



Dairy Business of the Year finalists selected

THE FINALISTS of the inaugural NAB Agribusiness and Dairy Australia Dairy Business of the Year competition have been selected. There are 15 finalists selected from a field of more than 80 entrants.

The organisers were pleased to have received such a high level of interest in

the competition, particularly given this is the first year that it has been run. The performance of many of the entrants was described as outstanding by the organisers.

David Beca of Red Sky Agricultural, who processed the data from which the finalists were selected, said a significant

group of farmers demonstrated a high level of profitability.

"What might surprise some people is that irrigated areas such as the Macalister in Gippsland and the southern Riverina in NSW have produced a disproportionate number of high performers," he said.

The finalists have been selected so that ▶

Table 1: The finalists in the Dairy Business of the Year competition

Name	Locality	Judging Categories	Area* and cows	Milk Production**
Kelvin and Lindy Bruce	Lancaster, Vic	Northern Victoria Low Concentrate	77ha 216 cows	1381 kg MS/ha 469 kg MS/cow
Craig and Catherine Cleggett	Glencoe, SA	South Australia Medium Concentrate	90ha 208 cows	1324 kg MS/ha 561 kg MS/cow
Tim and Margaret Donahoe	Bushy Park, Vic	Gippsland Medium Concentrate	150ha 670 cows	2362 kg MS/ha 529 kg MS/cow
Ken, Nora and Daryl Frost	Finley, NSW	Riverina Low Concentrate	104ha 326 cows	1267 kg MS/ha 397 kg MS/cow
Andrew and Zoe Gaul	Drouin, Vic	Gippsland Medium Concentrate Young Farmer	61ha 200 cows	1623 kg MS/ha 495 kg MS/cow
Jorg and Gerda Hobi	Heywood, Vic	South West Victoria Medium Concentrate	346ha 580 cows	1013 kg MS/ha 531 kg MS/cow
Greg and Joy Johnson	Oxley Flats, Vic	Northern Victoria High Concentrate	50ha 150 cows	1724 kg MS/ha 575 kg MS/cow
Stu and Kirsti Keightley, Mgr Darren and Janelle McDowell	Condah, Vic	South West Victoria Medium Concentrate	156ha 335 cows	869 kg MS/ha 405 kg MS/cow
Neville and Ruth Kydd	Finley, NSW	Riverina Medium Concentrate	354ha 1050 cows	1395 kg MS/ha 470 kg MS/cow
Geoff, Carol and Mark Landy	Briagolong, Vic	Gippsland Medium Concentrate	170ha 765 cows	2338 kg MS/ha 520 kg MS/cow
James and Jacinta Loveday	Timboon, Vic	Sharefarmer	130ha 278 cows	1401 kg MS/ha 655 kg MS/cow
Matt Seeliger and Kate Holberton	Glencoe, SA	South Australia Medium Concentrate	145ha 260 cows	1164 kg MS/ha 571 kg MS/cow
Claudio and Bronwyn Segafredo	Nambrok, Vic	Gippsland High Concentrate Young Farmer	104ha 400 cows	2214 kg MS/ha 554 kg MS/cow
John and Lyn Verstedden	Longwarry, Vic	Gippsland Medium Concentrate	177ha 535 cows	1356 kg MS/ha 448 kg MS/cow
Eric Ward and Danny Everingham	Deniliquin, NSW	Riverina Medium Concentrate Sharefarmer	336ha 920 cows	1042 kg MS/ha 380 kg MS/cow

*hectares = effective hectares

**MS = milksolids (milkfat and protein)

Conference to explore business success

THE DAIRY Business of the Year Conference will explore the secrets of dairy business success. The top flight speakers will look at the critical issues for dairyfarmers to develop their farms.

It will be held on May 18 at NAB Docklands Melbourne, and will be followed by the Dairy Business of the Year Awards dinner and presentation.

