



Victorian Farmers Federation

United Dairyfarmers of Victoria

District Council 2 and 3 Regional Update



United Dairyfarmers of Victoria District Council 2 and 3 Regional Update:

Over the past two weeks, your dairy and water leaders from DC 2 and 3 have been involved in the following activities.

Drought:

The State Government's drought package adopted a number of requests outlined in the joint DC 1, 2 and 3 drought submission. The water rebate is far more equitable than last year, with all irrigators getting 50% of their fixed water charges paid for. The costs associated with pumping Waranga basin will be met by the Government as well as \$3000 for on-farm productivity grants and \$1500 drought apprentice retention bonuses.

It was pleasing to see the package ticked off a number of our submission requests and the Government was listening to the concerns of farmers on the ground.

Shadow Agriculture Minister visits Shepparton:

Kerry O'Brien the Shadow Agriculture Minister visited a number of farms in Northern Victoria. Iwan Van Den Berg's dairy farm was among those visited where he showcased his automated irrigation practices.

A number of dairy farmers from DC 2 and 3 then had lunch with Mr O'Brien, where issues discussed ranged from drought, farm dams, the federal water plan and ethanol production.

Murray Darling Basin Association Meeting:

Richard Anderson attended the Murray Darling Basin Association's meeting in Shepparton last week. The meeting was arranged jointly by the State and Federal Government with a number of guest speakers. Discussion focused on climate change and the Federal Water Plan. Richard maintained that Victorian farmers do not support a full referral of State Government powers.

Federal Water Plan:

Richard Anderson was invited to attend a meeting in Sydney with Senior Federal Department of Environment and Water Officials to discuss outstanding issues with the federal water plan.

Discussion focused on how reviews of water entitlements will be handled when considering the impacts of climate change. Also concern was expressed that the formation of the Murray Darling Basin Authority will duplicate the Murray Darling Basin Commission and create an unnecessary level of bureaucracy.

VFF Water Council:

The VFF Water Council met last week in Melbourne, David Downie, General Manager, Water at DSE was present for part. Discussion focused on a revised carryover model, annual use limits on Water Use Licenses and the Foodbowl Modernisation Project.

Foodbowl Steering Committee

Geoff Akers and Max Fehring attended the Foodbowl Steering Committee meeting last week. Discussion focused on the submissions received regarding the draft report and determining a way forward to address those concerns.

Farm Walks – 19th November:

Murray Dairy together with DPI are arranging a number of farm walks for farmers to see first hand how others are managing the drought. Further details will be available shortly.

Katunga Family Night:

Congratulations to Moira Shire and Rotary for arranging an enjoyable family night last week.