

Raising the Roof 2026

Event program

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Welcome

Welcome to Raising the Roof 2026, the only major Australian dairy industry event focusing on intensive farm systems and their supporting infrastructure.

This event was developed by Dairy Australia with input and support from a wide range of stakeholders to ensure all who attend will gain practical insights into the design and management of modern dairy farming systems. It aims to support and share world-leading practices in dairy feeding and housing infrastructure from consideration through to operation.

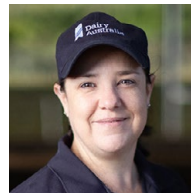
Over the next three days, Raising the Roof provides an opportunity to glean insights from progressive thinkers, technical experts and successful farm operators across the agriculture industry, both here and abroad.

The program for Raising the Roof 2026 has been carefully curated by a dedicated working group which includes farmers, service providers and subject matter experts to ensure the best possible experience for all attendees.

Our on-farm day will offer the chance to get up close and personal with systems in action, and we thank our farmer hosts for opening their farms up to allow us to visit. We will also once again provide some virtual farm tours which will feature newly established systems and also show how systems have changed over the years.

Events such as this cannot be held without the generous support of sponsors and we encourage all attendees to make the most of the chance to network with our sponsors at their trade stalls as well as with fellow farmers at the social dinners on Wednesday and Thursday nights.

On behalf of the conference committee, I would like to thank all attendees for taking the time to attend. We hope you enjoy the experience and gain insights and knowledge that you can apply to your business.



Alicia Richters
Dairy Australia
Development & Regional Adaptation Lead

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Event program

The information in this printed program is accurate as of the time of printing. However, please be aware that program details may be subject to change.

Day One | Wednesday 20 May | Riverlinks Eastbank, Shepparton, Victoria

Time	Detail	Speaker
8:00am	Arrival & registration If you need assistance during the event, locate one of the Raising the Roof team members.	
9:00am	Welcome	Alicia Richters , Development and Regional Adaptation Lead, Dairy Australia
9:10am	Session 1: Facility design	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Zoe Vogels , National Milk Quality & Biosecurity Lead, Dairy Australia
	What's new with calf housing Navigating the rough seas of transition - secrets to stress free calving	Nigel Cook , Director, The Dairyland Initiative, University of Wisconsin-Madison
	Shed design impacts - Airflow, cow comfort & productivity	Mario Mondaca , Senior Technical Application & Research Engineer, VES-Artex
	Panel member Q&A	
10:30am	Morning tea Sponsored by Daviesway	
11:00am	Session 2: Climate & energy - Tools & tech	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Jhin Bagchi , Environmental Projects Lead, Dairy Australia
	Learnings from implementing an anaerobic digester	Jason Limbrick , Australian Consolidated Milk, Chief Executive Officer
	On-farm energy projects: What can biogas, renewables & carbon really earn?	Matt Thomas , Energy Link Services, Principal of Origination & Trading
	Ideas & lessons from emerging tech	Doug Hartmann , Founder & CEO, Hart Bio Energy
	Panel member Q&A	
12:05pm	Lunch	
1:05pm	Session 3: Climate & energy - A farmer perspective	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Elissa McNamara , National Climate & Environment Lead, Dairy Australia
	Implementing energy initiatives on farm	Jarad Smith , Production Manager, KiaOra Piggery
	Farmer project - On-farm initiatives	Kaleb Quinn , Dairy farmer
	On-farm effluent systems & solids separation	Peter Mulcahy , Dairy farmer
	Panel member Q&A	
2:05pm	Session 4: Management & People	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Kylie McKee , Regional Manager (Murray), Dairy Australia
	How to get the right people for your farm	Gordie Jones , Independent dairy consultant
	Operational routines - A farmer perspective	Noel Kelly , Chief Executive Officer, Creva International,
	Operational routines - How it's changed over time	Dehne Vinnicombe , Dairy farmer
	Panel member Q&A	
	Session sponsored by Eagle Direct	

Time	Detail	Speaker
3:20pm	Afternoon tea Sponsored by Pioneer Seeds	
3:50pm	Session 5: Animals Session sponsored by Sensehub Dairy	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Stephanie Bullen , National Animal Health & Welfare Lead, Dairy Australia
	Hot cows don't get pregnant: The real cost of heat stress on fertility and performance	Sue Hagenson , Senior Dairy Consultant, InBarn Solutions
	Animal health in intensive systems	Rachael Holmes , Veterinarian, MSD Animal Health
	Farmer's perspective on best practice calf rearing	Noel Kelly , Chief Executive Officer, Creva International
	Panel member Q&A	
	Day One wrap-up & close	Alicia Richters , Development and Regional Adaptation Lead, Dairy Australia
5:10pm	End Day One	
6:30pm - 8:30pm	Eagle Direct Welcome Dinner Sponsor Address - Mike Ryan, Eagle Direct (Note: Dress code casual)	

