industry selection committee conducted the formal process leading to the recommendation of the three candidates to the Dairy Australia Board.

The candidates selected align with the Board skills matrix, which identifies the necessary skills and experience required for the Board as a whole.

All candidates will require more than 50 percent of the votes cast at the Dairy Australia 2015 AGM to be elected. For more information visit <http://www.dairyaustralia.com.au>

Manage and maximise staff performance

Mark and Sam Billing are the 2015 Employers of the Year from the Great South West Dairy Awards. This field day gives the opportunity to tour around their dairy and calf rearing facilities and discuss how the technology they have implemented has impacted on staffing routines and expectations.

Other topic for the day:

- Various roster templates
- Retention strategies for employers
- Incentives used and challenges
- Innovative staff schedules/rosters
- Maximising staff performance

WORKSAFE VICTORIA – will also discuss on farm site inspections and what it means for your business.



Workshop details

Where: 'Craiglands' –Billings Farm, 585 Princess Highway, Larpent

Dates: Tuesday, 27 October 2015

Time: 11am – 2.30pm

Presenters: Chris Hibburt & Karen Hart

RSVP: Wednesday, 21 October 2015

For more information or to RSVP call WestVic Dairy on (03) 5557 1000 or email amanda@westvicdairy.com.au

RSVP essential for catering purposes.

Farewell to WestVic's Regional Manager



It's with much sadness that we say goodbye to our Regional Manager Paula Doran at the end of October.

Of her time here Paula said "It's been an incredible year at the helm of WestVic Dairy. We've seen major events like the Great South West Dairy Awards and Dairy Inspire, which have both been positive celebrations of the dairy industry and our farmers, and an absolute showcase of what we are about as an organisation.

"In addition to our big events, throughout the year we have continued to hold workshops, webinars and collaborative projects which serve the industry and provide for positive growth. Our Business Focus Farms are a sight to behold as far as promoting best practise farming – these are incredible farmers we're witnessing through these groups. And by that I mean the Focus Farmers themselves, as well as the community support groups that are going on the journey with them.

"I'm very proud of all the programs, projects and events that WestVic continues to roll out, directly linked to the strategies and priorities given to us by farmers. I'm also very grateful to have met and worked with an incredible number of farmers and service providers who call Western Victoria home. How lucky are we to have you working with, and for the industry?"

"Most importantly, I am immensely proud and grateful to have worked with the WestVic Dairy team. What a talented group of people you are! You continue to strive every day to serve our dairy farmers and the region in the work you do. I feel lucky to have been with you for the past 12 months, and have learnt from each and every one of you. Best of luck in the future to those in-house, and on-farm! Thanks for having me."

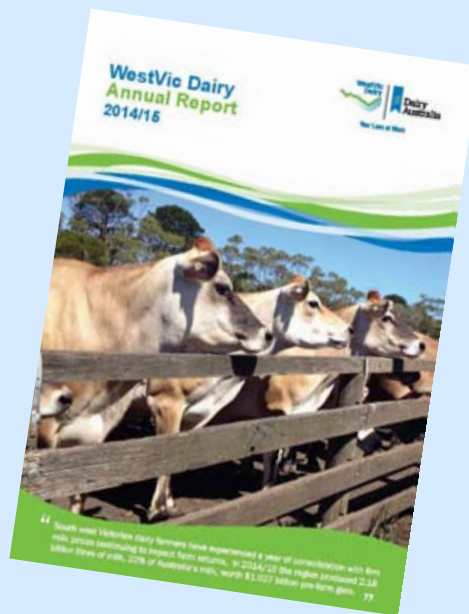
WestVic Dairy would like to wish Paula all the best in the future and greatest gratitude for her contribution to the organisation during her time.

WestVic Dairy

Annual Report now available

Copies of the 2014/2015 WestVic Dairy Annual Report are now available to collect from the library at 214 Manifold Street, Camperdown.

If you would like a copy but are unable to collect one, please call 5557 1000 or email info@westvicdairy.com.au to arrange for one to be sent in the mail to your postal address.



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Berry Kiwi Green Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 cup natural yogurt
- 2 scoops vanilla whey based protein powder
- 1/2 cup mixed frozen berries
- 30g baby spinach leaves
- 2 kiwi fruit, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon rice malt syrup, agave syrup or pure maple syrup
- crushed ice
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1 tablespoon coconut flakes
- 1/2 cup fresh blueberries, to serve

Method

- Process yogurt, protein powder, berries, +spinach, kiwi fruit, syrup and ice with a stab blender until smooth.
- Pour into two serving glasses or bowls. Top with chia seeds, coconut and blueberries. Serve immediately.

