

# The Milk Flow

WINTER EDITION - 2024

## Message from the Board

The 2024 National Dairy Farmer Survey has provided some interesting insights. Despite potential challenges, overall stability is anticipated in the upcoming season, with consumer demand for dairy products remaining robust. Additionally, while global competition persists, the slowdown in imports of overseas dairy products, coupled with favourable conditions in most Australian dairy regions, bode well for profitability and sustained farmer confidence.

We are pleased to report that the Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program (SFIRP) projects have continued to deliver significant value across New South Wales. Thanks to the program and its funding, we have been able to employ additional staff for the two-year period of its lifecycle.

As the program concludes later this year in December, we will not have the same level of resources that we have enjoyed for the past two years. To ensure we continue to meet your needs effectively, please take a moment to complete a short survey at [surveymonkey.com/r/DNSWAOP](https://surveymonkey.com/r/DNSWAOP).

Your feedback is crucial in helping us determine the future activity and service delivery priorities for Dairy NSW.

Thank you for your ongoing support and engagement as we work together to navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead.

To connect with the Dairy NSW Board, please contact Paul van Wel, Regional Manager, Dairy NSW via [paul@dairynsw.com.au](mailto:paul@dairynsw.com.au).

## Celebrating success at the inaugural Cows, Courage, and Curiosity YDN Conference

The recent Cows, Courage, and Curiosity YDN Conference, held on the 9th and 10th of May in Wollongong, NSW, was a resounding success.

Presented by Program 3 of the Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program (SFIRP) - Supporting Industry Development in Dairy. This groundbreaking event marked the first of its kind, attracting over 100 dairy farmers and industry members from New South Wales, Tasmania, and Victoria. The two-day affair was nothing short of inspiring as delegates from across the country came together to connect, learn, and forge meaningful relationships.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the conference was the sense of community that permeated every interaction. Delegates not only made new connections but also rekindled old ones, creating a support network that will undoubtedly prove invaluable in the future. In an industry as challenging and dynamic as dairy farming, having a dedicated support system is crucial, and events like these provide the perfect opportunity to foster those connections.

The lineup of keynote speakers was incredible, each bringing their own unique perspective and insights to the table. Paralegic Surfing Champion Sam Bloom shared her awe-inspiring story of resilience and determination, capturing the hearts of attendees. Mia Ryan, founder of the Howdy App, offered entrepreneurial wisdom that resonated with many aspiring and established dairy farmers alike. Industry experts Sam Marwood and Justin Walsh provided deep insights into the latest trends and practices in dairy farming, equipping delegates with valuable

knowledge to take back to their farms. Additionally, hearing from fellow dairy farmers from across NSW and beyond provided valuable insights and camaraderie, fostering a sense of solidarity within the industry.

The Cows, Courage, and Curiosity YDN Conference was a monumental event that brought together dairy farmers and industry experts in a celebration of knowledge, personal experience, and community. As we look forward to future gatherings, the spirit of collaboration and support that defined this conference will undoubtedly continue to strengthen the dairy industry in NSW and beyond.

For those who could not attend or want to stay connected beyond the conference, the YDN NSW Facebook page is the place to be. By liking and following the page, you can connect with other members of the NSW YDN community, stay updated on upcoming events and activities, and even catch a glimpse of photos from the conference. This online platform ensures that the connections and knowledge gained at the conference continue to grow and flourish.

If you are not already a member of the NSW Young Dairy Network, there is no better time to join. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or just starting out in the industry, being part of the YDN offers countless opportunities for growth, learning, and networking. Membership provides access to a wealth of resources, support, and events that can help you navigate the challenges and opportunities within the dairy industry. Visit [bit.ly/DairyNSWYDN](https://bit.ly/DairyNSWYDN) or reach out to the Dairy NSW staff member in your region to find out more!

## Staff spotlight

### Ali Briggs



Ali Briggs' journey in agriculture began amidst the sprawling landscapes of South East Queensland, where she cultivated a deep-rooted appreciation for farming from an early age. Her academic pursuits led her to the University of Queensland (Gatton), where she honed her skills in Animal Production, laying a solid foundation for her future endeavours.

Throughout her career, Ali has been a steadfast advocate for rural communities, both locally and internationally. Her tenure at Kempsey Shire Council saw her spearheading impactful projects and events, amplifying the voices of farmers and driving forward the agribusiness agenda. With a knack for leadership and a heart for education, Ali has left an indelible mark on the agricultural landscape.

