



AUSTRALIAN DAIRY INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

Consultative Forum: Dairy as part of a sustainable food system

13 May 2021 Meeting Report





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1. Executive summary

The Australian dairy industry hosted the Dairy Sustainability Consultative Forum with approximately 120 participants in Melbourne on Thursday, 13 May 2021. It was a hybrid event with 72 people attending in-person and 50 on-line. With the theme, *Dairy as part of a sustainable food system*, the Forum was registered as an independent dialogue for the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021.

Session 1, **Reimagining food for a healthier world**, explored the elements of a sustainable food system and the levers of change for accelerating transformation in such a system, including technological innovation. It was proposed that the focus of science for supporting a transition could be:

1. **Agricultural productivity:** Research to increase productivity, from new plant varieties to livestock feed substitutes that reduce methane emissions and the expression of omega oils in plants.
2. **The circular economy:** Closing loops in the food value chain to reduce loss and waste; improving processing, packaging, sell-by dates of food products; a focus on circular product mechanisms.
3. **Consumer behaviour:** Social science research into how to modify food environments, how consumers react to these changes and how to influence no or low-waste consumer behaviours.

Session 2, **Ideas for changing the future of food**, generated ideas for system change. The ideas from leaders in public health, social science, environmental advocacy and food manufacturing included:

- The introduction of a 20% tax on discretionary or junk food and drinks, and enhanced welfare payments that will allow low-income and indigenous Australians to afford well-balanced diet.
- A greater investment in small scale farming; more farmer and food cooperatives; a shift to regenerative agricultural practices; a focus on building small, resilient rural communities.
- The re-use of end-of-life plastic packaging; adoption of regenerative agriculture, payments for soil carbon farming; and use of feed supplements that reduce methane emissions from cattle.
- Consumers wanting zero carbon emissions foods; banks and investors “de-carbonising” their lending; and the growth in carbon trading and use of biodiversity credit markets by farmers.

Session 3, **What does the transformation look like?** explored possible outcomes for the dairy industry and how these could be part of the Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Framework e.g.

1. **Economics, livelihoods:** A sustainable and capable workforce; strong farm business management; and profitability across the industry driven by increases in productivity, wealth and confidence.
2. **Improving wellbeing:** Dairy recognised as part of a really sustainable diet; consumers trusting the nutritional and health benefits of dairy to people and the sustainability of dairy to the planet.
3. **Best care for animals:** Caring for the most vulnerable animals in an appropriate way; moving away from minimum standards (compliance) as a measure of progress; positive welfare targets.
4. **Environmental impact:** Shift emphasis from “reducing impact” to “enhancing” the environment; carbon neutrality by 2030; alternatives to plastics; and nature positive payments to farmers.

The date for the next Dairy Sustainability Consultative Forum is Thursday, **14 October 2021**.



2. Welcome

Terry Richardson (Chair, Australian Dairy Industry Council and President, Australian Dairy Farmers) acknowledged Traditional Owners and welcomed participants to the Forum. He reminded participants that the event would be an independent dialogue for the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit; and that discussions would also inform a review of the Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Framework's commitments, goals, targets and indicators.

He also launched the 2020 Australian Dairy Industry Sustainability Report – the eighth produced by the industry. It can be downloaded at <https://www.sustainableairyoz.com.au>





3. Reimagining food for a healthier world

The objective of this session was to explore the breadth, complexity and interconnectedness of the elements in a food system and the drivers of change for designing a sustainable food system.

The provocateur for this session, Sharon Natoli, a visionary thinker, speaker, advisor, communication expert and author, explained that innovation was an essential ingredient in a transition towards a sustainable food system.

Sharon shared the quote: “There’s no force on Earth more powerful than human thought”.

The quote is from Sam Harris, a global expert on the power of thoughts and ideas who holds conversations around consciousness and morality, and the future of humanity. Thoughts and ideas are the “building blocks” of innovation, said Sharon, who described them as the most powerful forces of nature (except for an immediate asteroid impact). Sharing thoughts and ideas was the aim of today’s forum.

