



AUSTRALIAN
DAIRY
CONFERENCE

MORE THAN MILK

BUILDING TRUST, VALUE & LEGACY



11-13 February 2026

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

australiandairyconference.com.au





PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

register now

WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY

ADC Pre Conference Tours – hosted by Lely & Pioneer Seeds (see page 6)

ADC Young Farmers function – sponsored by DeLaval – MCEC

ADC Welcome Function – sponsored by Fonterra – MCEC

ADC Trade Exhibition – MCEC

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY

ADC Morning Milk Run – sponsored by Halter (see page 17)

ADC Breakfast – hosted by Phibro Animal Health – MCEC

ADC Conference Day 1 – MCEC

ADC Trade Exhibition – MCEC

ADC Gala Dinner – hosted by Rabobank – MCEC

FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY

ADC Conference Day 2 – MCEC

ADC Trade Exhibition – MCEC

ADC Happy Hour Drinks – MCEC

MCEC = Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

Registrations and bookings must be made online at
www.australiandairyconference.com.au



From the Conference Chair

Dairy farming is more than a job-it's a passion and a way of life.

Across the industry, farmers pour their heart, soul and energy into their businesses-their herds, their land and their families-driven by deep pride, purpose and relentless ambition.

We know better than anyone that dairy is truly "More than Milk."

Dairy is an industry that creates value far beyond the farm gate: building equity, embracing sustainability and continually evolving to stay ahead of an ever-changing operating environment. Dairy farming demands a balance-keeping sight of the long-term horizon while managing the day-to-day realities with care, building trust, and creating a legacy for future generations.

Our 2026 theme, **'More than Milk – Building Trust, Value & Legacy'**, emerged from extensive consultation and reflection on what Australian dairy farmers need most to thrive-both within their farm business and beyond.

Leadership, the balance between profitability and productivity, redefining sustainability and safeguarding farmer health sit at the heart of the conversations shaping our path forward as the industry faces new and unpredictable challenges.

I am incredibly proud of the Programming Committee, who have worked with passion, insight and purpose to develop a program we are truly confident in. Every session, every speaker and every story has been deliberately chosen to highlight the forces influencing the future of Australian dairy.

Our hope is that the 2026 ADC Program challenges, inspires and motivates farmers as they continue building trust, value and legacy within their own businesses.

We look forward to welcoming the industry to Melbourne in February-this is a conference you won't want to miss.

Ella Credlin
2026 ADC Programming Chair

Industry Partner

As the national peak industry body, Dairy Australia is the ADC Industry Partner playing a pivotal role in bringing you Australia's premier dairy event.



Partners in name and nature, Dairy Australia provides financial input and resources to help bring one of the most valued dairy forums to fruition each year. In a collaborative effort to showcase the Australian dairy industry and drive significant change along with challenging the status quo, we thank Dairy Australia for their ongoing valued support towards ADC.

Welcome Function Partner – Fonterra



Fonterra is the face to bring you back to ADC, as a regular supporter of the ADC Welcome Function. The chatter, networking, introductions and vibe is always a welcome sight as delegates reconnect and meet new colleagues whilst they feast on dairy delicacies in a format that lends itself to good times and a great introduction to ADC every year. We thank Fonterra for their ongoing support to kick off festivities again in 2026!

Gala Dinner Partner – Rabobank



Synonymous with the signature social event at ADC, Rabobank have stamped themselves on the national dairy landscape as the major supporter and host of the ADC Gala Dinner. In a setting that delivers spectacular surprises and magnificent entertainment, we thank Rabobank for their continued contribution towards putting the spotlight on dairy, its achievements, challenges and global outlook. We look forward to what is in store for 2026 Melbourne.

GET ADC SOCIAL

Sign up to ADC news

Get all the latest ADC news straight to your inbox via the ADC e-newsletter. Latest speaker releases, updates, special events and guests, along with everything you need to know about attending ADC 2026 Melbourne.