DairySage program praises sung

By Karen Hart, Workforce Planning and Action Regional Co-ordinator, WestVic Dairy

DairySage 2015 was a great success for the dairy farmers and service providers of the South West. With the evaluation and formal meetings complete; the journey for mentors and mentees continue as professional personal goals are completed.

DairySage mentoring is an exciting journey for participants which includes a two day introductory workshop to prepare for the mentoring journey. The participants learn essential interpersonal, communication and mentoring skills, attend a dairy industry dinner and then are matched to an inspirational and committed mentor.

The benefits of the DairySage program are immense for the individuals and also for the industry as participants have the opportunities to see and capture opportunities within the dairy industry. Some mentees have increased their business capacity through additional training while other farming mentees found the confidence to change business plans and structures with support from their mentor. Change of career paths were also accomplished, as a result of a renewed confidence provided through DairySage. As one of the participant's acknowledged "transition to the new job was made easier due to the meeting with my mentor and getting to know them. They helped me build confidence with people that I would never have met otherwise. My mentor also is more aware of opportunities that would be appropriate for me to consider." Other exceptional benefits identified by participants were;

- It was great to learn that we are all different and we communicate differently. A great tool to apply to all aspects of my life...including the kids!
- There were opportunities to seek advice from other mentors that I wasn't matched with, and that was great.
- The friendships that I have gained are great and I now feel more confident even attending dairy industry events.
- The level of knowledge and support from my mentor was fabulous and while we didn't always agree, it helped me make clearer goals and more importantly, achieve them.

The program was conducted over a six month period, with a teleconference to touch base at the three month mark. After six months an evaluation day was held where all mentees and mentors came together to discuss the program and moving forward how the relationships will continue in regards to time, contact and expectations. Whilst the DairySage evaluation day endeavoured to dig deep into the mentoring relationships, including the positives and also the challenges, much laughter and bantering could be heard outside of the room; a testament to the friendships that have been formed over the course of the program with the mentees, mentors and all of the participants.

FREE Employment Basics Webinar

Employment Basics: Determining correct employment classifications and writing job descriptions - Employment Series (Brought to you by DairyNSW)

This session will provide you with an understanding of the roles required in a dairy farm business. You will learn about the importance of creating a role for your business needs rather than for a person.

In this webinar, Karen will take you through the recruitment process, including how to ensure you have the appropriate employment classification for your employee and what needs to be considered when writing job descriptions.

Date: Wednesday 28th October 2015

Time: 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm (AEST)

Presenter: Karen Hart, WestVic Dairy

RSVP: <http://www2.redbackconferencing.com.au/Dairy-NSW-28th-Oct-2015>

DairySage participants



Ilan Linley and Shara Leddy



Kirsti Keightley and Anna Kenna



Bernie Baxter and Matt Howe



Karen Hart, Presenter

Report shows a profitable year for South West farms in 2014/15

By Zita Ritchie, Dairy Extension Officer, DEDJTR, Warrnambool

Victoria's annual insight into dairy farm performance – The Dairy Farm Monitor Project Report – has shown that 2014-15 was a profitable year across the region. Despite seasonal challenges and a drop in milk prices, farms across the South West performed well with all farms reporting positive returns.

Data from 25 farms in the South West resulted in average whole farm earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) of \$289,135, a 32 per cent decrease from the previous year. Return on assets under management dropped to an average of 5.2 per cent, from last year's 7.8 per cent, as seen in Figure 1.