Speaker

Prof Mario Herrero, Chief Research Scientist in Sustainability for Food and Agriculture, CSIRO

- There is a global consensus through the IPCC that we need to act now on a transition to a sustainable food system. This is the first time the world reached such a consensus on food.
- Food systems contribute 21-37% of anthropogenic emissions. These emissions need to be reduced, as do the environmental degradation impacts, particularly biodiversity loss arising from food production.
- The EAT Lancet diet was an attempt to start a global conversation about sustainable food. It is too expensive for 1.5 billion people. It needs to be aligned with national dietary guidelines.
- This diet for Australia has plenty of chicken, eggs, a bit of beef, lots of vegetables, greens, whole foods and wholegrains, but little sugar and discretionary foods. It is multi-coloured.
- The right balance of what people need to eat depends on where they are in the world.
- In some places people eat too much processed red meat, starchy vegetables or poultry. In other places they do not. Generally, we do not eat enough fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts.

- What we want is a sustainable food system that leaves no one behind.
- Increasing food sustainability could increase the cost of production. We need to consider this strategically. Repurposing farm subsidies is an idea people are starting to think about.
- We need to find market mechanisms so that increases in costs associated with sustainable food production do not get translated into higher food prices that consumers cannot afford.

The focus of key technologies and science for a transition to a sustainable food system should be:

1. **Productivity:** Research to increase productivity, from new plant varieties to livestock feed substitutes that reduce methane emissions and the expression of omega oils in plants.
2. **Circular economy:** Closing loops in the food value chain to reduce waste; improving processing, packaging, sell-by dates; circular product mechanisms are most important.
3. **Consumer behaviour:** Social science research into how to modify food environments, how consumers react to these changes, and how to influence foster positive consumer behaviours.



4. Ideas for changing the future of food

Led by Dr Joanna McMillan, a panel of key voices from the public health, nature and climate, social science and manufacturing shared ideas for accelerating transformative shifts in food production and consumption. Their key points are noted below.

Joanna noted that there have been huge changes in how food is produced in the past 50 years. Recent challenges in public health have been weight control and what is the optimal diet. In particular, the conversation around diet has become very tribal. Changing food systems to produce enough food by 2050 will have significant impact on our health as well as on rural communities. The main message on health and environment has been ‘eat more plants and eat less animals’ without addressing some of the issues with vegetable production such as soil degradation, the impacts of lab-grown meat, and the health implications of eating more processed foods.

Speaker

Prof Amanda Lee – Professor of Public Health Policy, the University of Queensland

- Less than 1% of Australians follow the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*, yet 15% of deaths are related to poor diets. Less than 10% of the Australian population claim to be eating enough healthy dairy foods.
- The biggest problem is discretionary foods, which constitute 35% of what we eat. 58% of the average Australian family’s food budget goes to discretionary foods.
- It’s important to note that the healthy diets modelled are unaffordable for 30% of Australians. We did notice that while COVID-19 welfare payments were being provided, people could afford healthy food and families ate better. Now the payments have stopped, families have returned to previous eating choices.
- To improve healthy eating, we would like to see a 20% tax on unhealthy foods and use that extra money to support healthy food subsidies. We should also maintain a system of enhanced welfare for healthy eating.
- There are five things we can do to improve our diets and their sustainability – decrease food waste, dietary energy, and unhealthy options; and increase quality foods and diets, and healthy plant-based foods.

- The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* are associated with 25% less GHGs with better biodiversity and water use outcomes. This was not discussed publicly during the last guidelines review.
- The food industry has significant influence across all stakeholder groups.

Amanda’s key recommendations for achieving a major shift in dietary and societal food systems are:

- The introduction of a 20% tax on discretionary or junk food and drinks;
- Enhanced welfare payments, such as those introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, that will allow low income and indigenous Australians to afford a well-balanced diet rich in fruit, vegetables and low-fat dairy for their families; and
- Changing the location of discretionary and junk foods in supermarkets, potentially even limiting their sale through legislation and higher prices.

Assoc Prof Alana Mann – Food Lead Researcher, Sydney Environment Institute, the University of Sydney

- Saying that new innovations like cultured meats are the solution ignore the benefits of working productively with existing commodities. Increasingly, plant-based products are being revealed to be ultra-processed with damaging effects on health.
- Alternatives also have collateral economic and social impacts, such as displacing economic pressure on shock prone-land systems in Far North Queensland. Dairy farming is multifunctional – it helps build communities and local resilience.
- The environmental impact of plant-based alternatives is also just being uncovered. For example, the water use impact of growing almonds is significant. We are also missing the opportunity of how livestock can contribute to soil health.
- We need to move to food systems that restore nature, not just mitigate damage. We need to maintain our local domestic farming industries, and dairy is central to this. We cannot rely on our highly concentrated export approach to deal with future pandemics. Instead, we need to invest in small-scale farmers, regenerative agriculture and the circular economy.