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Australian Dairy Conference



@ausdairyconf

11-13 February 2026 Melbourne

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2026 Highlights



More than Milk Purpose driven leadership

Led by those who have been at the forefront of the national agriculture agenda, we explore what authentic, contemporary leadership really looks like at ADC 2026. Drawing on examples from both within and beyond agriculture, we will unpack how strong, purpose-driven leaders lead, unite people around shared values, and build confidence in the future of the industry featuring **Su McCluskey** (interim Chief Executive NFF), and a panel session including current dairy industry leaders **Matt Shaffer** (Dairy Australia), **Ben Bennett** (Australian Dairy Farmers), and **John Williams** (Australian Dairy Products Federation) moderated by political analyst and Sky News prime time program 'Credlin' host **Peta Credlin**.



Maintaining focus under pressure

In times of change and challenge, how we think can be just as important as what we do. At ADC 2026, 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.

Early AI adopters

Keeping a finger on the dairy tech pulse is no easy feat. ADC 2026 unpacks the latest innovations that shape the sector and, more importantly, how to make them work on-farm. Global agri-futurist **Aidan Connolly** (Agritech Capital, US) will explore what's next in the ag-tech space — from automation and data to smart systems. Plus Australian early adopters already integrating tech into their businesses, sharing real-world insights on what's delivering results, what's not, and how they're turning innovation into impact and profitability.





Special faces joining ADC

Our ADC community keeps on growing and likewise do the many fabulous personalities that join the team. Kimberley Busteed returns for back-to-back gigs as MC of ADC plenary sessions whilst we welcome Kirsten Diprose from 'Ducks on the Pond' podcast and the Rural Women's Network to host the Gala Dinner. Enjoy exclusive coverage during ADC 2026 from DOTP & fellow podcaster Chloe Brown 'More than Milk' podcast covering everything that is happening on the ground in 2026!!



ADC Centre Stage spotlight

Conversations will continue beyond the plenary walls in 2026 as we introduce the ADC Centre Stage. Sponsored by key ADC partners, the stage based in the ADC Trade Hall will feature Q&A facilitated by Kirsten Diprose with keynote speakers for those added lines of enquiry after their presentation and leading dairy service providers showcasing the latest in innovation and advancements in dairy. Make sure you check it out.

Celebrating dairy

UK ag media commentator and Agvocacy Consulting's Claire Taylor joins ADC to talk about lessons learned travelling the globe covering farmer issues and campaigns from gaining trust and strengthening support for dairy. Meanwhile Glenn's Zucco, Dairy Australia talks to two dairy businesses Dairy Adventures and Apostle Whey who have opened their doors to the public to strengthen connections with the community.



Connect at ADC

Networking with dairy farmers around the country is the main reason ADC has become Australia's premier dairy event. Take advantage of discussion and connection enablers in the ADC social functions from the Young Farmers Function, Welcome Function, signature ADC Gala Dinner, Morning Milk Run for the fitness fanatics and Happy Hour drinks at Conference conclusion.



ADC TOURS

The much-loved ADC tour looks a little different in 2026 as Australian dairy service providers have taken over to offer tailored dairy tours before Conference kick off. Choose your preference from the following tours that are offered to ADC delegates:

Pioneer Seeds ADC Tour

10 February 2026 to 11 February 2026

Join Pioneer Seeds for an engaging and insightful two-day tour through some of Northern Victoria's most innovative barn systems. This exclusive event is designed for dairy farmers looking to explore modern infrastructure, connect with industry leaders, and gain practical insights into high-performing operations.

Tour includes:

- Tours of several leading barn systems across the region, including a talk from Scott McDonald, Agriculture Victoria's Dairy Development Specialist.
- Visit to one of Pioneer Seeds' industry-leading STRIKE (Seed Technology Research In Key Environments) trial sites.
- Comfortable coach transport.
- Overnight accommodation at the Quest Echuca Apartment Hotel.
- All meals covered, including a relaxing dinner aboard the MV Mary Ann, cruising the scenic Murray River.

