Dairy NSW Strategic Plan

2026-30



Vision

Thriving dairy businesses supported by strong connections, informed decisions and regional leadership.

Purpose

Dairy NSW's purpose is to connect NSW dairy farmers with the people, knowledge, programs and opportunities that strengthen business capability, improve decision-making and support prosperous dairy businesses.

Strategic intent

To strengthen the capability and resilience of NSW dairy farming by connecting farmers with the knowledge, partnerships and opportunities that support informed business decisions.



Dairy NSW's approach

Dairy NSW delivers value by:

- **Connecting** farmers with the people, knowledge, programs and opportunities that matter.
- **Collaborating** with industry, government and research partners to maximise outcomes.
- **Building capability** by supporting access to practical information and informed decision-making.
- **Responding to regional needs** by ensuring NSW priorities remain central to industry investment and delivery.



Introduction

About Dairy NSW's Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan sets the long-term direction for Dairy NSW through to 2029-30. It establishes the organisation's strategic priorities and provides a framework for decision-making, investment and delivery over the life of the plan.

Developed by the Dairy NSW Board, the strategy reflects input from Members' Council, Regional Dairy Groups, industry stakeholders and strategic planning discussions undertaken throughout 2026.

The Strategic Plan provides the foundation for Dairy NSW's Annual Operating Plans (AOPs), ensuring that annual activities, projects and investments contribute to achieving the organisation's long-term strategic direction.

While the strategy aligns with Dairy Australia's strategic priorities where appropriate, it also recognises the unique opportunities and challenges facing the New South Wales dairy industry. This enables Dairy NSW to remain responsive to regional needs while contributing to national industry outcomes through collaboration and partnership.

About Dairy NSW

Dairy NSW is the regional development organisation representing and supporting dairy farmers across New South Wales. Guided by a farmer and skills-based board with strong industry representation, Dairy NSW works collaboratively with farmers, Regional Dairy Groups, Dairy Australia, government, research organisations, service providers and industry partners to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the NSW dairy industry.

As the operating environment continues to evolve, Dairy NSW's role extends beyond coordinating extension and development programs. The organisation connects farmers with trusted people, knowledge, programs and opportunities that strengthen farm business capability, improve access to practical information and support informed decision-making.

Through collaboration, partnership and project delivery, Dairy NSW identifies regional priorities, facilitates knowledge exchange, supports industry capability and helps ensure NSW dairy farmers remain connected to emerging opportunities, research and investment.

By bringing together regional insights with national initiatives, Dairy NSW helps ensure that the unique needs and perspectives of NSW dairy farmers continue to inform industry development and investment.

About Dairy NSW's operating environment

The NSW dairy industry operates across one of Australia's most geographically diverse and complex production environments. Dairy businesses span coastal, hinterland and inland regions, encompassing a wide range of farming systems, climates, production models and business structures.

This diversity is a significant strength of the industry; however, it also creates increasing complexity for dairy businesses. Farmers are making decisions within an environment shaped by changing climatic conditions, evolving technologies, workforce challenges, rising input costs, market volatility and an increasingly interconnected policy and regulatory landscape.

At the same time, the industry is becoming more collaborative and nationally connected. Farmers have access to more information, research, technologies and support services than ever before, but navigating these opportunities and identifying what is most relevant to individual businesses can be increasingly challenging.

While farm numbers have declined, the average NSW dairy farm has increased in scale and productivity, reflecting ongoing industry consolidation and investment in more efficient farming systems. As farms become fewer and more geographically dispersed, maintaining strong local relationships and ensuring farmers across all regions have equitable access to trusted information, services and support remains critical.

In this environment, Dairy NSW has an important role to play in strengthening connections across the industry. By connecting farmers with the right people, knowledge, programs and opportunities, Dairy NSW helps improve access to practical information, builds farm business capability and supports informed decision-making.

Working in partnership with Dairy Australia, Regional Dairy Groups (RDGs), government agencies, research organisations and industry stakeholders, Dairy NSW contributes to a coordinated and collaborative approach to industry development, ensuring regional priorities continue to shape investment and deliver value for NSW dairy farmers.

