

THE PROGRAM

Welcome Events – Wednesday 11 February

4.30pm **Young Farmers Function** – sponsored by DeLaval
A special meet and greet exclusively for young farmers before the official welcome. This casual gathering is designed to introduce you to others, share insider tips, and give you a run down of ADC making sure 'new' delegates are ready to network with confidence and fully enjoy the main event.



5.30pm **ADC Welcome Function** – sponsored by Fonterra – Trade Hall: The ADC Welcome Function is an exciting pre-conference event that brings delegates together with opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and get a feel for what lies in store for the days ahead. In 2026, the ADC Welcome Function will be held on the trade room floor allowing you to start your dairy immersion in the best and latest products and services a day early. Hosted by Fonterra the introduction to ADC 2026 always delivers with great food, dairy products, hype and conversation.



Day 1 – Thursday 12 February

6.15am **ADC Morning Milk Run** – sponsored by Halter
Kick start your day with dairy colleagues in a run, walk or stroll around the infamous Melbourne 'Tan Track'. Join 100+ farmers in an outing that is more than just fitness - be part of the movement and camaraderie of dairy farmers on the run.



7.30am **ADC Breakfast** – sponsored by Phibro Animal Health
ADC Breakfast is a new introduction on Thursday morning 7.30am start by connecting over coffee, a light breakfast, conversation and insight with an engaging panel discussion thanks to Phibro Animal Health. The first 100 farmers to register for the breakfast are free – so get in quickly to secure your place.



Session 1 – Dairy leadership, collaboration & advocacy

8.20am **Opening ADC 2026:** We welcome back **MC Kimberley Busteed** to Australia's premier dairy event to lead delegates through two days of dairy discussion.

8.30am **Welcome to ADC 2026:** Programming Committee Chair and southwest Victorian Dairy Farmer **Ella Credlin**
Ella Credlin
Victorian dairy farmer
In 2026, Ella and her Program Committee are bringing together the people, ideas, and innovations shaping the future of Australian dairy under the theme 'More than Milk: Building Trust, Value and Legacy'. The focus explores how trust, value, and legacy come to life across every corner of the industry — from leadership to productivity, sustainability, technology, wellbeing, and the power of storytelling. ADC 2026 celebrates an industry that continues to evolve beyond the vat — one built on purpose, pride, and people — proving that dairy is, and always will be, more than milk.

8.45am

Purpose driven leadership: ADC 2026 opening keynote, **Su McCluskey** will draw on her leadership journey and extensive experience across Australian and global agriculture to share what impactful, contemporary leadership truly looks like — how it's achieved, and why it matters. Reflecting on her own path and the leaders who've inspired her, Su offers insights into the kind of leadership needed to move agriculture forward. Her address will motivate and energise delegates, highlighting the importance of stepping into leadership roles and the difference purpose-driven leaders can make in shaping the industry's future.

Su McCluskey
Interim Chief
Executive, National
Farmers Federation
(NFF)

9.15am

Leadership Unfiltered: from the inside out: Moderated by **Peta Credlin**, this session goes beyond titles and politics to take a raw, honest look at leadership within Australian dairy. Bringing together Australian dairy leaders, this conversation will explore who they are, how they lead, and the impact they make. Discussion will turn the focus inward — drawing on the experiences of leaders shaping dairy's direction today and reimagining what leadership must look like for the future. It is not about policy or power; it's about people, culture, and courage. Panellists will share insights, challenge assumptions, and spark an honest conversation about the leadership we have today and the kind we need to take the industry forward.

Peta Credlin AO
Sky News political
analyst & former PM
Chief of Staff

Dr Matthew Shaffer
CEO, Dairy Australia

Ben Bennett
President, Australian
Dairy Farmers

John Williams
Australian Dairy
Products Federation
Brought to you by



9.50am

Morning tea brought to you by **Noumi** - Q&A with speakers from Session 1 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Noumi



Session 2 – Profitability & Productivity

11.00am	How does Australian dairy stack up on the global stage? Profitability may be rising, but productivity growth tells a different story. Dairy analyst Gavan Dwyer will give us the low down on the newly commissioned international benchmarking report on Australian dairy farms. Expect insights into how our industry compares globally, where the pressure points and opportunities lie, and what leadership and action are needed to strengthen profitability into the future.	Gavan Dwyer Marsden Jacob
11.20am	Milking it strong: Building on the big-picture view, we bring the focus back to the farm gate. Drawing on years of Dairy Farm Monitor Project (DFMP) data, Fiona Smith will explore the characteristics of farmers who consistently achieve strong results. From decision-making to business practices and behaviours, we will examine what these farmers do well, and how their approaches can be applied more widely across the industry.	Fiona Smith Dairy business consultant, Victoria
11.50am	Work smarter not harder: Lean farming is about working smarter, not harder - eliminating waste, streamlining processes, and focusing on what truly adds value. With a reputation across continents helping businesses become more efficient and sharper, Jana Hocken explores how Lean principles can improve profitability, reduce stress, and build more resilient farming systems.	Jana Hocken The LeanFarm Project
12.20pm	Wealth beyond the farm gate: Once the fundamentals are in place and the farm business is profitable, the next step is creating wealth that extends beyond the farm gate. Leading financial adviser and CEO of Catapult Wealth Tony Catt will delve into how strong cashflow can be transformed into lasting prosperity — through smart investment choices, diversification opportunities, and strategies that give farming families security, flexibility, and the chance to build a legacy for generations to come.	Tony Catt Catapult Wealth
12.50pm	Lunch brought to you by Coles - Q&A with speakers from Session 2 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Coles	coles



