

NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee

The primary objective of the NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee is to contribute to the Food Authority's goal of ensuring the production and sale of Dairy products that are safe and suitable for human consumption, by advising on policy and practices introduced into provisions of the Dairy Food Safety Scheme as it relates to Dairy and Dairy products, and developed through a consultative process. Other government agencies may seek to use the broad expertise and experience of the Committee members to obtain advice on matters beyond the scope of the provisions of the Dairy Food Safety Scheme.

Summary of outcomes

NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee – Summary of outcomes

18 June 2025

The NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee met via video conference on Wednesday 18 June 2025. Issues considered at the meeting are detailed below.

Attendees:

NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee: Ashley Cooper (NSW Farmers' Association), Stewart Davey (Dairy Australia), Iain Fee (The Riverina Dairy Pty Ltd), Steven Salway (NSW Farmers' Association), Ruth Kydd (eastAUSmilk), Bimi Singh (Bega Cheese Ltd), Su Zhang (Star Combo Pharma Ltd).

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) – Biosecurity & Food Safety: David Cusack, (Manager, Food Standards & Programs), Andrew Davies – Chair (Acting Director, Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Eric Davis, (Manager, Food Policy & Partnerships), Rhys Powell (Acting Manager, Preparedness and Response), Jaime Garcia (Secretariat), Ken Garner (Manager, Dairy Livestock Systems Branch), Mark Mackie (Manager, Regulatory Operations Unit), Helen Schaefer (Team Leader, Animal Welfare Policy & Programs).

Apologies: Chandni Rathi (Norco Foods), Andrew Smith (Dairy NSW).

Conflict of interest declaration

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest.

Industry updates

Members provided updates on the following key and emerging issues in their respective industry sectors:

- Dairy Australia provided an update on its initiatives addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR). They have launched a new project titled the "Data-Driven Animal Health, Welfare, and Antibiotic Use Benchmarking Project." This project aims to benchmark farm-level antimicrobial resistance and antibiotic use.
 - The objective is to generate reports that quantify disease rates, antibiotic use, and the extent of AMR on individual farms. This data will not only support trade, but also

demonstrate the dairy industry's commitment to tackling and addressing the use of antimicrobial drugs domestically and globally.

- The project will gather information on disease prevalence, antibiotic use and resistance levels to enable individual operators to compare their practices with others in the industry. The project began in late 2024 and is expected to continue until the end of 2027. Dr. Stephanie Bullen, Dairy Australia's National Animal Health and Welfare Lead, is overseeing the project.
- Dairy Australia is about to commence a new five-year strategic plan, with implementation likely delayed until September or October 2025 to allow the new CEO to get up to speed.
- Dairy Australia has emphasised the challenges confronting the dairy industry due to water-related issues. Over 50% of Australia's dairy farmers are either facing water shortages or experiencing excessive water, both of which put pressure on milk production. As a result of the drought and floods, the forecast for milk supplies will need to be adjusted.
- EastAUSmilk expressed concerns for the well-being and the need for support during difficult times. Mental health and the ability and willingness to recover after a flood or drought are significant issues among its members.
- NSW Farmers Association supports the prioritisation of all matters relating to virtual fencing so that virtual fencing can be legalised in NSW by the end of 2025.
- A discussion was held regarding concerns about the accuracy of dairy licensing data within Biomap, as this is crucial for managing emergency animal diseases and flood events. DPIRD agreed to look further into this issue.

1) Matters raised relating to the Dairy Food Safety Scheme

Food Safety Compliance Report

DPIRD's Compliance and Integrity Systems Unit provided an update on the dairy industry compliance activities for the FY 2024-25. 96 percent of licensed Dairy businesses recorded an acceptable audit and/or inspection result, a 4 percent fall compared to the same period in FY 2023-24. A total of 269 audits and inspections were conducted during this period, with a combined total of 14 regulatory interventions (improvement notices, prohibition orders, or warning letters). Biosecurity and Food Safety Compliance has moved to an audit and inspection calendar, which retains the risk based operational model for all licensed food businesses.

The Regulatory Operations team may need to adjust its planned activities and frequency of compliance monitoring depending on emerging risks and strategic priorities. Complaints, inspections, and investigations relating to dairy businesses will continue to be managed on an as needed basis.

3) Other matters raised

Animal welfare update

DPIRD's Animal Welfare Unit updated members on the following:

Virtual Fencing

National work:

The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) is currently finalising the Australian Animal Welfare Guide for Virtual Fencing (the AAW Guide) in collaboration with the Animal Welfare Task Group (AWTG) and with advice from a Stakeholder Reference Group.

- The AAW Guide is expected to be published on the DAFF website late in 2025
- Updates can be obtained here: [Virtual fencing technology - DAFF](#)

NSW:

- The NSW Government's response to the Inquiry into the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Virtual Stock Fencing) Bill 2024 committed to legalising virtual fencing.
- The Minister for Agriculture announced on 30 April that NSW legalisation to legalise use of virtual fencing in cattle will be introduced by the end of 2025.
- The Department is working with the Government to achieve this.

Certification to transport cattle under veterinary advice:

- The Animal Welfare Branch (AWB) has been working with the Australian Veterinary Association to make [Transport Livestock Certificates](#) easily accessible to all veterinarians.
- The purpose of a 'Certificate to Transport Livestock Under Veterinary Advice' is for the veterinarian to use their professional judgment in a range of individual circumstances to allow an animal, or multiple animals, to be transported that may not meet, or be marginal in meeting, the requirements of transport legislation of the relevant jurisdiction. In NSW, that legislation is [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(Land Transport of Livestock\) Standards 2013](#)
- The AWB has promoted the use of [Transport Livestock Certificates](#) during the recent flood response to help producers, veterinarians, processing establishments, and others involved in the supply chain manage this situation as effectively as possible. This approach ensures compliance with legislative requirements while also maximizing the welfare of the cattle.

Food Regulation 2025 update

David Cusack updated the committee on the upcoming Food Regulation 2025, which is expected to come into effect on 1 September 2025, highlighting the following:

- Minimal changes for the dairy Food Safety Scheme in the Food Regulation 2025, mainly involving the removal of obsolete definitions and clarifications on milk sample collection points.
- The regulation will reset the baselines for licence fees, which have been subject to annual CPI adjustments since 2015.
- A resetting of standard penalty amounts, which have not changed since 2010, will now be subject to cumulative CPI rounded to the nearest penalty unit.
- A new fee for lifting prohibition orders will be introduced, set at \$500.
- Transitional provisions will be in place to ensure continuity, and all matters previously governed by the Food Regulation 2015 will continue to be effective. Licenses issued before this date will be carried over as part of this transitional arrangement and will remain subject to standard renewal processes.

A communication plan will occur to facilitate a clear transition from Food Regulation 2015 to Food Regulation 2025.

A consultation process will occur later this year as part of a review of the Dairy Food Safety Scheme manual. The review will provide opportunity to examine the standardisation of milk testing focusing on specific testing protocols, frequencies, and requirements.

*The date for the next meeting of the NSW Dairy Industry Consultative Committee is
22 October 2025.*