Now, as the Dairy NSW Farm Engagement Lead for the Mid Coast, Ali is poised to bring her wealth of experience to bear in supporting local farmers. Her commitment to collaboration and her genuine passion for agriculture make her an asset to the dairy community.

Reach out to **Ali Briggs** at [ali@dairynsw.com.au](mailto:ali@dairynsw.com.au) or call **0456 971 331**.

### Natalie Campbell



Meet Natalie Campbell, an accomplished professional with 30 years of corporate experience, primarily in the legal sector. In March 2023, she joined Dairy NSW as the Executive Assistant and Business Administrator, bringing her

diverse skills and passion for community development to the forefront. Natalie plays a crucial role in supporting Dairy NSW Regional Manager, Paul van Wel, the Board, and the Dairy NSW team, ensuring smooth and efficient operations.

Her tech-savvy approach and project management expertise make her an invaluable asset, while her strategic problem-solving abilities align perfectly with Dairy NSW's objectives. Natalie's commitment extends beyond day-to-day tasks, as she actively engages with the community to understand and address their needs, contributing to the larger vision of a thriving dairy industry.

Recognised for her collaborative spirit and dedication to positive change, Natalie is a driving force behind Dairy NSW's mission to empower the dairy community. Her wealth of experience, business acumen, and enthusiasm for the sector ensure Dairy NSW continues to make a lasting impact on the Australian dairy industry.

Connect with **Natalie Campbell** via email at [natalie@dairynsw.com.au](mailto:natalie@dairynsw.com.au), or **0438 261 912**.

## Cows, Courage, and Curiosity snaps



## Update on The Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program (SFIRP) Program 2: Better Preparedness, Lower Risk, and Higher Resilience In Dairy

In the wake of the tumultuous storms and floods that swept through New South Wales in 2020/21, the dairy industry faced unprecedented challenges.

Recognising the need for proactive measures to bolster resilience, the Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program (SFIRP) initiated Program 2: "Better Preparedness, Lower Risk, and Higher Resilience in Dairy." As the program enters its second year, let us delve into its impactful initiatives and promising outcomes.

A cornerstone of Program 2 has been engaging with stakeholders and understanding the ground realities faced by dairy farmers across declared Local Government Areas (LGA's). Project officers have been actively surveying farmers, attending industry events, and listening to firsthand accounts. The insights gleaned from these interactions have been invaluable, providing a nuanced understanding of the challenges and aspirations of dairy farmers.

**One farmer aptly captured the sentiment, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to share their story amidst a media landscape that often overlooks their plight. This underscores the importance of direct engagement and empathetic listening in crafting effective solutions.**

Within Program 2, the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has undertaken a comprehensive climate vulnerability assessment for the dairy industry statewide. This forward-looking endeavour aims to anticipate the potential impacts of climate change on dairy production up to 2050. By identifying vulnerabilities and opportunities, the assessment lays the groundwork for informed adaptation strategies.

The ongoing work promises to deliver actionable insights, guiding future research and development activities to enhance the sector's resilience. While the results are slated for release at the end of 2024, the commitment to transparency and collaboration is evident, fostering a culture of preparedness and foresight.

A focal point of Program 2 has been the delivery of Dairy Businesses for Future Climates. The Bega Valley focus group have explored adaptation strategies for dairy farms considering predicted climate changes. Through workshops and collaborative sessions, stakeholders have deliberated on adaptation options, leveraging biophysical modelling to simulate the impacts of climate change up to 2040. This proactive approach empowers farmers with the knowledge and tools to navigate evolving environmental dynamics effectively.

During the final session, the focus group heard from facilitators Brendan Cullen (University of Melbourne) and Dan Armstrong (RMCG) of insights into the biophysical and financial implications of a changing climate in 2040. The culmination of these efforts promises to equip dairy businesses with actionable strategies tailored to future climates.

Identifying and mitigating climate-induced risks is paramount to ensuring the longevity of dairy farm businesses. Project 2b focuses on precisely this, developing a risk assessment tool to profile adaptation strategies against identified climate risks. By surveying dairy farm businesses and analysing data, the project aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of impacts and recovery methods.

Moreover, collaborative efforts between dairy farmers, milk processors, and research institutions underscore a collective commitment to resilience-building. The development of case studies and individualised reports will further bolster adaptive capacity, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and preparedness.

Infrastructure constraints pose significant challenges to dairy farm operations and business continuity. Project 2c seeks to better understand and address these constraints through stakeholder engagement and innovative solutions. Partnerships with organisations like Transport for NSW and CSIRO enhance the robustness of findings, paving the way for comprehensive recommendations to support industry growth.

