



GARDINER FOUNDATION

MEDIA RELEASE

Gardiner Foundation Shaping Change

150 Victorian dairy industry leaders met at a series of Gardiner Foundation events that highlighted the fact that the fundamentals that underpin the industry are strong and the long term future for the industry is bright.

Mike Taylor Chairman of the Foundation provided the leadership for the day's events. Peter Walsh, Victoria's newly appointed Minister for Agriculture and Food Security delivered his first public address. Tim Fischer AC, now Australia's Ambassador to the Holy See launched a new book, *Shaping Change*. Eighty of Gardiner Foundations project managers attended a briefing which identified issues that will shape the industry over the next 3 to 5 years.

Shaping Change is an initiative of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN), the peak body for extension professionals in Australia. It was edited by Drs. Jess Jennings, Roger Packham and Dedee Woodside and includes the work of over 35 leading practitioners in agricultural and nature resource management extension processes.

Professor David de Kretser AC, Governor of Victoria and Patron of the Gardiner Foundation provided the foreword to *Shaping Change* and said that it "...provides a timely and much needed road map for extension professionals and policy makers of all types".

Gardiner CEO Paul Ford quoted American scholar and futurist Joel A Baker: *Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes time. Vision and action together can change the world.* He said that bringing together research and development (*the vision*) AND extension (*the action*) is a core principle for the Gardiner Foundation, one which can 'Shape Change' in the world of dairy. This influenced Gardiner's decision to provide funding for the book which was designed and printed by the Kondinin Group.

Tim Fischer AC noted "This book looks at the environment we face in agriculture in the years ahead and suggests some ways forward. It correctly highlights the holistic but flexible approach that is necessary, in short, how to keep the decision makers and practitioners in the field flexible and on the front foot". Tim Fischer also described the global challenge of food security which is to increase food production by 40% by 2040 with the same amount of arable land, less water and less fossil fuels.

Peter Walsh said that after a lifetime history in agriculture and agrifood he considers it a privilege to represent the sector at the Cabinet table. He said "I will be making sure that agriculture and Country Victoria will always be high on the agenda under a Coalition Government".

He spoke about Victoria as the nation's largest exporter of food (25% of national exports) of which Victoria accounts for 85% of Australia's dairy exports and produces 64% of Australia's milk worth \$1.76 billion in 2009-10. In commenting on Food Security being added to the agriculture portfolio, he said "The Coalition sees food security as a major policy priority. Not just food security for Victorians but also our responsibility as a food exporter, which is all about continuity of supply and the quality of that supply".

He added that "This is something the Australian dairy industry has excelled at. Central to its success has been a strong eye to understanding consumers' needs and continuing to invest in research, development and extension – things that are also core for the Gardiner Foundation".

At a pre-lunch presentation for Gardiner Foundation project leaders Ian Halliday, Managing Director of Dairy Australia provided a brief on the issues that will define the success of the \$12.5 billion value chain over the next three to five years. Four Gardiner Foundation projects were showcased to demonstrate the diversity of investment made across the value chain and the focus on impact at end user level:

- Steve Spencer of Fresh Logic and Ross McInnes from the Queensland Dairyfarmers Organisation described the Sustainable Milk Production model they are developing which allows individual farmers to test different farming systems settings on a “flight simulator” and get feedback on the productivity and profitability of that farm over a five to ten year period
- Adriana Robaina and Clinton Hill described the Milk Plus project which aims to increase the protein levels of Warrnambool Cheese & Butter Factory’s milk supply. Adriana noted that an average increase in protein of 0.1% was possible and this represented a \$2.5m increase in payments to dairy farmers. Clinton said this increase meant an additional 900 tonnes of product per annum from the same volume of milk and the project was a win/win for farmers and manufactures alike. The project outcomes will be shared with other manufacturers and will be showcased at an event at DemoDAIRY in Terang on 31 March 2011.
- Kevin Joyce of Energy Consulting Group described a joint Gardiner Foundation / Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry funded project run at Tatura Milk. The project monitors all steam and electrical energy inputs to drying milk powder. Kevin said the average cost of energy in a 2 million litre per day plant would be \$6 to \$8 million a year. The project team had studied energy monitoring in the USA, Denmark and Ireland and savings in energy costs of between 3 to 15% were possible. Again findings would be shared with other dairy companies.
- Ned Dennis of South Gippsland Shire and Nadia Stefani of the Fish Creek Community Development Association described the Strengthening Small Dairy Community project. Ned noted that two thirds of the people who work in dairy live in small regional communities of less than 5000 people, and that there were 270 of these small dairy communities in Victoria. Nadia said that because these communities were small, eight towns had clustered in this pilot project. The aim was to make the cluster of towns self sustainable by having the ability to identify community issues, mobilise a project team, write a compelling grant application and manage projects. She said when the Gardiner funded pilot was completed in South Gippsland it would be rolled out to other Regions in Victoria.



Photo captions:

Dr Jess Jennings, Co-editor of *Shaping Change* (l) and Tim Fischer AC, Former Deputy Premier and Australian Ambassador to the Holy See.

Hon. Peter Walsh MP, Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

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