

The Australian dairy industry Sustainability Framework

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Introduction

The dairy industry is one of Australia's major rural industries, worth \$13.5 billion to our economy, directly employing approximately 38,000 people. In 2017/18, approximately 30% of Australia's total milk production (around 9 billion litres) was exported – with 80% going to Asian markets.

Increasingly, the community is demanding proof that we are doing the right thing by people, our animals and our planet. We recognised that a cohesive approach was needed to demonstrate Australian dairy's commitment to both sustainable development and continuous improvement.

Methods

We took a whole-of-industry supply chain approach to sustainable development through the adoption of the Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Framework. This covers the extended dairy value chain from feed production, manufacturing, retail and packaging.

Endorsed by industry in 2012, the Framework now centres on our dairy promise "To provide nutritious food for a healthier world", underpinned by our commitments:

- Create a vibrant industry that rewards dairy workers and families, their related communities, business and investors
- Provide nutritious, safe, quality dairy food
- Strive for health, welfare and best care for all our animals throughout their lives
- Meet the challenge of climate change and provide good stewardship of our natural resources

We measure and publicly report our progress against 11 goals and 36 targets, transparently demonstrating our commitments.

Our next Sustainability Report (December 2018) will incorporate revised goals and targets changing from a 2020 time horizon to 2030, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Results/Conclusions

Benefits of having a whole of supply chain Sustainability Framework include:

- An agreed roadmap for continuous improvement in industry practices
- Drives improved performance in sustainable practices on-farm and in processing
- Progress against sustainable development targets tracked and transparently reported so customers can trust dairy foods
- Improved ability to direct investment and effort to meet agreed targets