

# Members Newsletter

March 2024



## From the President

Robert Brokenshire

This month I attended the ADF State Presidents meetings on 12 March. At the top of the Agenda was a discussion around ADF and VFF levy discrepancies. This matter remains unresolved and the State Presidents supported the push by ADF to have the issue addressed.

Closer to home, on 21 March together with my fellow board members Ben McHugh and Gary Zweck, I attended the Dairy SA Central Conference in Hahndorf. Well done to the Dairy SA team on another quality conference. The level of optimism for the South Australian industry was one of a number of highlights from the day.

The following day I attended the national [Dairy Symposium](#) convened by the Australian Government to discuss productivity, competition and growth for the dairy industry in Australia. Minister Watt announced funding for Dairy Australia to work with the department to deliver industry workshops on dairy's productivity challenge. He also announced it's time to take another look at the Dairy Code of Conduct, since the code was first reviewed in 2021 it had changed the way the industry works.

The big challenge for government is not the unwinding of regulations, but what it replaces them with. Inflation is slowing, interest rates look to have peaked. I know a lot of farmers are really feeling the pain

this season and that costs remain stubbornly high. What we really need are rules that are fair, practical, affordable – but also enduring. That's what's going to give us certainty to make investments and restore farmer confidence.

I've yet to meet a farmer who doesn't want to see improved water quality, increased biodiversity, or reduced emissions – we just need to be able to see an affordable and realistic roadmap to help get us there.

On my own farm front we have been busy transitioning the Jersey's into our new dairy. Don't forget to [register](#) to the opening of our new Dairy and the Launch of the next SA Dairy Action Plan. This will be held on Tuesday 23 April in Mount Compass.

SADA continues to hold Effluent Management Plan sessions in the regions, if you've not been able to get to one, let us know and we'll see what we can arrange.

## It's time to get your sh!t together!



If you've received a letter from the EPA or want to get ahead of the game, call our office today and book in your first consult — **FREE for Members.**

The EPA has now signaled they're cracking down on dairies. SADA has taken the time to get trained up on a comprehensive tool to evaluate your Effluent Management and mechanism for submitting your plan.

[Register now](#) for all EPA Updates or check out our [Website](#) for the latest news.



WFI SADA Partnership: If you take out a policy with [WFI](#), SADA receives a commission from WFI of 7.5% of the policy premium. Make sure when your next speaking with WFI that you mention your a SADA Member to get the discounts.

Have you got  
a Telstra  
mobile phone?



To check if your mobile will be impacted by the 3G network closure on 30 June.

SMS 3 to 3498

Telstra has developed a **3G SMS Checker** tool to assist customers in checking if they need to upgrade their device before the 3G network closes on 30 June this year. It's very easy to use – just send a SMS with the number **3 to 3498** or “3G XT” to receive almost instant advice on your device. SADA would also be happy to hear from any members with concerns regarding the 3G closure.



**AgTrader** - the website where farmers come to buy and sell . . . has a fresh new look and is making it easier than ever to find everything you need when it comes to machinery and equipment. The [website is a highly trusted rural marketplace](#), offering easy searches on everything from tillage and seeding equipment, tractors, trucks and other vehicles.



**Government of South Australia**  
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

**In case you know anyone keen on a government role**  
PIRSA has an opportunity for an Animal Health Officer to be part of the Biosecurity Division within the Department of Primary Industries and Regions. The role contributes to delivering and implementing programs that educate and raise the standard of management and husbandry of primary producers and agribusiness personnel. The role will work in the Lower Southeast, and is open to recent graduates, through to those with more experience in the animal health and biosecurity field. [You can find out more here](#)

## SA Government is seeking to introduce a Biodiversity Act



The first of its kind in the state. It is important that as part of this, the dairy industry highlights not only its current commitment to biodiversity but also our expectations around biodiversity conservation and the priorities for a new Act.

**Biodiversity** is described as the incredible tapestry of life on our planet, including different species of plants, animals, microorganisms, and the ecosystems they form. It is recognised that we need functioning biodiversity for clean air, healthy soil, modern medicine, food on our plates, and a resilient earth that can respond to threats like climate change. To support our engagement on this matter, we need to be able to highlight the amount of “biodiversity” or native vegetation that is managed as part of dairy businesses. [Please complete this one minute survey.](#)



### Cows under cover: can sheds protect Australia's dairy herd?

An increasing number of Australian dairy farmers are building large housing structures to shelter their cows from rising climate extremes. South-West Victorian farmer Simon Rea, who recently spoke at Dairy Australia's Raising the Roof 2024 event, says creating a shelter for his herd has lifted income and cut operating costs – “one of the best investments he has ever made” (The Land). Sheds could also aid in herd management and combatting rapidly rising land prices. “Within six years about half the nation's milk production will likely come from cows housed in giant barns, and more from herds partially accommodated under big shelters.”



## The South Australian Agricultural Education Strategy

South Australia's primary industries sector is growing, innovating and achieving, but to realise its potential there needs to be talented and motivated people ready to fill positions. The primary industries sector is full of potential, yet many students are unaware of the opportunities and pathways. As such, the sector is facing a critical skills gap. There are not enough agriculture teachers and general teachers to deliver the food and fibre components of the national curriculum. A coordinated industry strategy is needed to engage people in agricultural pathways and opportunities to ensure the future workforce needs are met. Primary Producers SA has a vision: The delivery of coordinated and innovative food and fibre education programs which engage, link with industry and showcase opportunities, research and innovation pathways while building trust in the sector. With a clear plan, industry will drive change. We will promote agricultural pathways, innovation and opportunities and get more people into agriculture. If you would like to comment on the draft [PPSA South Australian Agricultural Education Strategy](#) please drop us [an email](#)

### Genetics – the key to a sustainable farming future?

One of Australia's leading genomics researchers, Professor Jennie Pryce, says genetics can lead the way to a greener future. Prof Pryce's team at Agriculture Victoria delivers genetic improvement tools to the dairy industry, including DataGene and the Sustainability Index. Pryce says there are exciting developments on the horizon: “we are also using more data and robust information to identify cows that are tolerant to hot and humid conditions and evaluating the reduction in yield as temperatures and humidity increase.”

**Find out more** about the role of genetics on [Genetics Australia](#).

Please ensure that your membership and supplier details are current and up to date.  
<https://share.hsforms.com/1IAwYKsxjQ1inwndbn2NbYQd5tpo>