Alana's ideas for how best to develop future, more sustainable, food systems are for:

- Greater investment in small scale farming,
- The encouragement of more farmer and food cooperatives,
- A shift to regenerative agricultural practices,
- A focus on building small and resilient rural communities.

Grant Crothers – President, Australian Dairy Products Federation

- Agriculture is noted as using 70% of fresh water, generating 20% of global GHGs, using 33% of land area and 30% of global energy – however it feeds 100% of the human population.
- Many companies are now committing to be net zero by 2050. The dairy industry needs to ask itself where it wants to be.
- The industry is not going to see subsidies to encourage change. Instead, we have to see our efforts as an investment in our future. The government isn't showing a lot of leadership but there is a lot of soft pressure in the market. Right now, nobody will finance a new coal mine – if we don't do anything, the same will happen to our industry.

Grant says three 'gamechangers' for the food system are:

- Novel end-of-life plastic packaging technology using catalytic hydrothermal reactors that can convert plastic milk bottles – after they have already been recycled several times – into renewable biocrude oil that can then be reused to make plastics in a true circular economy.
- The widespread adoption of regenerative agricultural practices and soil carbon farming, backed by farmers being paid income for carbon stored in their soils.
- The development of feed supplements (including supplements made from the native asparagopsis red seaweed) that can massively reduce methane emissions from cattle, with farmers potentially paid carbon credits for methane abatement.

Andrew Rouse – Senior Manager Food Security, WWF Australia

- We're seeing a shift in the discussion from negative to positive impact on nature.
- The Australian dairy industry – from farmers to dairy processors and food manufacturers – has "come a long way" in its quest and support for greater sustainability.
- WWF forecasting surveys reveal early signs of a mindset shift among consumers on the environment; there is a need to show the positive impacts dairy has on the environment.
- Consumers are realising the choices they make on their personal diet can be a positive force to slow climate change, with the fast-moving swing towards veganism and vegetarianism.
- The desire among millennials to know more about where their food comes from and how it is produced, could benefit dairy farmers and companies which can genuinely show they are sustainable.
- It would be unfair if the costs of transforming food systems were borne entirely by farmers. The best outcome would be where the costs were shared equitably because there was societal good that would come from these fundamental changes.
- Government may need to drive these changes through incentives such as increasing the prices (via taxes) on some foods and then sharing this revenue through the supply chain.

Andrew predicted that the key disruptors and gamechangers that will drive agricultural and food systems change would be all about carbon, including:

- Consumers wanting to buy and eat zero carbon emissions foods and more plant-based foods.
- Banks and institutional investors looking to "de-carbonise" their lending, favouring only low emissions producers and sectors.
- The growth in carbon trading and biodiversity credit markets.



Q&As

Q: You suggested that the food industry is not playing its part in driving a sustainable food system. How is this reconciled against the significant investments being made by industry groups and food companies in improving sustainability, reducing impact and improving quality?

Amanda Lee: There is an interest from the food industry to maintain the status quo. There is a lot of opposition to the progressive ideas we're talking about today. Determining how we can start having conversations with these more conservative groups is a real challenge.

Q: The younger generation is very sceptical of food industries, seeing them as purely self-interested. How do you stop these sustainability frameworks from being seen as greenwashing?

Grant Crothers: I think consumer trust in the dairy category is quite high and I think dairy does a good job of pushing dairy to all corners of the country. I think we're in good shape and other discretionary foods are in less good shape. This is a great place to start.

Joanna McMillan: Consumers also don't like change. They don't want us to mess with their favourite brands of food. For example, there was huge pushback in trying to reduce sugar in Milo.

Alana Mann: It's a real communication challenge. It's well known that nutrition is talked about in social media, and there, milk has gone from a great nutritious food for people of all ages to 'scary dairy'. There are lots of platforms to intervene and correct disinformation that we can use. Regulation that prevents the sale of unhealthy food is another strong option. I think when you start telling the truth people start trusting.

Q: I want to push back on Alana who mentioned we should export less. I think the malnourished people from around the world deserve to have access to nutritious dairy.

Alana Mann: I think reducing exports is too much of a generalisation. What we need to think about is how do we reduce food security risks due to disruptions in global distribution. For example, how do we reduce our risk to the trade dispute with China? How do we reduce our risk to a disruption like COVID-19? I don't think it's good for domestic consumers either as many Australians don't have access to healthy affordable food. There's a real tension between export revenue and ensuring domestic food security.