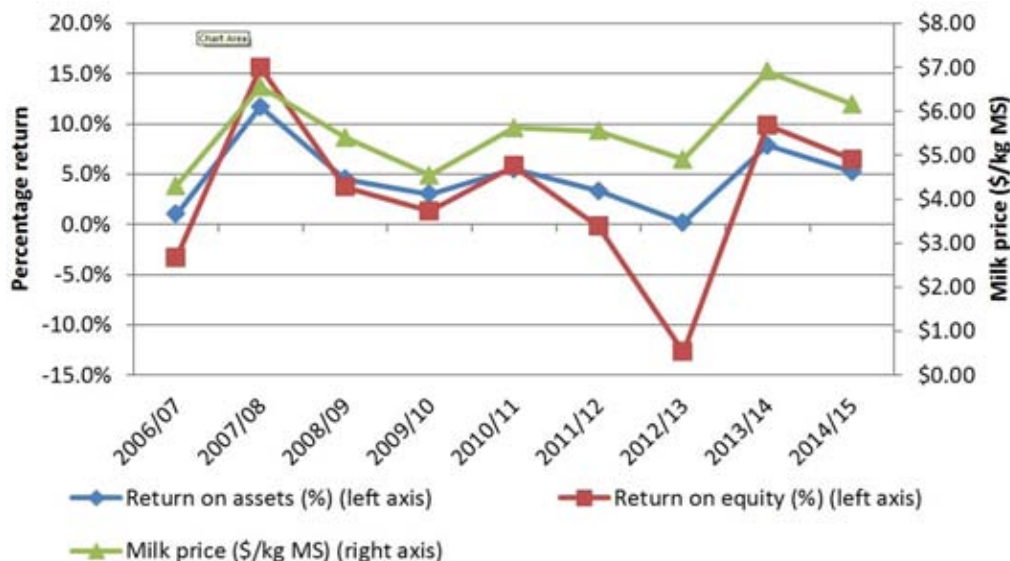
Drier seasonal conditions prevailed in the South West throughout 2014/15, with rainfall below average across the region. A shorter spring led to a 20 per cent reduction in conserved feed and fodder being fed out earlier. This resulted in fewer fodder reserves on hand at the end of the year compared to 2013/14.

Average milk price for the South West was \$6.16/kg MS, down from \$6.91/kg MS in 2013/14. Despite this, all farms performed well all with a positive return on assets and 84 per cent with a positive return on equity.

Cost of production increased slightly to \$5.48/kg MS, partly due to an increase in fodder purchases up by 59 per cent from \$0.17/kg MS to \$0.27/kg MS in 2014/15. The level of concentrate feeding remained similar to the previous year at an average of 2tDM/cow.

Now in its ninth year, the project is a joint initiative between the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) and Dairy Australia. The 2014/15 Dairy Farm Monitor Annual Report is available for download from the DEDJTR's www.agriculture.vic.gov.au or Dairy Australia website at www.dairyaustralia.com.au/dairyfarmmonitor.

Contact Zita Ritchie at DEDJTR Warrnambool on 0428 135 094 for further information.



Profit Prophet Tips for October

It is vital that you don't lose sight of pasture quality this month as you start (or possibly continue) cutting hay and silage. This is the time of year when pasture quality changes rapidly with neutral detergent fibre (NDF) rising at the expense of energy and protein. NDF limits the amount of pasture a cow can fit in. If the NDF in the pasture changes from 40% to 45%, it can make a difference of 1.5 kg dry matter intake for a 550 kg cow. This could mean a drop in energy intake equivalent to about 3 L of milk.

To try and minimise the change in NDF, you need to be aiming for 2-2.5 leaf-stage and faster rotations with bigger areas. Use young stock and heifers to clean up paddocks rather than the milkers. The idea is to keep the seed-heads away by grazing faster or locking up and cutting for silage paddocks that are past their best for grazing.

On a different matter it is worth investing in a vet check for your bull team before you put them in the herd. It is not uncommon for a quarter of the bulls to be inactive when vet-checked. You can't afford passengers and you need to make sure the cows get in-calf so this is definitely something worth considering.

Timboon Business Focus Farm field day a success

A Focus Farm field day held on Thursday 9th of September at Mat, Renee, Leeanne and John Whitehead's farm, Timboon proved to be a successful day with 88 district farmers and service providers attending the day.

The Whitehead farm business has well established procedures around documenting the method of asset transferal in the farm succession plan. The business structure has been set up with this in mind when the two original farms merged.

The aspect of the business that needs more attention is the process of transition for John and Leeanne from their current roles on the farm to one of semi-retirement from the day to day running of the enterprise.

Tom Walsh, Timboon Focus Farm facilitator organised the day into three information stations.

Station 1. The calf shed was staffed by Renee and John Whitehead, and Emma Bruce from the Vet Group. Discussion was built around the previous calf rearing facilities, and what prompted the motivation for change. A number of issues with the previous system were identified, and discussion continued onto the number of calves, i.e. previously, the last 12 months, and into the future. Questions were asked about the design of the facilities, the construction process (including support group input), daily work processes, capacity, and any problems.