Translating data into actionable recommendations will be crucial in overcoming infrastructure and utility challenges, ensuring the sustainability of dairy farming operations in the face of future adversities.

Central to Program 2d is bolstering animal and feedbase resilience through a multifaceted approach. By analysing trends in soil moisture, milk production, and pasture growth, stakeholders aim to inform risk assessments and decision-making processes. Collaboration with academic and research institutions strengthens the project's foundation, fostering knowledge exchange and innovation.

Moving forward, continued stakeholder engagement will be vital in raising awareness and addressing identified needs, empowering dairy farmers to make informed decisions in a rapidly changing environment.

Program 2 of the SFIRP Project embodies a proactive and collaborative approach to enhancing the resilience of the NSW dairy industry. Through engagement, assessment, and adaptation, stakeholders are laying the groundwork for a sustainable and resilient future. As the program progresses, the collective efforts of farmers, researchers, and policymakers promise to fortify the dairy industry against future uncertainties, ensuring its vitality for generations to come.

For more information on the Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program, visit [dairyaustralia.com.au/nswfloodrecovery](https://dairyaustralia.com.au/nswfloodrecovery).



## GRO Rural Dairy Registry – lending a helping hoof to the NSW dairy industry

In a bold stride towards bolstering the NSW dairy sector, GRO Rural, in collaboration with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and Dairy NSW, has unveiled the GRO Rural Dairy Registry.

This groundbreaking platform transcends the traditional directory model, serving as a specialised service that seamlessly connects NSW dairy farmers with dairy providers based on relevant factors such as location, service, and experience. This initiative breathes new life into industry support while fostering a revitalised sense of community.

Dairy NSW Regional Manager, Paul Van Wel, understands intimately the issues facing dairy farmers.

**“Dairy farmers have often spoken of the difficulty of finding local service providers to support their businesses. The GRO Rural Dairy Registry aims to make that process easier for the industry to connect to the right support,” he said.**

Not only is finding the right person an issue for dairy farmers, but professionals in dairy have also often remained isolated, relying solely on word of mouth. The GRO Rural Dairy Registry addresses this challenge by providing a centralised hub featuring convenient, cost-free, and regularly updated contact information for NSW dairy businesses and support services. This registry allows smaller businesses or contractors the same visibility as the large corporations.

The GRO Rural Dairy Registry aims to facilitate seamless networking and connectivity among service providers and dairy businesses, fostering collaboration and growth opportunities within the industry.

Dairy professionals, including veterinarians, nutritionists, consultants, agronomists, and more can highlight their expertise, availability, and location on the GRO Rural website for dairy-related organisations to easily connect with.

The Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program (SFIRP) identified that NSW dairy farmers and stakeholders required a more connected network, with easy access to dairy-specific service providers.

“We envision the GRO Rural Dairy Registry as a ‘meeting ground’ or a community hub for the NSW dairy industry. In an industry where connection and networking are paramount, this platform will introduce professionals in dairy and foster collaboration and growth for the industry,” said Dimity Smith, Director, and Founder of GRO Rural.

**“This platform connects dairy businesses with available support services, to build stronger industry networks and develop partnerships to help dairy businesses succeed,” said Dimity.**

Ken Garner, Manager Dairy, Livestock Systems Branch, Department of Primary Industries, commented on the launch of the Dairy Registry, “In NSW, the dairy industry thrives on collaboration and strong personal connections. The SFIRP program highlighted the need to facilitate that collaboration across the dairy service sector to enable service providers to connect with dairy farmers in a more efficient and targeted way.

The Dairy Registry is aimed at taking collaboration to the next level by ensuring our farmers have access to the services and support required for current success and future growth.”

The registry operates on a subscription-based model for professionals who wish to be listed, while organisations within the dairy sector can access and connect with listed individuals at no cost.

To kick-start this initiative, the first 50 eligible NSW dairy service providers will receive their first year’s subscription completely free, courtesy of the NSW Government’s Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program in collaboration with NSW DPI Dairy and Dairy NSW.

To confirm eligibility for discount and receive your code, contact [jess@grorural.com.au](mailto:jess@grorural.com.au).

The GRO Rural Dairy Registry promises to be a meaningful change for the NSW dairy industry, fostering an environment where connections are easily made, and support is readily accessible. By streamlining the process of finding and connecting with service providers, the registry aims to bolster the industry’s resilience and capacity for growth, ensuring a brighter future for NSW dairy farmers and their support networks.

Visit the registry at [grorural.com.au/dairy/home](http://grorural.com.au/dairy/home) and find out more about this service via the flyer insert in this edition of Milk Flow.

