



DAIRY BUSINESS NETWORK (DBN)

“PROJECT OVERVIEW”

2010



GARDINER FOUNDATION

Background:

- Murray Dairy developed a strategy ‘Growing the Murray Dairy Region’ in 2007 that focused on supporting existing farm businesses to recover from drought and grow in the future, this led to the development of the Dairy Business Network (DBN) pilot project.
- The project is supported by the Geoffrey Gardiner Foundation

Objective:

- To help build the business culture of dairy farmers across the region as well as improving their understanding of business profitability.

Dairy Business Networks – what are they?

- Dairy Business Networks are groups of 8-15 dairy farm businesses that meet 8 times a year with a suitably qualified consultant to:
 - Improve farm business management skills;
 - Review the performance of their business;
 - Analyse future management changes or capital investments;
 - Identify and evaluate opportunities for their businesses;
- Murray Dairy currently has 11 DBN groups in place across Northern Victoria and the Southern Riverina.

Outcomes:

- Business analysis and planning skills of the participants are improved as a result of the project;
- Farm businesses clarifying and achieving individual goals;
- Improved understanding of the measures of business profitability;
- Farmers have an increased understanding of and are better able to manage risk;
- Development of farmer leadership within the region;
- Farmers involvement in program is formally recognized;

National Centre for Dairy Education (NCDEA) Qualification:

- Having been involved in a DBN, participants will be assessed by their consultant to receive NCDEA’s competency standard in “Analysing Business Performance”.

DBN Steering Committee:

- Murray Dairy has DBN Steering Committee in place that meets bi-monthly to monitor the projects progress; The Chair of the Steering Committee is a Murray Dairy Board member.



Financial support:

- Network Groups will be provided financial support through Murray Dairy but with the expectation that groups will be self funded by the commencement of year 3 of the program;
- Funding arrangements are as follows:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Murray Dairy will fully fund 8 meetings per year	Murray Dairy will fund half the costs of 8 meetings per year	Group is expected to be fully funded, but still managed through Murray Dairy
\$2000 X 8 meetings plus travel	\$1000 X 8 meetings plus half travel costs	

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Murray Dairy monitors each groups meeting with reports from both participants and consultants;
- Murray Dairy will conduct a thorough evaluation of the project at the end of year two.