Station 2 – At the springing cows station Mat Whitehead, Ridley's Ben Boyd and the Vet Group's Matt Izzo spoke about nutrition and feed planning – especially transition feeding processes. The group had the chance to see a new transition TMR that was being fed through the feed pad. This group was shown previous transition management, and the current process – feed arrangement, mixing and delivery. Matt explained the reasons for changing the calving dates, and the success of changing the calving pattern.

Station 3 – In the dairy, the succession planning process was presented by Leeanne Whitehead and Tom Walsh. Discussion was focused on what it looks like now, work input, asset management, financial out comes, and work to do in the future. Leeanne stole the show at this station speaking candidly about the process of looking at the succession plan.

The day was deemed very successful as typified by these feedback comments;
 "Fantastic Day. The family was very open regarding all the aspects of their business"
 "The sharing of excellent information is a highlight of this Focus Farm"
 "Informative and cutting edge facts are always of interest"

The Whiteheads farm business structure continues to raise discussion from attendees, and prompted analysis of their own enterprise.

For more information about Focus Farms contact Laurie Hickey on 0439 833 484 or laurie@westvicdairy.com.au



Welcome Laurie Hickey, Extension coordinator

WestVic Dairy would like to take the opportunity to introduce the newest member of Staff, Laurie Hickey.

Laurie's association with the dairy industry has been extensive as he has owned and managed a dairy farm at Bookaar (7 kms north of Camperdown) for 25 years. Laurie took and opportunity to move to the agricultural education sector and has enjoyed the transition for the past 10 years.

As a traineeship coordinator, he engaged groups to ensure that the information they required was delivered in a concise and informative way so as to meet the needs of the entire group.

Laurie is passionate about supporting grass roots farmers and securing a successful future for the dairy industry in western Victoria. His passion is to forge stronger links with Dairy Australia, farming networks and industry stakeholders, instilling confidence in the longevity of the dairy industry; a community that he has invested so much of his working life.

Laurie's new role connects with local farmers and service providers to deliver well planned program roll outs and support for discussion groups and network groups.

Laurie is available to contact on
 P: 0439 833 484 or
 E: laurie@westvicdairy.com.au



Mat Whitehead discussing transition feeding

Focus Farm Data

WestVic Dairy Business



Heathmere	
Date	November 23, 2014
Milking Area (ha)	305
Production	
Cow Numbers	459
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.57
Litres/cow/day	20.2
Fat%	4.44
Protein %	3.32
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 41.7c/kgDM (\$375/t)	5.40
Pasture (kg/DM) approx.	1.90
Area in rotation (ha)	280
Rotation Length (days)	40
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	7
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
November Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.50
Income/cow	\$8.64
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$3.99
IOSFC/cow	\$4.65
IOSFC/ha	\$7.00
<small>† Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year</small> <small>‡ Milk price is current announced total package and inclusive of productivity and quality.</small> 11 empty low producing cows culled after preg testing. Grain feeding will be adjusted to feed to production table keeping average grain feeding to 6 - 6.5kg/cow/day. Pasture growth on the farm has almost stopped. 7 days grazing left on reasonable grass, approximately 350kgDM available per hectare. Then grass availability is likely to drop to 100-150kgDM/ha available. First crop ready to start grazing 20 December, next 10 hectares just germinating under irrigation, Hard Hose Irrigator battling to keep up in dry conditions. 10.5 Ha Dryland Lucerne is growing impressively. Support Group is suggesting more should be planted. Vetch Hay analysis: 10.5 ME (MJ/kgDM), 20.9% Crude Protein, 42% NDF.	
Timboon	
Date	November 3, 2014
Milking Area (ha)	303
Production	
Cow Numbers	560
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.65
Litres/cow/day	22.2
Fat%	4.02
Protein%	3.77
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 41c/kgDM (\$369/t)	5.6
Pasture (kg/DM) approx.	12.8
Area in rotation (ha)	156
Rotation Length (days)	21
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	7.5
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
November Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.21
Income/cow	\$8.60
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$2.07
IOSFC/cow	\$6.53
IOSFC/ha	\$12.06
<small>† Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from: 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year</small> <small>‡ Milk price is current announced total package and inclusive of productivity and quality.</small> 200 cows will be dried off in the next week ready for calving start on 1st January 2015. 2000 bales of silage have been harvested with another 3-400 yet to be done. 480 tonnes of vetch hay has been purchased to complete the summer feed plan. Summer crops have been sown – turnips only. These have had 12mm of rain this weekend. Feed pad construction is well under way. A double alley way pad to accommodate the mixer wagons will be constructed. All effluent is collected into the same pondage system as the dairy after a new first pond at the bottom of the pad. All earthworks have been completed and concrete formwork is just starting. Completion is anticipated by mid/late January.	