Location: **Echuca VIC**, return from Melbourne Convention Centre

Price: : **\$400 per person, \$500 per couple**

For more information, contact gentechseeds@gentechseeds.com



PIONEER.
BRAND • SEEDS

Lely ADC Tour

11 February 2026

7.00am departure – 5.00pm return

Discover how innovative farmers transformed their operations with the latest dairy farming technology. See firsthand how these advancements drive efficiency, sustainability, and profitability as we visit on-farm operations in Victoria.

Tour includes:

- Visit to AW Contracting, Whipp dairy farm featuring new shed with 2 x Lely Astronaut A5 milking robots. Built with expansion in mind. Presentation on site.
- Visit to Benlock Jerseys, the Rushton family with a brand new 4 Lely Astronaut A5 Milking robot.
- Lunch included as part of tour.
- Comfortable coach transport – pick up and return Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

Price: **Free for ADC delegates**

For more information, contact lbarnes@lely.com



11-13 February 2026 Melbourne



ADC Breakfast

New in 2026 we are energising the early rising dairy farmer and adding extra value into the itinerary for you to maximise your ADC experience.

- 7.30am Thursday 12 February
- ADC Trade Exhibition Hall
- Bite sized breakfast provided



FREE for the first 100 ADC Farmer delegates to register thanks to Phibro. \$25 per person once allocation exhausted. **Click ADC Breakfast on your registration to attend.**

ADC Centre Stage

We are elevating the conversation in the **Trade Hall in 2026** with the ADC Centre Stage.

Catch speakers post session and **delve deeper** with facilitated Q&A with Ducks on the Pond's Kirsten Diprose during the breaks. Extra dairy content will also be brought to you thanks to ADC 2026 stage partners. So sit back and get comfy whilst you listen to all things dairy at ADC Melbourne 2026.



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	



**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
2.25pm	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 byproduct or a sideline opportunity. The reality is different: red meat is a viable, valuable and integrated part of our protein business. This session will reframe the conversation from — looking at “what premium can I get?” to “how do we keep value within the supply chain?” as we explore what success looks like, the real story behind dairy beef, and why we must see ourselves not only as milk producers but as beef farmers too.	Speaker being confirmed at time of publication
3.00pm	Renewable Milk Energy – Powering the Future of Dairy: Dairy farmers across the world are reimagining the power of dairy — transforming their farms into hubs of innovation and sustainability. Farmers are proving that sustainability and profitability can work hand in hand. By capturing energy, recycling resources, and closing the loop, they're showing how dairy can fuel more than milk — powering homes, businesses, and a more resilient future for the entire industry.	Speaker being confirmed at time of publication

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



80+
exhibitors & large
equipment

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

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



Official coffee sponsors of ADC

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.	Facilitated by John Penry Dairy Australia Altmann Farms (SA) Weekly Times Farmer of the Year
12.55pm	Lunch brought to you by Lactalis - Q&A with speakers from Session 6 on ADC Centre Stage thanks to Lactalis	

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 Agvocacy 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	

MORNING MILK RUN

6.15am start

Thursday 12 February 2026

The Tan Track, Royal Botanic
Gardens, Melbourne

From cows on the beach on the GC to dairy farmers hitting the urban streets - the ADC Morning Milk Run is back by popular demand in 2026.

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.

ADC Morning Milk Run is free and brought to you by Halter.



THE PRESENTERS



Su McCluskey

Interim Chief Executive,
National Farmers Federation

Ms McCluskey commenced her role as Interim Chief Executive of the National Farmers' Federation in September 2025. Previously she was Australia's inaugural Special Representative for Australian Agriculture. With an increasing focus on more environmentally sustainable production, Ms McCluskey worked to promote and demonstrate Australia's commitment to climate-smart sustainable agriculture, and counter prescriptive policy that could negatively impact Australian agriculture and global food security. Ms McCluskey brought a depth of knowledge to this role, being a cattle producer herself, as well as Chair of the Crawford Fund, a Director of LiveCorp and the Australasian Pork Research Institute, a member of the CSIRO Food and Agriculture Advisory Group and an ATSE Fellow.