**Official media
partners of ADC**

Session 3 – Rethinking dairy sustainability

2.00pm

Sharpen your sustainability edge: Sustainability is no longer just a compliance exercise. It is shaping markets, consumer expectations, and the future of food systems worldwide. For dairy, this means rethinking what sustainability looks like and why it makes good business sense. **Catherine Marriott**, one of Australia's leading agricultural thinkers, will lead exploration of sustainability on a world scale and the rethinking of ESG as 'Enabling Smart Growth'. We'll examine the opportunities that arise when sustainability is seen not as an obligation, but as a driver of resilience, profitability, and trust, and how dairy can lead the way in building thriving businesses and communities.

Catherine Marriott
Nuffield Scholar

2.35pm

Power of Protein: If dairy is to be seen as a true protein farming system, then red meat must be part of the story. For too long, dairy beef has been positioned as a by-product or a sideline opportunity. The reality is different: red meat is a viable, valuable and integrated part of our protein business. Panel discussion with those at the front line including McDonalds **Andrew Wheeler**, FMG Global **Andrew Ralph** and Semex Australia's **Vaughan Johnson** facilitated by journalist **Carlene Dowie** will reframe the conversation — moving from “what premium can I get?” to “how do we keep value within the supply chain?” We'll explore what success looks like, the real story behind beef on dairy and why we must see ourselves not only as milk producers but as beef farmers too.

Andrew Wheeler
McDonalds, Strategic
Sourcing Food ANZ

Andrew Ralph
FMG Global Strategic
Sourcing Manager

Vaughn Johnston
Semex Australia
National Sales
Manager

Facilitated by:
Carlene Dowie
Writer & Editor

3.15pm

Global and national framework: Brian Lindsay will explore the Dairy Sustainability Framework (DSF), focusing on its international foundations, evolution and global alignment, and how it underpins the Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework. Positioned as a strategic, big-picture discussion to help delegates better understand how global sustainability expectations are shaping the dairy industry, and how these frameworks translate into practical, on-farm and business-level outcomes. Rather than a technical deep dive, it will provide clarity on why these frameworks exist, how they connect internationally, and what they mean for Australian dairy businesses and the industry as a whole.

Brian Lindsay
Director, Dairy
Sustainability
Framework (DSF)

3.20pm

Afternoon tea brought to you by **Lallemand Animal Health**
- Q&A with speakers from Session 3 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Lallemand



**Serving you up barista coffee
at ADC 2026**

Session 4 – ADC Dairy Innovators

4.10pm

ADC Innovator Award: sponsored by Gardiner Foundation, an evolution of the former ADC Young Dairy Scientist Award, opens the door to a whole new world of opportunities. Now embracing a wider spectrum beyond pure science, this award invites innovative dairy ideas from brilliant minds across all ages and stages of their careers. Whether seasoned professionals or just starting out, the finalists will be a delight to hear from and will undoubtedly inspire delegates. This is their chance to showcase research-backed or science-based ideas to the entire Australian dairy industry, capturing the very best talent and pushing the boundaries of innovation.

GARDINER
FOUNDATION

5.10pm

Day one close

6.30pm

ADC Gala Dinner sponsored by Rabobank

Rabobank with Master of Ceremonies Kirsten Diprose, Ducks on the Pond / Rural Women's Network.

Rabobank 



Day 2 – Friday 13 February

Session 5 – Mindset mechanics

8.45am **Welcome to Day Two - Kimberley Busteed**

8.50am **Maintaining focus under pressure:** In times of change and challenge, how we think can be just as important as what we do. In a compelling session with former world number 4 tennis player **Jelena Dokic**, explore the power of cultivating a growth mindset, reframing setbacks, and maintaining focus under pressure. Jelena's early tennis years gained significant media and public attention – and many times for reasons beyond her control. A captivating and remarkable story including inspiring insights into navigating uncertainty and how resilience and mindset underpin long-term success.

Jelena Dokic
Tennis star/analyst and media commentator

9.25am **Weathering the storm:** Every farm faces pressure — from price volatility and dry seasons to public scrutiny and family dynamics. Yet while the challenges may be the same, the way people respond can be very different. Some are able to steady the ship, adapt, and emerge stronger, while others struggle to regain their footing. **Carli Phillips** will lead us on the role of wellbeing in navigating pressures. By exploring the connection between mindset, resilience, and practical strategies for self-care, delegates will gain insights into how to support themselves, their families, and their businesses through the ups and downs of farming life.