Conference speakers include:

- Professor Keith Woodford, Professor of Farm Management and Agribusiness, Lincoln University, New Zealand. He will speak on attaining year-on-year productivity improvements in dairy businesses. Prof Woodford has a background in farming systems, agribusiness and international rural development. He has worked on rural development and education projects, as well as undertaken consultancies throughout Asia, South America and the Pacific. He worked for 18 years in Australia before returning to New Zealand in 2000.

- Basil Doonan, of Davey and Maynard Ag Consulting, Tasmania. He will speak on 'Pasture production to profit - Maximising pasture harvest and pasture energy density to promote high levels of milk production'. Mr Doonan's training is in agricultural economics and farm business management, and he's left an indelible mark on the Tasmanian dairy industry. He is a dynamic speaker on all things dairy, with pasture production being a particular area of interest.

- John Fegan, of Fegan and Co, New Zealand. He will speak on 'Becoming the employer of choice in your district - Developing a harmonious and highly-productive work environment'. Mr Fegan is the founder and managing director of Fegan and Co, New Zealand's largest human resources and recruitment company specialising in agriculture. His passion is "the people issues" of farms, with his business interests also involving promoting the agricultural sector and providing inde-

pendent audits of employment practices.

- David Beca, of Red Sky Agricultural. He will speak on 'Sorting the best from the rest - critical success factors and key profit drivers with competition finalists'. Mr Beca's background is in farm systems and business analysis, as well as consultancy and farm ownership. He has spent the past four years developing the largest database of dairy business analysis in Australia and New Zealand, with this now extending to South Africa.

- Jeff Oughton, National Australia Bank. His speech is entitled: 'Where in the world are we going?' Mr Oughton is an economist with NAB and will discuss trends in the both the world and the Australian economies, and the likely impact on exchange rates and commodity prices.

Conference participants will also have the opportunity to choose from a selection of workshops including:

- Innovation on farm and in the

factory - Keith Woodford, Lincoln University.

- Transferring technology to the farm - To be confirmed (Dairy Australia).

- Balanced investing and planning for the future - Chris Fry, NAB Agribusiness.

- Pasture management: Getting it right each day - Basil Doonan, Davey and Maynard/Wrightson Seeds.

- Breeding the right type of cow for your farming system - To be confirmed (Intelact/BOS Trading).

- Assessing your staff's satisfaction with their work environment - Shaun Wilson, ATR Solutions.

- Detailing your herd's daily dietary needs - To be confirmed (CopRice/Elanco).

- Contracting commodities: Opportunities to secure your business - To be confirmed (UDP).

The cost of the conference is \$143, with the awards dinner \$77. Conference and dinner \$209 a person.

Contact: Website <www.redskyagri.com> or phone 1800 733 759 to obtain a registration form.

the two judges, Associate Professor Bill Malcolm, of Melbourne University, and head of NAB Agribusiness Neil Findlay have at least two entrants in each category from which to select a winner. These categories include:

- the five regions - Gippsland, Northern Victoria, South-West Victoria, South-East South Australia and Riverina NSW;
- the three farm systems - low, medium and high concentrate feeders,
- young farmer, and
- sharefarmer.

All of the finalists are invited to the Dairy Business of the Year Conference and Awards Dinner to be held on Friday, May 18, in Melbourne. They are also invited on a retreat to Stonelea Country Estate near Alexandra on May 19-20, where they will have an opportunity to mix with their peers as well as the two international speakers from the conference.

The conference is open to everyone and will have a mix of speakers and workshops with a strong emphasis on issues that improve profitability.

In addition to Dairy Australia and NAB Agribusiness, who are the gold sponsors of the competition, the other six sponsors are all involved in supporting workshops that promote better business practice. These sponsors include CopRice,



Melbourne University Associate Professor Bill Malcolm is one of the judges in the Dairy Business of the Year awards.

United Dairy Power and Intelact as silver sponsors, as well as PGG Wrightson, Elanco and BOS Trading as bronze sponsors. *The Australian Dairyfarmer* is the lead media organisation of the competition and will feature the finalists in future publications.

To read more about the Conference and to register please refer to box story or go to website <www.redskyagri.com/dboy-aus>.