Ms McCluskey was previously a Director of Australian Unity, Commissioner for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and held positions as a Commissioner on the National COVID-19 Advisory Board, a member of the Charities Review, CEO of the Regional Australia Institute and the Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations and the Executive Director of the Office of Best Practice Regulation. She has also held senior positions with the Business Council of Australia, the National Farmers' Federation and the Australian Taxation Office.



Peta Credlin AO

Sky News political analyst & host 'Credlin'

PETA CREDLIN AO is a political analyst who hosts her top-rating prime time programme 'Credlin' on Sky News each weeknight and is a national columnist with both News Corp Sunday newspapers (The Sunday Telegraph, Sunday Herald-Sun and Queensland's Sunday Mail) and The Australian. A trained lawyer, Peta has been involved with the University of Melbourne's School of Government as an Honorary Professorial Fellow and is a board director at the Robert Menzies Institute at the University of Melbourne and Quadrant (Magazine).

For 16 years, Peta was a senior adviser to a number of Howard Government ministers across a range of portfolios including defence, communications and the arts, immigration and foreign affairs. Between 2009 and 2015, she was Chief of Staff to the Hon Tony Abbott AC during his time as Leader of the Opposition and later as Prime Minister of Australia. She is one of the longest serving chiefs of staff to a political leader. For many years, she appeared in the Australian Financial Review's 'Power List' and in 2015 was named Australia's most powerful woman by the Australian Women's Weekly, with a number two ranking the previous year.

She is a Walkley Award winner (2016), TV Week Logie Award winner (2017) for her role in Sky News Australia's 2016 Federal Election coverage and a joint winner of Harper Bazaar magazine's Woman of the Year in 2016. Her programme 'Credlin' has been the number one rating show on Sky News in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. In the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours, Peta Credlin was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for 'distinguished service to parliament and politics, to policy development, and to the executive function of government.



Dr Matthew Shaffer
CEO Dairy Australia

Dr Matthew Shaffer was appointed as Dairy Australia's new Chief Executive Officer, from 16 July 2025. Matt most recently served as CEO of DataGene from 2016 – 2025. DataGene is an Australian industry-owned organisation focused on driving genetic gain and herd improvement in the Australian dairy industry.

Prior to that, Matt was CEO of Holstein Australia from 2005 – 2016. Holstein Australia is an industry organisation which supports the continual development of the Holstein cattle breed, promoting the benefits of the breed through the provision of high quality, independent and valued information services to the dairy industry.

Matt started his career in the finance industry for the US based Hancock Agriculture Investment Group where he played a critical international operations role. Matt was the Director of International Operations for Hancock Agriculture, based in Boston, USA from 1997-2000. Matt then moved to Australia and established Hancock Agriculture Australia, leading that operation from 2000-2003.

Matt grew up on a farm in Western Pennsylvania, USA, where his first paying job was milking cows. He went on to attend Penn State and Cambridge. Matt has a PhD in International Relations, from Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK.



Ben Bennett
President, Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF)

Ben Bennett has worked in dairy farming in south-west Victoria for 16 years and he has experience in low-cost, lucerne-based pasture and domestic seasonal calving. Prior to his work in the dairy sector, Ben worked for 13 years in the meat processing industry. In this role he managed everything from procurement to processing and international

marketing exposure and has experience with costings modeling. Ben began his career on the floor with roles that ranged from labouring to quality control and technical project management. He then moved to the line and gained experience in executive management and whole of business consulting. He has a graduate diploma in agriculture and a degree in biotechnology and bioprocess engineering.