Q: Transforming the food system will be an expensive challenge. Who will pay?

Andrew Rouse: Historically during market transformations, the best outcomes are achieved when costs are shared equitably. I don't think the costs will be borne by producers. I think there will be an increase in prices, and in some instances government incentives and funding from industry as well.

Grant Crothers: I'm convinced the consumers will pay. Producers do not have wiggle room to take on costs. We have very cheap food in Australia, and Canberra doesn't want to see the price of food increase. But we are in the business of presenting a healthy nutritional food. We have competitors in almond or oatmilk. Consumers will pay \$1 for dairy milk but are paying \$5 for almond milk.

Amanda Lee: We need to spend less on discretionary foods. People didn't believe us when we said 58% of the food dollar was being spent on junk foods, but it was verified by others. If we had a nutrition policy that privileged basic foods, you would see a better balance.



Group discussions

Participants broke into groups to brainstorm game-changing ideas for responsible dairy food production and consumption. Discussions were framed around the dairy value chain. A summary of ideas is presented below.

Sector	Ideas and considerations
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better resourcing and funding of extension and adoption including adoption of any sustainability goals; a roadmap for how farmers can implement any goals and improve; practical help to dairy farmers so they know what to do - Tougher compliance and regulatory measures, such as planning permits that align with the SDGs - More investment from corporates and big dairy farms into sustainable outcomes - Maintain diverse dairy practices to bolster resilience - Build awareness of circular economy principles, such as using waste feeds and manure - Providing financial incentives to farmers for sustainable outcomes, including ecosystem service payments, carbon payments, payments for improving practices - Increase uptake of regenerative agriculture practice - Changing producer mindset to prioritise the environment and handing land over to the next generation - Introduce driverless small trucks that can operate 24/7 - Improve minimum standards and best practice for better sustainability outcomes - Standardisation and better monitoring for carbon sequestration - Improving particular practices including feeding cows better, composting, using home-grown fodder, silage wrap recycling, pain relief for dehorning, planting trees - Industry leaders admitting the need to change - Tell the industry's story better - Methane abatement options like seaweed - Ensuring farms become energy self-sufficient - Improving refrigeration on farm and across the supply chain - smaller trucks could collect milk more frequently and improve efficiency of getting product to market - Integrating livestock industries to tell the livestock story
Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn from sustainable models like Arla, e.g demand more from suppliers, encouraging and rewarding on-farm change - Talk not only about mitigating impact, but also making a positive impact on the environment - Reduce waste by aiming to have only water and salts as outputs - Improve packaging use in processing, e.g through using recycled sugarcane packaging - Improve product shelf life by using smaller trucks with more frequent collection - Better metrics to compare products, and improve clarity of comparisons between dairy and non-dairy products



Sector	Ideas and considerations
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition to electric vehicles, this will need government support - Improve efficiency by reducing duplication of transport service with milk pick-up - Reduce the fuel use of transports
Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better communication about what each industry is doing on sustainability - Educating the public about food production - Dialling up the culinary nutrition space and getting people excited to eat healthy food and reduce junk food consumption - Reintroduce basic cooking skills - Ask the community - Reducing the number of overseas dairy products on shelves - Increasing how much consumers pay for food - Combatting public misinformation - Improve trust in dairy by increasing transparency and acknowledge areas that need improvement - Transition to a bulk/wholesale model for consumption would reduce packaging whilst maintaining shelf life - Introduce pricing structures based on milk freshness so consumers can get older milk if they need to pay less; this will also reduce food waste - Reduce consumer food waste - Better understanding generational shifts in consumption patterns - Develop a sustainability food tick similar to the Heart Foundation tick - Embark on a whole-of-agriculture campaign to show sustainability credentials of the industry - Provide a public definition of regenerative agriculture - Focus on a single compelling sustainability message - Tell our story better using positive language
Whole-of-chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australia needs to continue being a part of global discussions - Increase financing options across the value chain - Improve and retain product integrity across the value chain - Improve communications across the sector - Make measurements more consistent across the sector - Identify and work with supporters

5. What does the transformation look like?

In the final workshop session facilitated by **Mark Paterson** (Currie), attendees joined breakout groups to workshop significant changes, milestones and achievements for dairy in the next 10 years and their implications for the evolution of the Sustainability Framework. Each breakout group addressed a specific commitment in the Framework. Discussion points are summarised below and will contribute to a strategic review of the Sustainability Framework during 2021.