*This activity is made possible through the generous support of the Australian and NSW Governments’ Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program, in collaboration with the NSW Department of Primary Industries.*

# Dairy NSW Regional NDFS results at a glance

In the latest Dairy NSW Regional NDFS results unveiled in May 2024, a nuanced picture of the dairy industry's outlook emerges.

Despite over three-quarters of respondents maintaining positivity towards the future of their businesses, overall confidence in the industry's trajectory has notably declined to 60 per cent. This shift in sentiment could be attributed to mounting concerns surrounding production costs and anticipated seasonal hurdles expected in the coming year.

While approximately eight in ten Dairy NSW farms reported profitability in the 2022/23 period, a slightly diminished proportion foresees making an operating profit in the current fiscal year, standing at 71 per cent. Interestingly, the landscape of dairy farming in the region is evolving, with one in five farms currently in expansion mode.

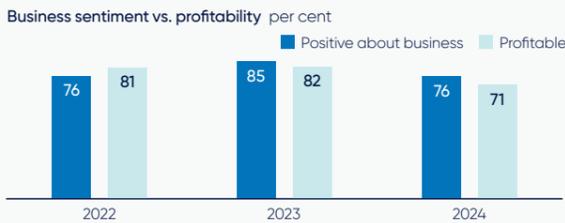
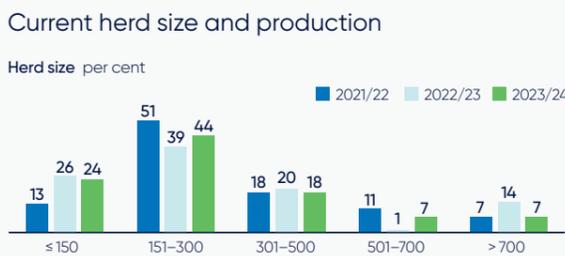
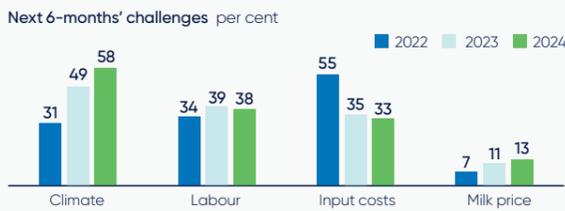
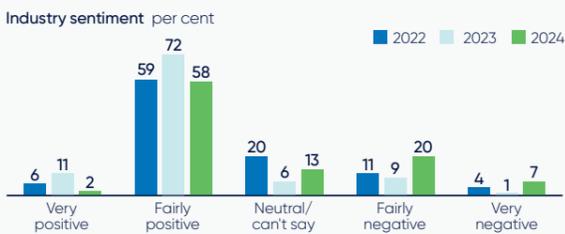
However, mirroring this growth trend, one in five farms are also in the process of winding down operations, with an additional 9 per cent contemplating exiting the industry within the next three years.

## Profitability and investment

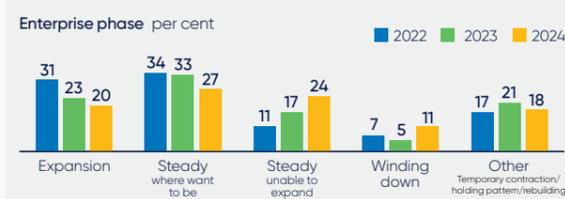
- 82%** Made profit 2022/23
- 71%** Expect profit 2023/24
- 36%** Profit higher than 5-year average
- 31%** Profit about same/unsure
- 29%** Profit lower than 5-year average
- 89%** Invested 2022-24
- 87%** Plan to invest 2024-26
- 42%** Plan minor investment
- 27%** Plan moderate investment
- 18%** Plan major investment



## Sentiment



## Farm profile



# Upcoming events:

Month	Event
July	25 Central West NSW Farm Walk and Talk, Forbes
Weekly, 2024	Success[bytes] Lunch and Learn weekly series Online. <b>See insert for more details!</b>
August	6-7 Milking and Mastitis Management, Day 1 – Bomaderry Bowling Club, Day 2 – Alex Good's farm, Wattamolla
September	10-12 NSW Women in Dairy Bale Up Conference, Sydney



Visit our events page [bit.ly/DNSWEvents](https://bit.ly/DNSWEvents) to RSVP and view a full listing of upcoming activities in your local area.

# Stay connected:

- Visit our website [dairyaustralia.com.au/dairynsw](https://dairyaustralia.com.au/dairynsw)
- Follow us on Facebook [facebook.com/dairynsw.au](https://facebook.com/dairynsw.au)
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