Gavan Dwyer
Dairy Analyst, Marsden Jacob

Gavan has 30 years of professional experience and is one of Australia's lead practitioners in agricultural resource economics and public policy review. Clients work with Gavan for his strong understanding of these issues and his experience in applying economic principles and sound decision making to wicked applied public policy policies and programs. Since joining Marsden Jacob, Gavan has worked on a wide array of high-level and applied projects in a diverse set of sectors including agriculture, resources, water, fisheries, biosecurity, natural and earth resources, land contamination, energy, transport, and sport including for government departments and agencies across Australia, local councils, and non-government organisations.



Fiona Smith
Dairy business consultant

Fiona was raised on a dairy farm in south western Victoria which she now runs as a beef farm with her husband. Fiona has her own consulting business in Australia providing farm business analysis to farmers along with succession planning and scenario planning to assess the impacts on profitability of strategic changes in farm businesses. She works as an experienced facilitator and presenter at farm business discussion groups and seminars. Fiona is extensively involved in the Dairy Farm Monitor Project and was also involved in the recent productivity and competitiveness work.



Tony Catt
Director, Catapult Wealth

With over three decades of experience in the finance industry, Tony brings a strong background in accounting, research, stockbroking, succession planning, and financial planning which allows him to provide a broad range of advice to clients in different stages of their life. Throughout his career, Tony has been a passionate educator and presenter, sharing his expertise through lectures and seminars with organisations such as Women Together Learning (WoTL), Farm Owners Academy (FOA), the Australian Shareholders Association (ASA), regional TAFEs, and ASX Investor Hours for more than 30 years.



Jana Hocken
The LeanFarm Project

Jana is a Lean consultant with more than 20 years' experience working for Toyota and in Lean consulting. She is the founder of consulting company Improve8. Jana has helped dozens of companies around the world use Lean thinking to help them improve their businesses. Since 2013 she has also been involved in supporting her husband's 1000-head dairy farm in New Zealand, introducing Lean thinking to the business. She developed and rolled out the successful LeanFarm training program across New Zealand in 2017. Since then, Jana has founded The LeanFarm Project to help create awareness of lean in farming and her successful LeanFarm training workshops have been delivered to over 1000 dairy, sheep, beef, goat, deer, arable, horticulture farmers across NZ, Australia and Europe. Jana has also engaged with thousands of farmers around the world, speaking at numerous agricultural events. In 2019 she published her book 'The Lean Dairy Farm' – a highly practical and relevant step by step guide that every farmer globally can use to apply



Catherine Marriott (OAM)
Consultant Director

As a passionate advocate and thought leader for agriculture and rural communities, Catherine offers a proactive, global perspective with holistic systems thinking. Catherine's career has spanned numerous geographies and cultures, providing a rich tapestry and a nuanced understanding of global agriculture and rural communities. Catherine understands the intricate connections between rural communities, their businesses and the environment. She has worked extensively to promote agricultural practices that boost profitability while enhancing environmental and human wellbeing. She has self discipline, experience, generosity and intellect which assist in building incredible teams and implement impactful change for those she works with. Catherine loves acquiring and sharing knowledge, empowering individuals, and engaging in bold discussions about things important to business, people and the planet.



Jelena Dokic
Former international tennis player
& media commentator

Former world number 4 tennis player, Jelena Dokic embodies resilience and triumph.

Her awe-inspiring journey on the court includes making the semi-finals of Wimbledon at 17 years of age and being a doubles Grand Slam finalist at 18. Yet, beyond the spotlight, she endured adversity, including abuse from her father for 15 years. This trauma shadowed her success, affecting her mental health.

At 22, she faced a breaking point, but chose resilience. Dokic emerged as a survivor, determined not just to survive but to thrive. Her story, shared in bestselling books Unbreakable and Fearless, and her number 1 documentary The Jelena Dokic Story, which was named 2025 Feature Documentary Production of the Year at the Screen Producers

Australia Awards, and the 2025 Logies Best Factual or Documentary Program, showcases her journey from victim, survivor to thriver.

