

# Project update

## P5: Our Farm Our Plan

### Planning for success

In 2020 the Australian dairy industry launched an initiative called “Our Farm, Our Plan” to help dairy farmers set long term goals, improve business performance, and manage risk.

Central to this program is the development of a strategic plan including business and personal goals.

Within Our Farm, Our Plan, a strategic plan has been known as a ‘plan on a page’ – a one page document that’s developed by farm business managers, with assistance from industry consultants – that provides direction by outlining goals and practical steps to get there.

It’s a document that helps dairy farm businesses plan for success.

### Potential benefits

Clear, long-term business and personal goals help farmers and farm businesses identify and prioritise actions, manage uncertainty, mitigate risks, and capture opportunities.

These goals – and the consultation, deep and strategic thinking required to develop them – enable business owners a unique insight into themselves and their business.

From this, they get a better understanding of their current business position, including its strengths and weaknesses, and can set a direction for the farm business.

Clear business direction is a great way to boost morale and involvement, stay on track and check progress.

An effective strategic plan also helps a business deal better with challenges or unexpected hurdles, such as changes to operating environments and climate risks.

### Looking to the future

The Dairy UP team is working with industry organisations to increase the proportion of dairy farmers in NSW with effective strategic plans to help clarify long-term business and personal goals.

Successful businesses have a strategic plan that describes goals and a plan to achieve them including practical steps.

This plan helps a business manage risk and improve its performance by encouraging reflection and a proactive business culture.

It’s also a great tool for recovering from adverse events such as bushfires or droughts.

Our Farm Our Plan is a Dairy Australia initiative. It is delivered in NSW through Dairy NSW, Subtropical Dairy, Murray Dairy and Dairy Australia as part of the Dairy UP program (P5).

A strategic plan is a good fit with businesses recovering from adverse events such as bushfire recovery or drought.

It also helps with investment decisions, succession planning, staff recruitment and retention as well as implementation of technology and much more.

For the dairy industry, a big part of Our Farm, Our Plan is to upskill local consultants.

This will enable farmers have access to assistance quicker than flying in interstate consultants following adverse events.

### Strategic approach

Our Farm, Our Plan provides a framework for identifying goals, planning, evaluation and action steps.

It equips dairy farmers with the skills and knowledge to apply strategic thinking and planning processes to achieve their agreed business and lifestyle goals.

As part of the planning process, farmers outline their business direction – including goals – assess their current position and business risks, identify, and prioritise options, understand risk management principles, records access farm performance data and develop communication skills.

## Feedback

The workshops have delivered more to dairy farmers than strategic planning skills. Feedback from dairy farmers about the workshops highlighted the benefits of meeting fellow farmers while developing a useful planning tool for their farm business.

## Progress update (November 2023)

Thanks to Dairy UP, 130 farmers have participated in Our Farm, Our Plan workshops and one-to-one sessions delivering more than 60 individual plans across 22 workshops.

This is a high proportion of the industry compared to other dairying states.

A breakdown of the Dairy UP roll-out since July 2021 includes:

- Eight face-to-face workshops
- Two intensive workshops
- Three workshops focused on the next generation – those looking for a career path – through the Young Dairy Network (YDN)
- Nine national online opportunities

## Next steps

Dairy UP's P5 Our Farm, Our Plan runs until June 2024.

Encouraging farmers to complete strategic plans will continue to be a priority.

More recently, seasonal challenges in NSW have plagued the dairy industry and as a result it has been challenging to recruit participants to complete the Our Farm Our Plan sessions.

For more information, or to register for face-to-face or online events, visit the links below.

Registration is essential.

Dairy NSW\_Our Farm, Our Plan: Hunter Valley April

Register by clicking:

<https://bit.ly/OFOPHunter2024>

Our Farm, Our Plan National Online February 2024

Register by clicking: <https://bit.ly/42xd4lx>

or

National Our Farm, Our Plan National Online May 2024

Register by clicking: <https://bit.ly/3SPvquL>

## Collaborators

Delivery of Our Farm Our Plan in NSW involves collaboration between Dairy UP, Dairy Australia, Dairy NSW, Subtropical Dairy and Murray Dairy.

## More info

### Project lead

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