



Food Authority

Summary of meeting outcomes

NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee

14 June 2023

The NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee met via video conference on Wednesday 14 June 2023. Specific issues considered at the meeting are outlined below.

Attendees:

NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee: James Neal (Dairy NSW), Justin Wilson (The Riverina Dairy Pty Ltd).

NSW DPI: Jane Bennett (Acting – Manager Animal Biosecurity Surveillance and Engagement), Sheena Carter (Dairy Industry Advisory Unit), David Cusack (Manager Food Standards & Programs), Eric Davis (Acting - Director, Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority - Chair), Jaime Garcia (Secretariat), Mark Mackie (Manager Regulatory Operations Unit), Melisa Norris (Acting - Manager Food Policy & Partnerships), Helen Schaefer (Team Leader Animal Welfare Policy & Programs).

Apologies: Michael Cains (Percora Dairy), Geneveive Bonello (Manager Communications Strategic Programs & Partnerships), Sarah Britton (NSW Chief Veterinary Officer and Group Director Animal Biosecurity), Helen Dornom (Dairy Australia), Ruth Kydd (Dairy Connect), Sarah Mandelson (Serendipity Ice Cream), Phil Ryan (NSW Farmers' Association), Bimi Singh (Bega Cheese Limited), Susan Stanton (Norco Foods), Lisa Szabo (Director Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Greg Vakaci (Director, Compliance & Integrity Systems), Su Zhang (Star Combo Australia Pty Ltd).

Members provided updates on key and emerging issues/concerns:
NIL

Food Safety Compliance Report

Mark Mackie updated the Committee on the Department's Dairy industry compliance activities for the 2022-23 financial year to date. Dairy sector compliance recorded a 6% drop compared to the previous reporting period with 92% recording an acceptable audit and/or inspection result. A total of 187 audits & inspections were conducted during this period, with a combined 16 Improvement notices issued for the same period.

Proposed remake of the Food Regulation

David Cusack presented a paper on the proposed remake of the Food Regulation and advised that public consultation will occur later in the year for at least three weeks.

The current Food Regulation 2015 has been reviewed internally by the Food Authority. The current Regulation is fit for purpose, providing a regulatory framework to achieve the objectives of the NSW Food Act 2003, and plays an integral role in ensuring food is

safe for human consumption and that consumers are adequately informed prior to making purchase decisions.

The Food Standards and Programs team is proposing the following amendments (relevant to the seafood industry) for the new Food Regulation:

- Shorten the timeframe for food businesses to notify the Food Authority of samples that fail the microbiological standards in the Food Safety Schemes Manual.
- A general increase in fees, charges, and penalties in line with the Consumer Price Index.

The Food Authority will alert members of the NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee when the proposed Regulation and Regulatory Impact Statement opens for public consultation.

The Food Authority will provide further updates on the progress of this work at the next NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee meeting in October.

Animal welfare update

Helen Schaefer presented a paper on the animal welfare activities.

Animal welfare reform:

- A parliamentary committee reviewed the Draft Animal Welfare Bill 2022 as part of the Inquiry into Animal Welfare Policy in NSW. The [First Report](#) from the Inquiry into AW Policy in NSW (the Draft Bill) was released 15 June 2022. There were 2 recommendations contained within it, which the Government responded to in September 2022 - the response can be seen [here](#)
- The NSW Government is considering all stakeholder and community feedback provided on the Draft Animal Welfare Bill through the inquiry process and will work towards developing draft regulations for public and stakeholder feedback – consistent with Recommendation 1 of the Committee's First report.

2. Livestock Processing Establishment Standards & Guidelines (S&G)

- The final meeting for the independently facilitated stakeholder advisory group (SAG) was held in December 2022. The drafting of the Standards has commenced.
- Public consultation on draft documents is expected to occur mid-2023
- A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) for the S&G will be prepared
- Finalisation of the S&G is due 2024

More information on national animal welfare policy and regulatory matters, can be found at [Animal Welfare Task Group \(AWTG\)](#)

3. Livestock market chain engagement

The Animal Welfare livestock team is continuing to prioritise engagement with stock agents and saleyard management, in partnership with LLS, to promote practical application of welfare legislation, and collaboration of relevant agencies and industry groups.

Actions since 1 July 2022:

- 9 F2F presentation/discussions with stock agents, and other saleyard stakeholders, in collaboration with LLS

- Distribution of more than 50,000 copies of the “Glovebox Guides: biosecurity, emergency animal diseases and preparing livestock for transport” in partnership with NSW Farmers, LLS, Dairy NSW, RSPCA NSW, AWL NSW, ALMA, AWI, AVA, Ag Vic (border region)
- Reprinting of the DPI book “Welfare scoring nutritionally deprived livestock...”
- Project commenced involving analysis of NLIS data on deceased livestock at saleyards to quantify the number of livestock that are loaded for transport to saleyards and do not survive the process to be sold. Information obtained will be utilised to inform targeted education programs with market chain stakeholders.
- Distribution of more than 600 aluminium A1 & A4 “Fit for Transport” and “Bobby Calf Welfare” signs to saleyards across the state

4. Virtual Fencing

- The issue of virtual fencing is currently being considered by the AWTG as directed by AGSOC.
- The AWTG Virtual Fencing subgroup has been established; NSW is a member
- All available information from manufacturers of the various virtual fencing options, international, and domestic experience and trials, is being collated and examined to ensure that informed recommendations can be made at a national level regarding the use of virtual fencing.
- Subsequent to any potential national agreement-in-principle regarding the regulation of the use of virtual fencing, it will then be up to each state and territory to consider implementation into their own legislation.
- Every effort is being made to consider all the evidence available, as thoroughly and as expediently as possible while following due process. The aim is to ensure that any alterations to legislation are defensible and will not result in negative impacts on the animals to which it relates.
- For further updates on the national consideration of virtual fencing, please go to the AWTG website [here](#), under Work Priorities and Communiques.

Biosecurity update

Jane Bennett updated members on DPI’s Animal Biosecurity preparedness activities for foot and mouth disease (FMD) and lumpy skin disease (LSD) should the disease be detected in Australia, with surveillance, early detection, and awareness top priorities. This is part of DPI’s five priority diseases component.

DPI has been working with other jurisdictions and industry stakeholders to finalise the FMD [AUSVETPLAN](#) review which is now with the Animal Health Committee for review and endorsement.

Animal Health Australia will hold an exercise on the milk movement matrix plan that will be held between August and September this year. DPI is intimately involved in the planning of Exercise Milky Way.

DPI is also contributing to the DPI’s Dairy Team Climate Vulnerability assessment project that’s underway

*The date for the next meeting of the NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee is
25 October 2023.*