

10 February 2026

Paul Roderick Opening Remarks

Thank you, Chair.

My name is Paul Roderick. I am the Chair of Dairy Australia and a dairy farmer based in Harrisville, South-East QLD. I farm with my wife Linda and my parents David and Gwen.

We are a multi-generational business, and my son Tom and his partner Natalija have also returned to the farm. I was elected as Chair of Dairy Australia in 2024, after sitting on the board since 2020.

I'd like to introduce my colleagues who join me today – Dr Matt Shaffer, CEO of Dairy Australia, and Susannah Tymms, General Manager of Sustainable Dairy. Matt took over as CEO in July 2025, bringing a wealth of agricultural experience from his time as Director of International Operations at Hancock Agricultural Investment Group, and more recently as CEO of DataGene. Susannah leads our work in bringing the dairy industry together to drive our sustainability, policy and trade agenda from farms through to export markets.

Dairy Australia is funded by a combination of levy contributions from dairy farmers and matching payments from the Commonwealth Government for eligible research and development activities.

We are the industry's service body – our remit is to invest in research, development, extension, and market support to improve farm business performance, sustainability, and industry resilience.

We do not regulate the industry, set farmgate milk prices, make processor decisions, or lobby on behalf of the industry. Our role is to provide trusted information, tools, and services that benefit dairy farmers and the broader industry.

The context for the industry at present is challenging. Farmers across southern Australia in particular continue to face tough seasonal conditions, putting pressure on feed costs, water availability and margins. This has been compounded by an intense bushfire season in parts of Victoria and other regions, creating additional pressures through infrastructure damage, power and access disruptions, operational uncertainty and recovery demands. All states except New South Wales have recently reported milk production

declines, reflecting the impact of dry conditions, though national output remains relatively stable overall.

At the same time, demand for Australian dairy remains strong, both domestically and in key export markets. Our role is to support farmers through these difficult conditions while positioning the industry to take advantage of future opportunities.

Dairy Australia has recently released the framework of its new five-year strategy, shaped in consultation with farmers and industry stakeholders. This strategy focuses on:

- Strengthening farm business performance and supporting informed decision-making;
- Investing in innovation and research that drives productivity – from incremental gains to emerging technologies; and,
- Uniting the sector around shared sustainability commitments to support long-term resilience and market confidence.

We welcome the opportunity to update the Committee on the state of the industry, the challenges being faced by farmers, and the work Dairy Australia is undertaking to support them.

Thank you, Chair. We're happy to take any questions.