Today, she inspires as a TEDx presenter and commentator, 2-time bestselling author, a living testament to the human spirit's resilience.



Carli Phillips

CEO Corporate Wellbeing Hub , Lead Researcher

Carli is a Wellbeing Keynote Speaker across the globe leading Wellbeing for Johnson & Johnson and was the recipient of 'Best Health & Wellbeing Program 2020'. A degree in Health Science and a Masters in Business, Carli's research uncovered key success criteria needed to build successful employee Wellbeing programs. Carli is a Nutritionist, Mental Health First Aider and Lead Researcher for government wellbeing research projects. Carli deliberately ditched her own wellbeing whilst juggling work, studying and caring for loved ones. The physical and mental illness of burnout stopped her in her tracks. Through recovery, Carli has now prevented recurrence whilst ducking life's curve balls for the last ten years. Presenting wellbeing science and strategies, Carli will inspire you to protect and uplift your wellbeing.



Wiremu and Marsella Edmonds

Founder of Stand in the Gap

Wiremu and Marsella Edmonds are the driving force behind *Stand In The Gap* — a movement born from deep personal loss and an unshakeable commitment to transform the culture of health, safety, and wellbeing across industries and communities. In 2013, they founded Tuakiri, reimagining how organisations think and act around safety, leadership, and care. Through their signature keynote, "Stand in the Gap," they've reached over 100,000 people worldwide — challenging the "production before people" mindset and inspiring leaders to protect what truly matters: their people.

Wiremu is a fourth-generation bushman and master storyteller, and one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most authentic leadership voices with his commanding presence and ability to connect with any audience inspiring transformation from the boardroom to the bush including the New Zealand All Blacks Sevens to win the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series, sharing lessons of mindset, courage, and identity. Marsella brings balance, wisdom, and heart to their shared work. A mother, grandmother, and leader, she fosters trust and resilience through empathy and grounded strength. Her calm presence helps others heal, communicate, and grow — especially through change and adversity.

Together, Wiremu and Marsella embody leadership in motion — two powerful voices working as one. Their impact spans industries and generations, uniting the personal and professional, the cultural and corporate, the ancient and modern. Beyond workplaces, they help families and communities break cycles of harm and rebuild through cultural values and connection.



Aidan Connolly

Agri-futurist, Agritech Capital, US

'Forbes' describes Aidan as a "food and farm future futurologist". Aidan is an unusual leader. With 30 years of experience in the agribusiness sector, his role has changed so often that his experience covers the full range of executive and managerial challenges. He has direct experience with greenfield start-ups, high-growth environments, turnaround issues, and challenging economic environments in a wide range of political and economic systems. Aidan's leadership experience ranges from strategy to operations to production, as well as developing sales programs and cohesive teams that deliver strong results. Having worked in over 100 countries, lived in six, and spoken five languages, Aidan is well-placed to understand the complexities of virtually any environment. He has worked in political associations with state and national governments in the US, China, Europe, and Brazil, and international organizations such as the European Union and the United Nations.



Rachel Durie

Senior Consultant, Perrin Ag, NZ

Rachel Durie is a Senior Consultant with Perrin Ag, based in Waikato, New Zealand. Growing up on a dairy farming family and now contract milking, Rachel brings firsthand experience to her advisory work. She works directly with dairy farmers to improve business performance and resilience, from owner-operator farms to large Māori-owned operations. Rachel provides consulting and supervision services, including governance and operational support, and helps farmers make informed decisions that drive profitability and efficiency. Alongside her on-farm work, Rachel leads various industry projects with regional councils, government, and sector bodies. These projects span farmer education, environmental initiatives, and farm system innovation - including composting shelters for dairy cows and exploring opportunities for artificial intelligence. Rachel brings a practical, solutions-focused approach to supporting dairy businesses in an increasingly complex environment.



