

Performance Report

Key achievements at a glance

2025-26



Who we are

As the industry-owned research and services body, Dairy Australia is here to improve farm profitability by increasing herd and feed productivity, while remaining focused on sustainable practices. We also promote Australian dairy, drive community trust and expand market opportunities.

This delivers a proud, successful and valued industry that celebrates dairy, attracts great people and strengthens communities.

2030 industry goals

In consultation with farmers and industry, Dairy Australia has developed industry goals focused on shaping a profitable and sustainable industry.

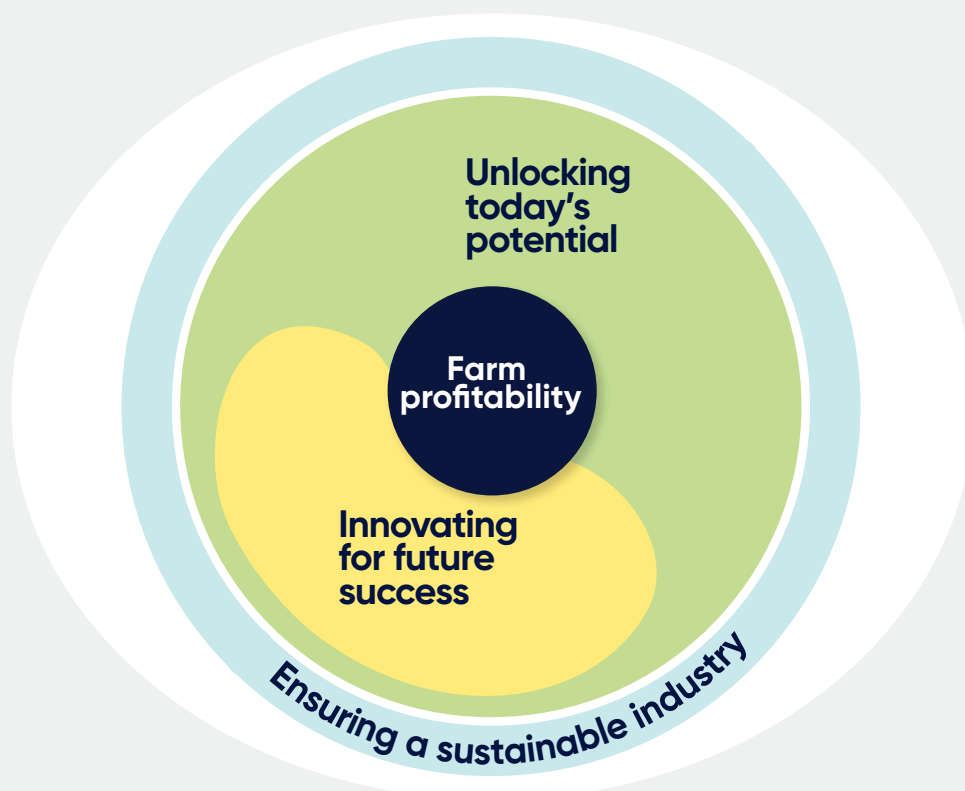
The primary industry goal is for every farm business to achieve an average return on total assets (ROTA) in the range of five to six per cent through to 2030.

The four industry goals in support of this are:

- **Increase profitability** – improve earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) by 30c per kilogram of milk solids.
- **Increase feed productivity** – increase homegrown feed utilisation by one tonne per milking hectare.
- **Increase herd productivity** – increase genetic gain by \$90 per cow entering the herd.
- **Increase herd longevity and other sustainable practices** – increase the proportion of first calving heifers reaching their third lactation and beyond by 12%.

Our priorities

Our Strategic Plan 2030 is focused on three priorities to guide where Dairy Australia will focus effort and investment. These priorities reflect the strong connection between productivity, profitability and sustainability.



Key achievements in 2025-26

Unlocking today's potential



1.1 Uplifting farm business performance

- Expanded farm business decision support through DairyBase, which now supports more than 3,200 registered users, 19,610 farm datasets and 6,140 carbon calculator datasets.
- Enabled 168 farmers to make more informed decisions about the future of their business through first-time participation in Our Farm Our Plan.

1.2 Enhancing farm operations

- Equipped farmers to make on-farm improvements, with 64% of dairy farmers participating in at least one Dairy Australia activity, event or resource during 2025-26, and 65% of those reported taking action to do things differently because of the information or support received.
- Deepened farmer engagement and service planning, with 73% of all farmers engaging with the Farm Engagement team, identifying priority areas of focus for their farm which then inform regional and national priorities.

1.3 Creating pathways for people

- Piloted the Dairy Capability Guide across 15 farm businesses of varying sizes and systems across six regions with good feedback received to inform implementation.
- Built leadership capability on farm by delivering the Second-in-Charge (2IC) program to 130 participants across Western Victoria, Gippsland, Murray, South Australia, New South Wales and Western Australia. Over 90% of participants reported high satisfaction.
- Assisted with over 280 farmer enquiries relating to industrial relations and human resources.

Innovating for future success



2.1 Building feedbase productivity

- DairyHIGH 2 research showed farmers could reduce annual nitrogen fertiliser use by 50% while maintaining milk production.
- Awareness of the Forage Value Index among farmers increased from 52% to 69% between 2023 and 2026, accompanied by increased use of the tool by farmers and advisors in ryegrass variety selection.
- Delivered new feedbase research insights across regions, including forage crop rotations, kikuyu grazing management and irrigated pasture systems.

2.2 Building herd productivity

- Delivered new breeding tools to support calf health, cow survival, fertility, health, heat tolerance, feed efficiency and herd productivity, with over 62,000 genomic tests completed.
- Identified factors associated with cows remaining in the herd, including links between omega-3 blood lipid profiles and lower culling risk in older cows.
- Grew capability to improve reproductive performance through the Repro Refresh project, informed by analysis of 1,202 herds.

2.3 Adapting to a changing operating environment

- Engaged more than 700 farmers and service providers through national workshops on understanding farm carbon, with 159 farmers completing one-to-one consultations to calculate their farm carbon number.
- Improved access to practical effluent management expertise and guidance through updated resources, collaboration on revised Victorian Effluent Guidelines and delivery of the Design of Livestock Effluent Systems course.

Ensuring a sustainable industry



3.1 Advancing industry sustainability

- Strengthened Australian dairy's competitiveness and market access through the 2025 Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework Scorecard, updated Animal Care Commitments, and 39 policy submissions with Australian Dairy Industry Council.
- Strengthened industry resilience by providing timely insights, guidance and preparedness support during H5 avian influenza and fuel and fertiliser disruptions, helping farmers and industry make informed decisions and respond confidently to emerging risks.

3.2 Remaining locally and globally competitive

- Protected and enhanced opportunities for Australian dairy exports through coordinated market development, trade policy, technical market access and market intelligence activities.
- Enhanced Australia's strategic positioning in China by combining sustainability leadership, market intelligence and trusted industry relationships to support future dairy trade, influence and competitiveness.
- Supported farm business decision-making through economic analysis and an intensive dairy housed systems webinar attended by more than 100 dairy industry participants.

3.3 Driving community trust and support

- Maintained strong community trust in Australia's dairy industry, with 86% of Australians expressing trust in the sector, supported through farmer ambassador activities, school education, community engagement and consumer campaigns.
- Contributed towards an increase in the proportion of Australians making an effort to consume dairy every day to 59%, up from 56% the previous year, supported by nutrition research, health professional engagement and evidence-based health campaign.





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