

## Summary of meeting outcomes

### NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee

18 September 2018

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The NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee held a meeting in Sydney on Tuesday 18 September 2018. Specific issues considered at the meeting are detailed below.

#### Attendees

**NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee:** Helen Dornom (Dairy Australia), Ruth Kydd (Dairy Connect, dairy producer), Michael McNamara (Director, Pecora Dairy), Yasser Mohamed (Bega Cheese Limited), Jane Sherborne (Dairy NSW Chair, dairy producer), Colin Thompson (NSW Farmers' Association, dairy producer).

**NSW DPI – Biosecurity & Food Safety:** Lisa Szabo (Group Director Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Emily Staniforth (Director Customer Service & Engagement), Matthew Campbell (Acting Manager, Audit Systems & Verification Unit), Paul Freeman (Senior Veterinary Officer, Wollongbar), Ryoko Uchida (Senior Industry Analyst, International Engagement Unit).

**Apologies:** David Bremner (The Riverina Dairy Pty Ltd), Erika Chesworth (NSW Farmers' Association), Allison David (Norco Foods), Sarah Mandelson (CEO Serendipity Icecream), Bruce Christie (Deputy Director General, Biosecurity & Food Safety, NSW DPI), Sarah Britton (NSW Chief Veterinary Officer and Group Director Animal Biosecurity), Mark Mackie (Acting Director Biosecurity & Food Safety Compliance), Craig Shadbolt (Manager, Food Incident Response & Complaints), David Cusack (Manager Food Standards & Programs), Ian Sanders (Director International Engagement), Geneveive Bonello (Manager, Stakeholder Engagement & Communications).

#### Industry updates

Members provided updates on key and emerging issues in their respective industry sectors.

The committee sought clarification from the NSW DPI on an issue raised previously by dairy producer members on the possibility of providing up-to-date information to farmers and veterinarians on the full range of veterinary chemicals available. It was advised that the responsibility for registration of veterinary chemicals is now handled nationally by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) who publish a newsletter with the names of newly registered products. This is available by subscription and there is a search capacity on the APVMA website for more detailed information about specific products. The NSW DPI does not have any direct linkage with them to be alerted to new products as they become registered and does not have the resources or capacity to set up a DPI portal that would be an effective tool for industry. Other suggested resources for information on veterinary drugs and labels include the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) website and the *MIMS IVS Annual* (a veterinary subscription book which must be purchased or subscribed to privately). The NSW DPI will put together a communique for the committee on resources for obtaining information on drugs and veterinary chemicals.

Other issues raised by members included discussion around bulk milk cell count requirements for small processors and biosecurity concerns with people and service providers coming onto farms. The NSW DPI is currently preparing a draft protocol which will outline how farmers can safeguard their properties and meet their biosecurity obligations when people are coming and going onto their farms. This will be circulated to the committee for comment.

### **Food safety program compliance report**

A report was presented on dairy industry compliance activities between 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. During this period 605 audits and 109 inspections were conducted with 21 failed audits and 9 failed inspections. There was a high compliance rate of 96% recorded across the dairy industry sector, which is a great result. The low level of enforcement activity during the period is reflective of a highly compliant industry

A breakdown of compliance data showed that the top three audit items with critical issues being identified were within process control (record keeping and monitoring), analytical testing and failure to implement or document pre-requisite calibration programs. Key food safety indicators and industry trends for the last three years for dairy producers and processors collected under the verification program for the dairy sector were tabled and noted. This showed that trends for bulk milk cell counts, total plate counts, and pickup temperatures have been targeting within the normal performance expectations. There were a small number of antibiotic notifications and pathogen notifications received during the period.

### **Biosecurity & Food Safety Compliance Regulatory Priorities 2018-19**

A paper was tabled for information on the Regulatory Priorities for the NSW DPI's Biosecurity & Food Safety (BFS) Compliance team during the 2018-19 period. These priorities are reviewed annually and are determined in consultation with key industry and community stakeholders. The Critical Core Functions for the team include:

- Audit, inspection and certification services to verify a safe and secure food supply, the welfare of exhibited and research animals and to maintain and provide access to markets for NSW primary producers;
- Investigation of unlicensed/unregistered operations and complaints;
- Responding to and investigating foodborne illness outbreaks and pest and disease issues and assisting in emergency management operations as necessary.

The priorities demonstrate that there is now collaboration across the Department on projects, investigations and field work. It was noted that there are no specific priorities for this financial year relating to the dairy sector other than the proposed review of the third party auditing program.