Barongarook West	
Date	November 5, 2014
Milking Area (ha)	249
Production	
Cow Numbers	345
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	2.09
Litres/cow/day	27.9
Fat%	4.04
Protein%	3.43
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 41.4c/kgDM (\$376/t)	4.5
Pasture (kg/DM) approx.	12
Area in rotation (ha)	166
Rotation Length (days)	47
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	3.5
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
October Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$5.00
Income/cow	\$10.43
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$1.88
IOSFC/cow	\$8.55
IOSFC/ha	\$11.81
<small>† Cost of pasture has not been included. This will range from: 10c – 20c per kg DM during the year</small> <small>‡ Milk price is current announced total package and inclusive of productivity and quality.</small> Currently 195 Spring and 150 Autumn cows in vat. 38 dry and freshly calved cows plus 65 Autumn calves on the property. Average pasture cover 2495kgDM/ha. Whole farm average growth rate calculated at 54kgDM/ha over the last 24 days. 67ha has been cut for silage so far, another 43ha shut for silage, reducing average farm cover to 2262kgDM/ha and rotation speed to 47 days. Urea spread at 100kg/ha to selected paddocks. Most summer crops (20 ha brassicas, 7 ha turnips) have reached ground cover stage, Diamond Back grubs present in moderate numbers, spraying to control likely in 7-10 days. 8 ha crop still to be sown. First of three underpasses installed (Adams Road).	
DemoDAIRY Terang	
Date	November 14, 2014
Milking Area (ha)	140
Production	
Cow Numbers	252
kg Milk Solids/cow/day	1.57
Litres/cow/day	21.1
Fat%	4.03
Protein%	3.41
Grazing and Supplement Feeding	
Pellets 35c/kgDM	4.5
Pasture (kg/DM) approx.	11
Rotation Length (days)	27
Grazing area (ha/24hrs)	4.5
Daily Income over Supplementary Feed Costs (IOSFC)	
November Milk Price (\$/kgMS)	\$4.96
Income/cow	\$7.78
Supplementary Feed costs/cow	\$1.58
IOSFC/cow	\$6.21
IOSFC/ha	\$11.17
Silage regrowth grazed daily. 10 ha shut for hay on the milking area. Bulls now out of the herd. Culled 10 cows last week and will continue culling to reduce the need for bought in hay. Produced 486 bales of silage on farm, but there will be minimal hay produced. Will need around 250 tonne hay if we have a dry autumn.	



Contact Us

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

What's on October 2015

OCTOBER 14, 21, 28
EVENT Farm Chemical Users Course (Short Course) SAFARMCHEM1
TIME 10am – 3pm
WHERE Timboon
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437 or 0407 552 011

OCTOBER 27
EVENT Manage and maximise staff performance
TIME 11am—2.30pm
WHERE Billings farm 585 Princess Highway, Larpent
CONTACT Amanda (03) 55571000

OCTOBER 28
EVENT: Free Employment Webinar with Karen Hart, WestVic Dairy
TIME 12noon - 1pm
CONTACT <http://www2.redbackconferencing.com.au/Dairy-NSW-28th-Oct-2015>
 Or call (03) 5557 1000

OCTOBER 29, NOVEMBER 2 (Note: Change of Date)
EVENT Farm Chemical Users Course (Short Course) SAFARMCHEM1
TIME 10am – 3pm
WHERE Heywood
CONTACT Michelle Easterbrook, (03) 5592 2437

NOVEMBER 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 or 0407 552 011

NOVEMBER 19
EVENT Heathmere Focus Farm field day
TIME TBC
WHERE Taylor Farm, 234 Wilson Rd, Heathmere
CONTACT Laurie Hickey (03) 5557 1000

NOVEMBER 27
EVENT Dairy Australia AGM
TIME 10:30am start.
WHERE The Atrium, Flemington Racecourse, 448 Epsom Road, Flemington, Victoria
CONTACT General inquiries about the AGM can be directed to the Dairy Australia toll-free Memberline on 1800 004 377.



WestVic Young Dairy Network - Keep your finger on the pulse!

Free membership provides access to WestVic Dairy, Dairy Australia industry information and events for young farmers and service providers. For membership information contact WestVic Dairy 03 5557 1000 or WestVic YDN Co-ordinator **Rob Swinton** on 0459 227 337.

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