Dr John Penry

Principal Scientist, Dairy Australia

After graduating from University of Melbourne Veterinary Science in 1990, John worked in a mixed dairy vet practice at Camperdown in SW Victoria until 2013. From the late 1990's, after completing a Masters program in Dairy Medicine and Management, he spent a large portion of each year involved with industry funded Australian national animal health and feedbase programs including Countdown and InCalf. John completed a PhD program in 2016 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison conducting milk harvesting research with Professor Doug Reinemann. In addition, he had previously completed membership examinations with the Australian and NZ College of Veterinary Scientists in ruminant nutrition. Following a research and advisory role at Anexa/Cognosco in NZ, he joined Dairy Australia in 2019 and is the Principal Scientist for the organisation. Through his various industry roles, John has presented at conferences

and workshops in twelve countries, primarily on dairy animal health and milk harvesting topics. His family remain based in Camperdown, South West Vic.



David Altmann

Dakkara Farms, Murray Bridge SA

David Altmann is a fifth-generation dairy farmer based in Murray Bridge, South Australia, where he and his wife Karen run an intensive, zero-grazing dairy operation of approximately 500 cows milking three times daily. In 2006 they transitioned their herd to a Total Mixed Ration (TMR) feeding system—removing the reliance on grazing, stabilising feed inputs across seasons, and allowing consistent productivity and milk component levels all year round. Under David's leadership the farm has embraced technological innovation and welfare-focused design, including some of Australia's first compost barn systems for dairy cows. David emphasises doing the basics really well: "putting the cows first" and holding production and business systems to high operational standards. Recently, David, Karen and their son Jake were recognised as the overall winners of the 2024 The Weekly Times Coles Farmer of the Year Awards, acknowledging their farm's innovation, productivity and sustainability.



Claire Taylor

Director, Agvocracy Consulting

Claire Taylor hails from a beef farm in southwest Scotland and is a seasoned media professional, international MC, and keynote speaker with over a decade of experience in TV, radio, print, and PR.

As a Nuffield Farming Scholar who has studied agriculture across six continents, Claire brings a wealth of knowledge and a global perspective to agricultural advocacy and communications. Now based in Orange, NSW, she farms alongside her partner and founded Agvocracy Consulting to help agricultural businesses and organisations effectively communicate their stories, build social licence,

and foster positive collaborations within the global agricultural industry.

She is also a founding board member of Unstoppable World, an initiative delivering immersive learning journeys across Africa that combine exploration of food systems with leadership and mental health training to strengthen resilience in agriculture. Claire is passionate about using her platform to amplify the voice of agriculture worldwide, challenge outdated thinking, and rethink how we connect both within the farming community and beyond.



Glenys Zucco

Head of Marketing Dairy Australia

As Dairy Australia's Head of Marketing, Glenys leads the organisation's national marketing strategy to enhance the reputation of the Australian dairy industry, grow demand for dairy products, and attract new talent into dairy careers. She has overseen a broad portfolio of major campaigns and initiatives, including Aussie Dairy, Simple Greatness, Dairy Matters, Legendairy, Healthy Bones Action Week, the Australian Grand Dairy Awards, Picasso Cows, and the Farmer Ambassador Program - all designed to strengthen consumer trust, celebrate excellence, and deepen community connection with dairy. Originally from a dairy farm in the Victorian town of Katunga, Glenys brings genuine industry insight and passion to her role. She is also a regular media spokesperson for Dairy Australia, championing the contribution of dairy farmers and the value of the industry to Australia..



Narelle Zanker

Director, Dairy Adventures

Narelle Zanker's journey from classroom teacher to dairy farmer and agritourism operator has been shaped by her love for farming, education, and community. Now working full time on the farm for the past three years, she has brought her passion

for teaching into the world of dairy through Dairy Adventures, which she runs with her husband Joel. Together, Narelle and Joel aim to bridge the gap between farmers and consumers by creating meaningful, hands-on connections that inspire curiosity and appreciation for agriculture. Through fun and educational experiences, Dairy Adventures gives visitors a chance to see where their food comes from and experience the heart of dairy farming. Recognised as the South Australia Young Farmer of the Year 2025, Narelle continues to share her enthusiasm for farming and education with visitors of all ages, encouraging others to see the joy, care, and hard work behind what she does.



