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Dairy industry stepping up with new leadership skills

Twelve members of the dairy industry from all over Australia graduated from the National **Advance in Dairy** Leadership Development Program on the 28th of April in Canberra hosted by Dairy Australia and delivered by Leading Industries.

The six month Program commenced in December in Melbourne and concluded in Canberra with the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Sussan Ley speaking at the dinner.

The program focuses on developing leadership skills in stakeholders of the dairy industry, with opportunities provided for the participants to practice the skills they learn in the sessions that cover networking, profiling the industry, planning and lobbying to bring about change, team leadership, communicating with impact and gaining outcomes from meetings.

The program hosted two industry dinners at which the participants were introduced to industry leaders. This provides a platform for the participants and the current industry leaders to form links and build relationships. Allan Burgess, President of Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd said meeting graduates of the **Advance in Dairy** Leadership Development Program was an absolute highlight.

“The vision and energy the participants share in regards to the purpose of the program will bring many benefits to our industry as they transform their skills into their own businesses, dairy related committees and the industry as a whole” Mr Burgess said.

National Food Industry Strategy Ltd Managing Director Dr Susan Nelle praised the **Advance in Dairy** Leadership Development Program saying, “Programs like the Advance in Dairy Leadership Development Program play such an important role in encouraging and nurturing the leaders of the future,” Dr Nelle said.

“It’s certainly my privilege to work with people who are putting their hand up to provide leadership in their sector,” she said.

Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Sussan Ley said that from her experience, successful leaders see their leadership position as the beginning, rather than the result of climbing to the top. They have vision and an agenda for change, and are relentless in their pursuit of knowledge and professionalism. “Successful leadership demands integrity, rationality and courage and above all else, good leaders are resourceful, and can make their visions happen,” she said.

“As tomorrow’s industry leaders, this group of participants has a great opportunity to lead by example and pursue excellence in their careers. However, you must never lose sight of the need to continue to represent the interests of your dairy industry colleagues,” she said.

“This Program has given the participants the confidence and knowledge to take Australia’s dairy industry forward,” she said.

Mr David Mortimer, Executive Manager, Food and Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) also took part in the program as a panel member and delivered a presentation on the role of DAFF in the dairy industry.

“The **Advance in Dairy** Leadership Development Program is an excellent initiative by the industry to help younger dairy farmers develop their leadership capabilities and encourage them to think about the future of the industry,” Mr Mortimer said.

“I was impressed by the quality and the enthusiasm of the participants, as well as the diversity of perspectives they contributed. It was valuable to discuss their vision for the industry and how Government can assist, as well as how important it is to openly communicate our different views and build on the high degree of shared attitudes,” he said.

Leading Industries Training Manager, Cheryl Phillips said “In today’s climate, leadership is not about a single decision maker, but rather everyone has a valuable contribution to make,” she said. “If we can form diverse groups of decision makers then the outcome is going to be much better for industry than if one person is left with the responsibility,” she said.

The program has been developed and is delivered by Leading Industries with support from Dairy Australia, the Australian Government’s Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, FarmBis, Westpac and sponsors of the individual participants. .

A list of the participants’ projects follows. Contact Leading Industries Program Manager, Kelly Tape on 0408850110 for further information or participant contact numbers. .

Advance in Dairy 2005/2006 Leadership Development Program

NAME	SECTOR	STATE	PROJECTS
Bernard Baxter	Production	Vic	Work with the media to enhance the profile and associated self esteem of dairy farmers.
Glenn Britnell	Production	Vic	Maximise the win/'win opportunities between Local Government and dairy farmers in South Western Victoria.
James Geraghty	Production	Qld	Ensure herd recording is available to all farmers in New South Wales and Queensland.
Jos Van Der Geest	Production	Vic	Undertake a feasibility study into the establishment of a co-operative multi-skilled labour pool in Gippsland.
Brad Missen	Production	Vic	Identify the current status of a UDV District Council to provide support for dairy communities experiencing exceptional circumstances in Gippsland and position it to achieve its original purpose.
Patrick Neal	Production	NSW	Develop and implement a model of effective communication between employer and employee.
Sarah Parker	Production / Extension	Vic	Profile positive stakeholders and future leaders of the dairy industry. Prepare a portfolio of case studies.
Michael Connor	Production	SA	Develop a tool to measure the cost of production on farm.
Terry Toohey	Production	NSW	Research a sustainable milk price in Sub-Tropical Region and strategies to achieve this price.
Iwan Van Den Berg	Production	Vic	Research why the Dairy Industry is out of vogue as an employer and how can the industry become the employer of choice.
Brian Welsh	Finance	Vic	Prepare case studies for young farmers to provide strategies to increase wealth in the early years of their career.
Kerry Wilson	Farming/ Processing	NSW	Organise a conference for northern NSW's and Queensland dairy farmers as a means of providing skills, motivation and goal setting.