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Dairy industry launches Masterclass for aspiring farm managers

The next generation of Australian dairy farm managers will soon be able to take their careers to the next level with a new Masterclass in Dairy Farm Management.

The University of Tasmania and Dairy Australia have partnered to develop a masterclass to boost the capability of Australia's dairy sector and address a current national shortage of professional training pathways for dairy farm managers.

The masterclass will provide practical management skills that participants can apply to their businesses from day one, including financial management, leadership and human resources, business development and farm systems.

The 12-month course will be based on a blend of online learning and face-to-face workshops at a range of locations across Australia. It is expected most participants will already be working in dairy and can fit studies around their current roles.

Aurora Dairies CEO Ben James oversees large-scale dairy farming operations in South Australia and Victoria, employing a number of dairy farm managers. He said the Masterclass was a step forward for the industry which was seeing farm sizes grow, the number of people employed on farms increase and cutting-edge technology utilised to improve farm performance.

"The role of dairy farm manager requires a diverse range of skills to drive farm business profitability and sustainability and the masterclass will support dairy businesses and employees for development in these roles. Investing in education is an investment in your people and your business, and I encourage the industry to get behind the masterclass and support the development of people within our industry," Mr James said.

Associate Director of Learning & Teaching with the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) at the University of Tasmania, Associate Professor Alistair Gracie, said: "One of the most valuable parts of the masterclass is that it is being built in collaboration with industry. This will ensure it is highly relevant to support the future growth and prosperity of Australia's dairy sector.

"Running a dairy farm is a complex business and with farms getting bigger and employing more staff, strong people and business skills are vital to enabling and growing leadership in the sector. The masterclass will provide key business skills, but importantly will also offer networking opportunities for people to meet with and learn from others facing similar challenges," Associate Professor Gracie said.

Dairy Australia's Learning and Development Manager, Felicity Blackstock, said: "The Masterclass in Dairy Farm Management is an exciting development for the industry and will ensure current and future dairy managers around the country have the knowledge and skills to maximise farm performance and lead successful teams.

"Attracting people to the industry and building skills are key commitments of the recently launched Australian Dairy Plan, and we're pleased this initiative will help to deliver on these priorities."

The Masterclass in Dairy Farm Management is open to people working in the dairy industry across Australia, and expressions of interest are invited prior to the formal application process opening later this year. More information is available via utas.edu.au/dairy-masterclass

Images available on request.

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