Kirsten Diprose

Journalist & communications specialist

Gala Dinner MC & Facilitator ADC Centre Stage

Kirsten Diprose is a journalist, podcaster and communications specialist who lives on a sheep and cropping farm in Caramut, south-west Victoria. Kirsten founded the Rural Podcasting Co, a podcast coaching and agency service, specifically for people in rural areas. She has also founded and co-hosts two podcasts: Ducks on the Pond (a podcast specifically for rural women) and Town Criers (a comedy podcast championing small towns).

Kirsten has spent much of her career as a radio and TV news journalist for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. She has also presented the news and current affairs Drive program ABC Statewide Drive Victoria. You can still hear Kirsten as a regular guest on ABC TV's News Breakfast, where she has a monthly newspaper review and on the Conversation Hour on ABC Radio Melbourne. Kirsten is currently a PhD candidate at Deakin University, studying journalism, podcasting and local news sustainability. She is married to a farmer and mother to two busy farm boys!

PRICE LIST

Early bird registrations for ADC 2026 Melbourne

Registration Type	Cost *inclusive of GST	Details
Early Bird Farmer Registration	\$825	Register & pay by Wednesday 17th December 2025 for this ticket pricing. Full conference package
Early Bird Farmer Registration – second and subsequent from the same farm	\$715	Register & pay by Wednesday 17th December 2025 for this ticket pricing. Must use the group portal and be from the same farm/employer. Full conference package
Farmer Registration (after early bird closes)	\$990	Full conference package
Non-Farmer Registration	\$1485	Full conference package
Day Registration	\$450 Farmer \$715 Non Farmer	One day of conference only. NOTE: evening functions are not included with this ticket.
Additional sponsor	\$1,100	Full Conference package for extra sponsor delegates.
Welcome Function	\$120 per person	Included in full conference package. Additional tickets can be purchased for accompanying guests. Includes cocktail style dinner and drinks.
ADC Gala Dinner	\$200 per person	Included in full conference package. Additional tickets can be purchased for accompanying guests. Includes 3 course meal, drinks and entertainment.

Full Conference package includes:

- ADC Young Farmers Function (if applicable)
- ADC Welcome Function by Fonterra
- ADC Morning Milk Run
- ADC Breakfast – first 100 Farmers to register are free
- ADC Conference Days 1 and 2
- ADC Trade Exhibition – 2.5 days entry
- ADC Gala Dinner by Rabobank
- ADC Happy Hour

Early Bird Registrations close **Wednesday 17th December 2025.**

Register online at www.australiandairyconference.com.au



ACCOMMODATION

Melbourne offers extensive diversity of accommodation options within walking distance of the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre (MCEC), the CBD hub and the energy and highlights of the epicurean Victorian capital from arts, culture, sport and major events.

High end hotels and apartments, suites, large chain affordability and a plethora of boutique accommodation. There is something for everyone around the MCEC hub. Explore options via www.mcec.com.au as a starting point.

Please note delegates are responsible for making their own accommodation bookings and arrangements.



GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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Cancellation Policy A full refund, less a \$150 cancellation fee, will be made on any cancellations received by Friday 23 January 2026. No refunds will be issued for any registration cancellations made after Friday 30 January 2026, although substitute delegates will be accepted.

Insurance Participants shall be regarded as carrying their own risk for personal injury or loss of property, including baggage, during the conference. We strongly recommend that, at the time of booking your travel, you take out a travel insurance policy of your choice. The organisers are in no way responsible for any claims concerning insurance.

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Condition of Entry It is a condition of entry that no delegate may disrupt the order of events or intent of the program. Anyone considered to be disturbing the program intent will be asked to leave. Only pamphlets and brochures approved by the event organisers may be distributed.

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