Commitment 1 – Enhancing economic viability and livelihoods

Significant change/achievement/milestone	How might this be represented in the Framework?
Sustainable capable workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Capability, farm business management, skillset increasing
Profitability of industry (Target 1.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Driven by increased productivity (measure this?) – Measure of long-term wealth generation – Measure of confidence to invest in your own business for the future is one way to measure



Commitment 2 – Improving wellbeing of people

Significant change/achievement/milestone	How might this be represented in the Framework?
<i>Australian Dietary Guidelines: Dairy is recognised as part of a really sustainable diet</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 6.1 (Improve consumers perception of the health and nutrition benefits of dairy foods). Are there particular age groups we want to identify under this target? – Teenage girls, older women are well short of meeting guidelines – Long term education? Who is responsible for this? – If dairy not maintained in guidelines, have our own story to tell
Food safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Difficult to measure but critically important, needs to carry on
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transparency is the key – Goes beyond health and nutrition (planet is part of the dialogue) – There are a number of targets. What are the few things we want to be known for and striving for so we can hang our hat on those? If known/agreed, we can consolidate number of targets



Commitment 3 – Providing best care for animals

Significant change/achievement/milestone	How might this be represented in the Framework?
Sustainable capable workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include positive welfare measures - Need to improve variable practices in industry - Include metrics for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Non replacement calf rearing rates o Calf mortality rate o Positive welfare e.g. provision of enrichment, group housing - Reproductive rate – a metric that encompasses a lot of meaningful things - Disbudding needs to account for polled calves - Polled genetics – currently missing - Cull cow longevity, production, fertility
Bobby calves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to be aspirational for bobby calves - Targets needed - Qualitative statement (e.g. UK statement) about responsible breeding strategies or caring for all animals
Move away from minimum standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be more aspirational (e.g. animal health plans mapped by vets) - Minimum standards are not good enough - Need carrots as well as sticks
Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantitative measure for clinically important drug use - No whole-herd preventative treatments - Clear goal that farmers are all aware of (and that resonates with consumers)
Cow-calf separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Becoming an issue
Biosecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remaining free of OIE exotic diseases - Dairy and beef could work together on this
Animal welfare very material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In a recent materiality review for the beef industry, four out of five of the top issues related to care of animals



Commitment 4 – Reducing our environmental impact

Significant change/achievement/milestone	How might this be represented in the Framework?
Change of emphasis from 'reducing impact' to 'enhancing' the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language of Commitment 4 - Targets should be around enhancing environment, not just reducing impact - Need to change from negative to positive framing - Need to be aspirational and progressive - Include a positive/aspirational/inspirational statement such as “Within 10 years all farmers have on-farm commitments to environmental change”. This may proceed along four steps – reducing impact, contributing positively, net contributors, innovators. - Need to move to an agroecology mindset - Recognising the rights of nature
Change of emphasis from 'reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Silage wrap is a big issue - Need to think about alternatives to plastics - Other technologies - biodegradable, etc will be important
Change of emphasis from 'reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If this goal is set by dairy and it fails to achieve it, there will be different responses from different stakeholders, but should still try - Aligns with other Frameworks (e.g. beef) - Some farmers don't accept science still so will be unwilling to change practices. Processors can be important levers if they offer incentives Individual farmers will then act, even if they don't believe it is necessary - Should emissions reduction targets be local/regional to increase palatability? - Framework could use a different climate metric that could recognise that most of dairy's emissions (methane) are short-lived, compared to CO₂ and NO₂
Change of emphasis from 'reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to work to achieve farmer buy-in/change of practice, especially where they don't accept the science (e.g. emissions reduction)
Change of emphasis from 'reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No data in 2020 report against indicator (8.2 10% of riparian zones actively managed and maintained) - How is industry working towards this ability to measure? Where is the investment to get there? Can you report this?
Change of emphasis from 'reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include in budget of industry and individual farmers