Strategic context

The context considered in the development of Dairy NSW's Strategic Plan are:

Our strengths

- Trusted regional relationships
- NSW-specific knowledge
- Strong partnerships
- Proven project delivery

Our challenges

- Increasing complexity for farm businesses
- Large and diverse operating environment
- Limited organisational resources
- Fragmented service landscape

Our opportunities

- Strengthen farm business capability
- Enhance collaboration across the industry
- Expand project delivery and external funding
- Improve access to practical tools and information

Our strategic focus

- Connect people and organisations
- Build farm business capability
- Support informed decision-making
- Deliver through partnerships



Strategic priorities

Dairy NSW has identified four strategic priority areas to guide our direction and activities for 2026–30.

Informed by consultation with our members, dairy farmers, and industry stakeholders, these priorities reflect the key needs, challenges and opportunities facing the NSW dairy industry.

Together, they will shape Dairy NSW's focus, investment and objectives over the next four years, ensuring our work delivers meaningful value for farmers and supports a strong, resilient and sustainable dairy industry.

1

Strengthen connections

Strengthen connections between farmers, industry, research and government.

Objectives

- Strengthen regional engagement
- Improve access to trusted people
- Increase collaboration
- Translate farmer needs into industry

2

Build capability

Improve access to knowledge, programs and tools that strengthen farm business capability.

Objectives

- Increase participation in Farm Business Monitor programs
- Improve understanding of profit drivers
- Increase awareness of available programs
- Improve access to NSW-specific information

3

Enable better decisions

Provide practical information, benchmarking and learning opportunities that help farmers make informed business decisions.

Objectives

- Promote benchmarking
- Support business planning
- Improve awareness of decision-support tools
- Share practical NSW examples

4

Deliver through partnerships

Coordinate projects and partnerships that maximise value for NSW dairy farmers.

Objectives

- Deliver projects
- Secure funding
- Strengthen partnerships
- Reduce duplication

How we'll measure success

Dairy NSW will monitor progress through a combination of quarterly **member feedback, participation and delivery data,** and **partner feedback**. Measures are intended to show direction and value over time, rather than operate as fixed targets. This approach keeps measurement focused on whether Dairy NSW is creating value for members, while retaining flexibility in how priorities are delivered over the life of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic priority measures

Each quarter, Dairy NSW will work with the **Regional Dairy Groups (RDGs)** to gather a short member pulse across the four strategic priorities.

How we'll know we're making progress for each priority.

Strategic priority	Primary measure	Supporting indicators	We know we're making progress when
Connect	Dairy NSW helps connect me with relevant people, programs and opportunities.	Member connection and access; regional engagement and participation; regional priorities captured and reflected in industry discussions.	• Members report stronger connections with Dairy NSW. • Farmers participate in regional activities. • Emerging regional priorities are regularly captured.
Build capability	Dairy NSW provides information and activities that strengthen my farm business capability.	Participation in relevant business management activities; awareness and access to resources; understanding of key business performance drivers.	• Participation in farm business programs increases. • Members report greater awareness of available resources. • Farmers indicate increased confidence in understanding business performance.
Support better decisions	Dairy NSW helps me access information that supports informed business decisions.	Access to benchmarking and decision-support resources; confidence accessing relevant information; practical NSW examples and resources shared.	• Benchmarking and decision-support tools are promoted and accessed. • Members report greater confidence in identifying business opportunities. • Practical NSW examples are shared across regions.
Deliver through partnerships	Dairy NSW works effectively with partners to deliver value to NSW dairy farmers.	Collaborative projects and initiatives delivered; external and project funding secured and diversified; partner feedback on Dairy NSW's value and role.	• Collaborative projects increase. • New funding opportunities are secured. • Partners identify Dairy NSW as a trusted delivery organisation.

How we will use the information

The first year will establish a baseline, with subsequent results used to identify trends alongside participation, delivery and partner feedback.

Measures will be reviewed bi-annually by the Board and will inform Annual Operating Plans and priorities, while retaining the flexibility to respond to changing NSW dairy industry needs and opportunities.

Looking ahead

The NSW dairy industry will continue to evolve.

As farmers navigate increasing complexity, changing markets and emerging opportunities, Dairy NSW will remain committed to strengthening connections, building capability and working collaboratively with industry partners to support informed decision-making and prosperous dairy businesses.

Through trusted relationships, regional leadership and practical delivery, Dairy NSW will continue to ensure the voices and priorities of NSW dairy farmers help shape the future of the industry.



Dairy NSW regions



Dairy NSW is broadly divided into six regions:

- Central West
- Far South Coast
- Hunter
- Mid Coast
- South Coast and Highlands
- Wagga and Inland

Contact

Dairy NSW's Region Members

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Dairy NSW Board

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