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Day Two | Thursday 21 May | Riverlinks Eastbank, Shepparton, Victoria

Time	Detail	Speaker
8:30am	Welcome	Karen Romano , Practice Lead - Development, Dairy Australia
8:35am	Session 1: Nutrition	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update Reviewing nutrition strategies - A University of Queensland case study	Dannylo Sousa , National Lead - Animal Nutrition, Dairy Australia
	Tips from the feedpad to the bunk	Jeff Hoeger , Ruminant Nutritionist, Cornerstone Cows
	Three circles of excellence in feed	Gordie Jones , Independent dairy consultant
	Managing and evolving the system	Stuart Crosthwaite , Dairy farmer
	Panel member Q&A	
	Session sponsored by Alltech Lienert/KEENAN	
9:55am	Morning tea Sponsored by Innovative Farming Solutions	
10:25am	Session 2: Managing effluent	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Cath Lescun , National Soils & Water Lead, Dairy Australia
	Siting dairy developments - Navigating land capability constraints & requirements	Christian Bannan , Environmental & Agricultural Soil Scientist, South East Soil & Water
	Managing manure & chemical separation	Sharon Aarons & Jose Lopez , Agriculture Victoria
	Re-thinking poop - Managing recycled solids for bedding	Alain Houle , Wastewater Management Systems Consultant, Valmetal Inc
	Utilising nutrients on farm	Jade Clymo , Dairy farmer
	Utilising your nutrients	Cath Lescun , National Soils & Water Lead, Dairy Australia
	Panel member Q&A	
11:55am	Session 3: Planning	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	India Ovens , Extension Advisor, Dairy Australia
	Virtual tour - Challenges of planning & building	Philip Tate & Craig Tate , Dairy farmers (Video)
	Conditions of construction & watchouts	Clare Fitzpatrick , Agriculture & Environment, Planning & Approvals Consultant, Progressive Rural Solutions
	Managing objectors throughout the planning process	Janine Price , Environment & Regulation, Scolexia
	Q&A about the planning journey	Nico Polato , Dairy Development Specialist, Daviesway
	Panel member Q&A	
12:55pm	Lunch	
1:55pm	Session 4: Farm financials	
	Dairy Australia - Introduction & update	Karen Romano , Practice Lead - Development, Dairy Australia
	Sponsor update	Allan Cameron , Chief Executive Officer, Gardiner Foundation
	Update on business performance analysis	Claire Waterman , Agriculture Victoria & Sheena Carter , NSW DPIRD
	Farmer journey tracking performance	Don Stewart , Dairy farmer
	Reviewing and tracking farm performance	Tom Farran , Farm Management Consultant, Farmanco
	Signal versus noise: Long term drivers of the dairy outlook	John Droppert , Head of Insights and Government Services, Bendigo Bank
	International trade strategy	Karl Ellis , Economic Sustainability & Competitiveness Manager, Dairy Australia
	Panel member Q&A	
	Session sponsored by Gardiner Foundation	

Time	Detail	Speaker
3:15pm	Afternoon tea Sponsored by DeLaval	
3:45pm	Session 5: Systems	
	Introduction and supporting intensive systems	Scott McDonald , Program Manager & Dairy Development Specialist, Agriculture Victoria
	How to plan for tomorrow's milking system	Jurgen Steen , National Sales Manager for Automatic Milking Systems, GEA Farm Technologies
	A breath of fresh air – Ventilating sheds & cooling cows	Nigel Cook , Director, The Dairyland Initiative, University of Wisconsin-Madison
	Getting more from less – The next 100 years of dairy farming technology	Oliver Moore , Senior Vice President – New Equipment Division, GEA Farm Technologies
	Weathering the calving cycle – The mother lode of benefits	Grant Sherborne , Dairy farmer
	Panel members Q&A	
	Wrap & close	Alicia Richters , Development and Regional Adaptation Lead, Dairy Australia
	Session sponsored by GEA	
5:20pm	End Day Two	
6:30pm – 10:30pm	SenseHub Dairy Gala Dinner Sponsor Address – Clancy Jordan, SenseHub Dairy (Note: Dress code semi-formal)	



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Have a chat with the GEA team at Raising the Roof.

GEA.com/dairyfarming | 0428 445 472



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Day Three | Friday 22 May | Farm visits

Attendees will either visit a loose housing or freestall farm as per their registration.

Time	Detail
7:45am	Arrival for buses Bus pick-up and drop-off locations and times may change and will be shared with participants at the event.
8:15am	Buses depart
9:00am	Morning tea on arrival Sponsored by Lely 
9:15am	Farm introduction & tour Sponsored by Ausmix, Sensehub Dairy and Eagle Direct    
12:00pm	Lunch
2.30pm	Buses arrive back in Shepparton/Tatura

Elevate Dairy connects farmers with breakthrough solutions to drive continuous improvement. Our mission is simple: help farmers adopt cost-effective, practical innovations that deliver real on-farm impact.

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