

Alpine Valleys Dairy Inc. (AVD)

Strategic Plan July 2024



This strategic plan was created in 2024 by the incoming committee, as they sought to clarify and better understand the role of AVD in the community, how the group fits into the wider dairy network, and determine the main areas of focus for the next 12 months. The plan will be reviewed at the end of 2024 to identify the areas of focus for the following year.

This document will be used as a reference point for the committee on clear and achievable actions for the next 12 months. The plan features four pillars:

- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Education

AVD Vision

- **Unity:** Develop a strong and united dairy community through awareness social events, support and training
- **Voice:** Be the voice of our dairy region by ensuring AVD farmers' needs are understood by advocacy groups and stakeholders
- **Sustainability:** Promote sustainable farming practices – business physical and environmental
- **Succession:** Support and empower the next generation of farmers with the aim of maintaining milk supply
- **Visibility:** Increase visibility of the dairy industry to young people to increase interest and future involvement

Who and what is AVD

- **The collective voice of farmers** and related dairy businesses (i.e. calf rearing) in our region- A united voice allows us to communicate our region's unique needs to service providers, key stakeholders and other community groups. It also allows us to advocate for required and desired change and respond to challenges in a united way and utilize grants and sponsorship. We are a support network group to promote dairying to the wider community.
- “Our region”: Kiewa, Mitta Mitta, Upper Murray, Ovens, King and Broken catchments- “Everyone east of the Hume highway including bordering areas of southern NSW”

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Objective	Strategies	Actions	Who is responsible
ADVOCACY			
Increase farm sustainability, confidence and positivity	1. Ensure AVD has sound understanding of our region's dairy farmers' current needs and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and synthesize needs from the 2024 survey into a useful reference document 	AVD Secretary and committee
	2. Increase the visibility of AVD to farmers in our region, promoting AVD as the region's collective voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain social media presence through Facebook and email mailouts Maintain AVD mailing list and monitor read rates Create a website to promote the group to farmers without social media, the wider community, and potential sponsors 	Socials: Ebony Newsletter: Murray Dairy In collaboration with AVD members
	3. Promote upskilling opportunities (e.g. workshops, business training) provided by external groups, based on needs identified by farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor opportunities from Murray Dairy, Dairy Australia and other external groups, and promote when relevant Promote attendance at business discussion groups (i.e., Phil Shannon's groups) Contribute to the re-establishment of the Focus Farms program through liaison with Murray Dairy and promotion of the program to our farmers 	
	4. Discuss and respond to proposed changes in policy, legislation or governance which may impede dairying in our area, and feed information into policy groups for further action (acknowledging that we ourselves are not a political group).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to exchange information between AVD and major policy groups - Dairy Farmers Victoria or UDV Ensure farmer's opinions are captured at meetings and the majority opinion is established 	

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Continue to work on the challenge of farm succession	5. Determine what farmers need or want to know regarding succession, with the aim of minimizing farm losses to retirement or transition to beef.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine interest and specific needs of retiring and upcoming farmers through meeting discussion/succession-specific survey Promote DA programs or privately facilitated programs that match identified needs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Farm Our Plan workshops Guest speakers & farm visits with succession or diversification focus. WiNE facilitated succession day (August 2024?) Include focus in study tours 	
COLLABORATION			
Maintain networks with key stakeholders	6. Act as a conduit of information between farmers and stakeholder groups Groups including Murray Dairy , Dairy Australia (DA) Young dairy network (YDN), North East Catchment management authority (NECMA), AGVIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include relevant stakeholders in meetings so farmers can communicate needs and receive updates directly <p><i>2024 Sustainable Irrigation Project</i> <i>Climate Change and Pathways project</i></p>	
	7. Apply for funding and grant opportunities relevant to current events or needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify people in the group willing to follow up and apply for grants on behalf of the group 	
	8. Attract research trials and fieldwork to our area in response to emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships with universities and research organizations and provide information on our current issues <p><i>Melbourne Uni Multispecies trial</i></p>	
	9. Build councils' awareness of current issues affecting the dairy industry locally (i.e., accommodation and childcare shortages impacting dairy business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a presence at council meetings or events relevant to our needs <p><i>June 2024 - Alpine Shire roundtable meeting tackling housing</i></p>	

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Enhance resilience in our community	10. Provide avenues for socialization, connection, mental health awareness, and support where necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate events focusing on community and connection within our industry Collaborate with other community groups to support events focusing on mental health, community, resilience <p><i>Dare to Dairy dinner</i> <i>WiNE (Women in North East) Functions</i> <i>Previous programs include "Are you bogged mate"</i> <i>Little Bit of Relief – Alpine Shire</i></p>	AVD Dinner Subcommittee
Respond to critical issues and events	11. Support during environmental disasters or disease outbreaks (human or animal) by working with industry representatives, local government, response and recovery agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a conduit of information between farmers and support teams 	
EDUCATION			
Promote leadership and development opportunities for current farmers	12. Biannual Study tour (covers many areas of focus: leadership and engagement, increasing engagement and positivity, new technology, succession examples, networking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a subcommittee to coordinate the 2026 study tour 	Formed by end of 2024
	13. Promote external events to our dairy farmers as opportunities for learning and connection Events include Alpine Leadership Program, Australian dairy conference, Cream of the Crop, Women in Dairy, Dairy Ambassadors, Gardiner Foundation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote alternative study tours run by Gardiner Foundation, Murray Dairy, milk processors etc. Promote events and programs through Facebook and email mailouts Promote the benefits of these programs to farmers through presentations / social media (etc.) from members who attended events 	
	14. Encourage involvement and active participation of young farmers within the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen relationship with YDN and encourage young farmer engagement across both groups 	YDN subcommittee

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Educate community (particularly young people) about dairy industry	<p>15. Increase awareness or attractiveness of the dairy industry as a career pathway to children, general consumers, and potential young farmers, and promote the dairy industry within the local community</p> <p>16. Provide options for industry capacity building, by working with career programs feeding into the dairy industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form education subcommittee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with local schools and determine need or interest in Dairy Aus programs i.e. <i>Picasso cows, cows create careers</i> Have a presence at local career expos for high school students to see dairy as a career pathway Promote farmers willing to host school tours, (based on survey results) Support programs promoting career pathways and exposure to the industry for young people <p><i>Boys to the Bush program, NELLEN, Local groups supporting disability</i></p>	Form a SC before end of 2024
INNOVATION			
Build awareness and adaption of new technology	<p>17. Promote examples of technology or changes in farming practices to our region's farmers which can improve or support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ease of management labour intensity environmental impact emissions reduction supporting farming when faced with environmental restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include emerging technology in the study tour itinerary Promote new technology to farmers via media platforms/guest speakers / farm walks Promote awareness of changing emission restrictions in other areas Promote awareness of worldwide emissions restrictions to prepare farmers for change <p><i>Nitrogen laws in Ireland, UK Climate futures project</i> <i>Milk company emissions monitoring</i></p>	
Environmental extremes and adverse conditions	<p>18. Increase preparedness for unpredictable changes to weather, climate extremes or unfavourable seasonal conditions through education and discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating information sessions relevant to current or emerging issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant climate extremes Relevant Pest management Promote opportunities to improve preparedness (i.e., grants/ funding for capital works) 	