

Future Drought Fund

Dairy Grains Mentoring Project – Express your interest now



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Subtropical Dairy has been successful in securing funding through the Future Drought Fund for a project focused on improving business resilience through increased knowledge of soil fertility and health on northern Australian dairy farms.

The combined impacts of climate change, drought and margin erosion have led to a steady change in farming systems in the northern Australian dairy industry with an increase in propagation of annual grain and fodder crops. This change in systems has been driven primarily by lower irrigation water availability, an increase in frequency of drought, competition for feed grains and a greater need to manage cow comfort.

The objective of the Dairy Grains Mentoring project is to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of northern Australian dairy farmers to refine and adopt contemporary agronomic and soil management best practice for grain-based and forage silage crops from the region's grain industry.

The project will look to establish a Community of Practice between dairy farmers and grain farmers with an aim to share knowledge between the two industries around soil health and agronomic practices and improve productivity and profitability.

'A Community of Practice is simply a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.'

Whilst the Community of Practice will operate across the wider two industries, a coaching network between dairy farmers and grain farmers will also be established with an aim to connect 15 individual dairy farmers with 15 grain farmers in a mentoring-type role. A two-day workshop and a tour to six participating grain farms will form part of the coaching experience. The aim of the coaching network is to increase capability regarding crop productivity and soil health on dairy farms,

and also enhance the coaching skills of grain farmers involved. With industry support, participating dairy farmers will establish and measure a number of key benchmarks across summer and winter crops.

Throughout the project, learnings will be shared to the wider dairying community via the Subtropical Dairy eNews, articles in Northern Horizons, videos and webinars and various other extension channels. ■■



Expressions of Interest to participate in the project will be available soon. For more information on the project or to register your interest to become involved please contact:

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