



Your Levy at Work



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Top dairy awards go to Tassie's North and North-East

Two farms in Tasmania's North have been awarded top marks at the annual Tasmanian Dairy Awards, reinforcing the region's reputation as a dairy powerhouse.

Clear Springs Dairy in Meander, managed by Tim and Fiona Salter, has been named the 2019 ANZ Tasmanian Dairy Business of the Year. Rushy Lagoon Share farmers Damien and Brooke Cocker have been named Fonterra Share Dairy Farmers of the Year.

The awards were jointly presented by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) and DairyTas, both of which keep farmers informed on innovative and profitable farming practices.

"Tim and Fiona are enthusiastic and always want to know more about their business. They've built up hearty pastures and healthy cows," TIA Dairy Extension Team Leader Lesley Irvine said.

The ANZ Tasmanian Dairy Business of the Year is awarded to a business that has strong financial performance and demonstrates a high standard of management skills. Award recipients Tim and Fiona Salter have increased the amount of dry pasture harvested at Clear Springs Dairy by almost two tonnes per hectare since it was converted from a beef farm three years ago.

Share farmers Damien and Brooke Cocker operate two of the largest dairy farms in Tasmania, dividing their time between spring calving at Cinderella Dairy and autumn calving at Cygnus Dairy.

The Share Dairy Farmer of the Year is awarded to a business that shows strong growth in equity and a high level of skill in financial, people, pasture and cow management. Since beginning share farming at Rushy Lagoon five years ago, Damien and Brooke Cocker have increased production on both farms by 40 per cent. In 2017/18, the farms yielded nearly eight million litres of milk.

"This is a very good result for a large dairy business. Improved herd, feed and irrigation, along with excellent staff management, have played a major part in their success," TIA Senior Dairy Extension Officer Symon Jones said.

"Damien and Brooke encourage their staff to upskill, and subsequently, one employee has progressed through his farming apprenticeship to become a share farmer himself."

Judging panels for this year's top two awards included TIA's Lesley Irvine and Symon Jones in addition to last year's winners, Michael and Rhys Palmer (2018 Dairy Business of the Year), and Wayne and Caroline Seward (2018 Share Dairy Farmer of the Year).

DairyTas Executive Officer Jonathan Price said Tasmanian dairy farms thrive when farmers continuously upskill across a multitude of areas.

"The Salters honed their pasture management skills at the Meander Discussion Group's Measuring and Monitoring Boot Camp.

"They also hold monthly safety meetings for all Clear Springs Dairy staff," Mr Price said.

The winners of the Dairy Safety Encouragement Award, Dairy Employer of Choice Award, Employee of the Year Award, Dairy Environmental Award, Dairy Services Award and Young Farmer Encouragement Award were also announced at the event, organised by DairyTas.

A field day for the dairy industry will be held at Clear Springs Dairy, 264 Meander Road, Meander on 3 April at 10:30 am. More information will be shared via the TIA Dairy Discussions Facebook Group bit.ly/TIADairyDiscussions.

AWARD WINNERS

2019 ANZ Dairy Business of the Year

Winner

- Clear Springs Dairy, managed by Tim and Fiona Salter

Finalists

- Waterhouse Dairies 'Oxberry Dairy' managed by David Risbey-Pearn, Waterhouse
- 'Clear Springs Dairy' managed by Tim and Fiona Salter, Meander
- Gary and Helen Strickland, King Island

2019 Fonterra Share Dairy Farmer of the Year

- Damien and Brooke Cocker

Finalists

- Andrew and Jenny Aldridge, Branxholm
- Damien and Brooke Cocker, Rushy Lagoon
- Jeffrey Gijsbers and Monique Mulder, Elizabeth Town

- John and Emma Innes-Smith, Togari

Dairy Safety Award, sponsored by WFI Insurance

Pineview Dairies

Employee of the Year Award, sponsored by Van Dairy Group

Nigel Lee

Dairy Employer of Choice Award, sponsored by Aurora Energy

Dalmore Dairy

Dairy Environmental Award, sponsored by Veolia

Gary Watson

Dairy Services Award, sponsored by Elphinstone Stevens Pty Ltd

Peter Tyson

Young Farmer Encouragement Award, sponsored by Cadbury

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