Carli Phillips
Corporate Wellbeing Hub

9.55am **The human side of safety, why it truly matters:** An emotional and thought-provoking story that goes beyond policies and procedures - highlighting the real cost when safety is overlooked. **William and Marsella Edmonds** share with us what is truly at stake when we fail to prioritise the wellbeing of our people: the lives of our employees, our families, and the communities that rely on them. It's not just about compliance - it's about making sure everyone goes home safe, every single night. Because behind every safety decision is someone's partner, parent, or child.

Wiremu (William) & Marsella Edmonds
NZ

10.25am **Morning tea** brought to you by **Ridley AgriProducts**
- Q&A with speakers from Session 5 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Ridley AgriProducts



Stay charged and connected at ADC 2026 thanks to ADC Partner CowManager with charging hubs located in the trade hall.

Session 6 – Tech & Innovation



11.15am

Ahead of the Curve: the next wave of dairy tech:

Technology is moving fast — and the next wave of innovation is already on its way to dairy businesses. Agri-futurist, **Aidan Connolly** will explore the exciting tools and technologies set to transform the dairy and livestock sectors within the next 1–2 years. From automation and data-driven decision tools to breakthroughs in animal health, nutrition, and sustainability, hear what's coming, what's worth watching, and how farmers can prepare to take full advantage of the opportunities ahead. Real, practical, and forward-looking to leave delegates motivated and inspired about what's next for dairy tech.

Aidan Connolly

Agri-Futurist, Agritech Capital, US

11.55am

How AI can enhance your dairy duties: Artificial intelligence is no longer a future concept — it's here, reshaping how dairy businesses operate. **Rachel Durie** goes beyond the hype to show practical, step-by-step ways to use AI and ChatGPT on farm: from analysing data and drafting communications to streamlining reporting and decision-making. Leave with real examples and confidence to start experimenting, and a clear sense of how AI can boost efficiency, cut costs, and strengthen profitability.

Rachel Durie

Senior Consultant, Perrin Ag, NZ

12.20pm

Dairy early adopters: New technology promises plenty, but how do you know what's right for your business? Early dairy adopters will share how they chose which tools to invest in, what worked, and what didn't. We'll explore the real decision-making process: the checklists they use, how they weigh financial and non-financial benefits, and what a cost-benefit analysis looks like in practice. From labour efficiencies to improvements in animal health, delegates will gain practical insights — and a checklist of questions — to help determine whether new technology is truly fit for purpose on their own farms.

John Penry

Dairy Australia – Facilitator

Jake Altmann Dakara Farms, South Australia

Ryan Ashby

Compass Agri Australia, Tasmania

Matt Glennan

Dixi Park Dairying, Victoria

12.55pm

Lunch brought to you by **Lactalis** - Q&A with speakers from Session 6 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Lactalis



80+

exhibitors & large equipment

ADC Trade show is supersized in 2026. The best in dairy products & services.

Session 7 – More than Milk

2.00pm	Celebrating Dairy – Farmers, trust and global competitiveness: Trust in dairy is strong today, but social license is never guaranteed. UK ag media commentator Claire Taylor has travelled the globe covering farmer stories, issues and campaigns. At ADC 2026, she brings the focus back to the farmer: what do you gain from engaging consumers, and how does that shape not only local trust but also global competitiveness? Claire will explore how proactive storytelling and celebrating the value of milk can strengthen support for dairy, while ensuring our industry remains competitive on the world stage.	Claire Taylor Agvocy Consulting
2.30pm	Dairy Adventures: opening the gate: Two dairy businesses share how they are breaking down barriers and building trust by opening their farms to the public. Through on-farm tours, school visits, and hands-on milking experiences, they're helping consumers see where milk really comes from — and why it matters. The conversation will explore what motivates these farmers to open their gates, how they handle tough questions about animal welfare and sustainability, and the powerful role transparency plays in strengthening dairy's connection with the community.	Facilitated by Glenys Zucco Head of Marketing, Dairy Australia Narelle Zanker Founder Dairy Adventures & Young SA Farmer of the Year Julian Benson Apostle Whey
2.50pm	Creating value beyond the farm gate: Across agriculture, producers and entrepreneurs are reshaping how consumers experience food — turning raw products into powerful brands and premium experiences. From artisan foods and niche beverages to innovative, value-added products, this session explores how creativity, storytelling, and customer connection can transform profitability and build business resilience. Hear inspiring examples of how farmers are diversifying, adding value, and taking control of their story — building brands that connect directly with consumers and capture more from every litre, kilo, or acre produced.	Speaker being confirmed at time of publication
3.15pm	Conference close	

3.30pm ADC Happy Hour



Keep hydrated to go the distance at ADC 2026
thanks to ADC Partner Saputo Dairy Australia