### **NSW DPI Antimicrobial Resistance Policy update**

An information paper and draft copy of the NSW DPI Antimicrobial Resistance Policy was tabled. This policy outlines the role of the NSW Government in the use of antimicrobials in animals that create AMR threats to human and animal health and the environment in NSW and is being circulated for industry consultation with key stakeholders. It was noted that the main feedback being received is on the importance for the NSW policy to be consistent with the national strategy. Comments received back from industry groups will be incorporated into the next version of the draft which will be circulated for further comment prior to submission to the Animal Health Committee for review. The policy is open for comment until 28 September 2018 and further comments are welcomed.

### **Package Assisting Small Exporters (PASE) Project**

The committee received an update on a trial session held in Newington on 24 May to pilot a Package Assisting Small Exporters (PASE) joint project developed with Dairy Australia to provide training and education to small and medium dairy enterprises on the regulatory side of the business for exports. Presentations were done on domestic and export operations and their regulation and on how to make the leap from the domestic supply chain to getting export registered and moving into the export market space. There was good feedback from the pilot session.

### **Botulism incident, Pyree, January 2018 – After Action Review paper**

A confidential After Action Review summary highlighting key learnings from a botulism incident in January 2018 was tabled for information of members. A NSW DPI Primefact sheet on Botulism in cattle was also distributed for information. This is available on the NSW DPI's website and was also distributed widely to the local community following the January incident.

A major concern raised by members was the need for farmers to be aware of the importance of having control measures in place to minimise risks to animals from the consumption of contaminated feed. Rotting organic matter can produce botulism toxins when mixed through silage and contaminate water sources. Concerns were also expressed at the potential for biosecurity risk when there was a lag between the time the event occurred and diagnosis or notification. Whilst botulism is not an infectious or notifiable disease, if the incident had involved a contagious hazard the large number of people coming onto and off the property could have been concerning. The (previously mentioned) draft protocol DPI is preparing for farmers on how to meet their biosecurity obligations when people are coming and going onto their farms could be of assistance.

Members noted the summary paper and reiterated the importance of good communications during an event and also of communicating the lessons learnt from these types of incidents to farmers afterwards.

### **NSW DPI Animal Welfare update**

Members were informed of work currently underway in the NSW DPI to update legislation, standards and guidelines around animal welfare under the Animal Welfare Action Plan. A discussion paper was released for public consultation in June and feedback from that is currently being reviewed.

It was also noted that the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Saleyards & Depots* have been finalised by Agricultural Ministers and are available on the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines website. State jurisdictions are now working on their implementation into law. Work is progressing on development of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Processing Establishments.

An Emergency Drought Relief Package was announced by the NSW government on 30 July 2018 to assist farmers facing difficult drought conditions across the State. The NSW DPI is currently preparing a wide range of communications material to assist farmers, including clarification on the rights of entry for people from enforcement agencies.

### **Recent approval of raw milk cheese business**

Members noted a paper advising of the recent approval of a NSW dairy company to manufacture raw milk cheese under Standard 4.2.4 of the Dairy Standard. This manufacturer has met all the conditions set out in the NSW Food Authority's checklist for raw milk cheese and it is now available for sale.

### **Update of the Food Safety Schemes manual**

Members noted a paper advising that the NSW Food Authority's Food Safety Schemes Manual has recently been reviewed to ensure that all requirements of *Food Regulation 2015* are included and to modernise the format for easier reading. Changes to the chapter relating to the Dairy food safety scheme were tabled. This includes the requirement that infant formula manufacturers implement microbiological testing for *Cronobacter*. The updated Manual will be released following further industry consultation.

### **Communications update**

The committee received a brief update on a NSW Biosecurity Round Table held in August in partnership with the ACT government and National Biosecurity Committee. Interest in biosecurity is growing and a National Round Table event is being held in November.

It was noted that a priority project for NSW DPI is to raise awareness of biosecurity. The Department's website will be updated to improve people's ability to make a report about biosecurity risks, diseases or pests and make reporting more streamlined. This will include a new section on "Your role in biosecurity" to make it clear what action people can take to eliminate biosecurity risks day to day. It is hoped this will be completed by the end of the year.

### **Biosecurity update**

A general fact sheet on biosecurity duty was tabled for information and noted.

*Dates for the 2019 meetings of the NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee to be advised.*