Commitment 4 – Reducing our environmental impact

Significant change/achievement/milestone	How might this be represented in the Framework?
Introduce Code of Practice or industry standard where necessary i.e. potentially for effluent (self-assessed?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Owned on-ground at farm level, and at industry level – What gets measured gets done – dairy producers have “passport”/ “dashboard” to demonstrate achievement (or code of practice or industry standard) that they can understand, then translate to industry level – Improve the ways information translated back to farm so that this can be understood by investors, consumers – Ways of rewarding good stewardship – achievement on-farm linked to price paid for product
Pathways to change recognised (it is not a straight line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need to be innovative about adoption pathways – Adoption pathway – incentives, assistance, rewards, stewards – Moving towards positive framing of “impact”, moving away from doing things “less badly” to being a contributor – Highlight key environmental attributes in targets (biodiversity etc) – Reward stewardship on-farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stratified payment options e.g. NZ incentives for good practice) ○ Improved measurement/metrics to allow this
Emissions - Improved quality of measurement (More accurate measurement becomes available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need standardisation of measurements – Measures split to represent actions i.e. climate targets represented by farm/land/animal to give more data about changes – Improve connectedness between important actions and measurement (current measures not necessarily linked to actual actions) – Need to be absolute measures rather than intensity measures
Effluent management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need to go above compliance – More carrot than stick

General comments

- **Scorecard** – Need to get rid of ‘N/A’s in reporting against targets in the Sustainability Framework; detracts from the meaningfulness of the reporting.
- **Performance** – Need to go ‘beyond compliance’.
- **Trust** – Transparency is key. Need to bring elements we need to earn trust (e.g. nutrition, environment) together.



6. Feedback

Members were invited to respond to an online survey at the close of the Forum. Results were positive and endorsed the hybrid model.

- The value of the Consultative Forum to the Sustainability Framework was rated as 8 out of 10 (52 responses)
- The value of the Consultative Forum to attendees was rated as 7.4 out of 10 (50 responses)
- 84% of respondents (43 out of 51 responses) indicated the hybrid virtual/physical model was 'effective' or 'very effective'

Several specific suggestions were made on what could be improved next time. These will be considered by the Steering Committee in planning for the next Forum.

In response to a question from the facilitator, approximately 85% of people attending in person indicated that they found the time allocated to speakers was 'about right'.

In response to the survey question, "How can we improve the next forum?" responses included:

- "The morning session was great"
- "Continue with the great speakers"
- "The Q&A session was great"
- "From a young farmer's point of view today was inspiring"
- "That has to be about as good as a hybrid forum gets!"

Common themes in responses proposing areas for improvement included:

- Give participants pre-reading on a specific subject that needs attention at the event
- Speakers from other sectors who have more diverse views and outside thinking
- More time for discussion and breakout groups to explore issues in more depth
- A report on the changes which came about following the previous forum
- Case studies, stories about innovation in dairy and progress on sustainability

7. Summary

Grant Crothers (President, Australian Dairy Products Federation and Deputy Chair, Australian Dairy Industry Council) closed the meeting. He commented that 'responsible dairy' verses 'sustainable dairy' was heard a lot during discussions. He acknowledged that there are things the industry needs to address including some hygiene issues and regulatory frameworks that are not quite fit for purpose, and that processors listen to the consumers and have a role to play.

Grant thanked and congratulated all speakers, participants and the organising team for their contribution to making the Forum a success.

8. Next forum

The next Forum will take place on **Thursday, 14 October 2021**.



Appendix 1 Attendees

Approximately 120 people attended the Consultative Forum, representing the following organisations:

Australian Food and Grocery Council

Agriculture Victoria

Animal Health Australia

Animal Medicines Australia

Appetite Communications Pty Ltd

Australian Dairy Farmers

Australian Dairy Products Federation

Australian Dairyfarmer Magazine

Australian Eggs

Australian Pork Limited

Bega Cheese

Bega Dairy & Drinks

Birkenwood International

BridgeLogic

Brownes Dairy

Bulla Dairy Foods

Corporate & Community Sustainability Int

Cotton Australia

CSIRO

Currie

Dairy Australia

Dairy Food Safety Victoria

Dairysafe

DairyTas/Landly

DataGene

Debenham Australia Pty Ltd

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

Dietitians Australia

Farmers for Climate Action

Fight Food Waste Ltd

Five:am Yoghurt

Fonterra Australia

FoodBytes

Global Meat Alliance

Haystac

KN & SK Jolliffe

Lactalis Australia

LIC

McDonald's

Meat & Livestock Australia

Mondelez International

Murray Dairy

Nestle

Norco Foods

NRM Regions Australia

NSW Ministry of Health

Nutrition Australia

Rabobank Australia

RSPCA Australia

Saputo Dairy Australia

STR Consulting

Sugar Research Australia

Sustainability Victoria

Sydney University

The Ethics Centre

The National Heart Foundation of Australia

United Dairy Farmers

Warakirri Asset Management

WestVic Dairy

Woolworths

World Animal Protection

WWF