Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme

The story of Australia’s new breeding indices

Indices evolve over time

Final year index applied in Australia

- 2000
- 2001
- 2009
- 2014

Trait Emphasis

- Fertility
- Workabilities
- Cell Count
- Liveweight
- Survival
- Protein
- Fat
- Milk

Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme
Current National Breeding Objective = Profit

The NBO review aims to
1) Is Profit still the focus
2) Produce an index (indices) that are based on sound scientific principles and is in line with overall objective and farmer preferences.
Farmer Input into NBO review

- Farmwalk event
- 26 events on 46 farms throughout Australia
- >600 participants

>600 farmer and service provider responses collected through;
- Random phone calls
- Volunteer participation

1000 Minds™
Lower number – higher ranking by farmers.
Key Outcomes from Survey

• Profit remains important

• Mastitis, longevity and fertility and protein rank highly

• Emphasis on improving confirmation (Type)

• Some differences seen in preferences
Introducing the New Indicies

Balanced Performance Index (BPI)
- Economic index
- Blends production, type and health traits for maximum profit
- In line with farmer preferences

Health Weighted Index (HWI)
- Fast track fertility and mastitis resistance

Type Weighted Index (TWI)
- Fast track type
# Economic values

## Economic values for new indices

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April ABV Release
Australian Indices.
Tailor made for Australian farmers.

When breeding cows are you most interested in...

- A balance of production, type and health traits to deliver maximum profit?
  - Your Index is...
  - Balanced Performance Index
    - Production
    - Fertility
    - Type

- Traits like fertility, mastitis resistance, feed saved and longevity?
  - Your Index is...
  - Health Weighted Index
    - Fertility
    - Less Mastitis
    - Improved Longevity

- Overall type and mammary system?
  - Your Index is...
  - Type Weighted Index
    - Overall type
    - Improved udders
    - Production
What’s their real efficiency?

Cow B is more efficient than cow A
1 kg/d at $0.3/kgDM is worth $110/cow/year
Construction of Feed Saved ABV

- Holsteins – Residual Feed Intake plus maintenance
- Other breeds – maintenance requirements
# Example Feed Saved ABVs

![The Good Bulls Guide Logo](image)

## Holstein

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*Note: The table represents hypothetical values for demonstration purposes.*
Impact ads
Hearts and minds comms
Invest in opinion leaders
Tools are cool
Working Together
ABVS
DON'T BE NUTS
GET INTO THEM!

BPI, TWI, HWI – THE ABC OF MORE BUCKS IN YOUR BANK
Thank you

ADHIS Team
- Daniel Abernethy, Michelle Axford, Peter Williams, Sarah Saxton, Gert Nieuwhof, Kon Konstantinov, Tim Hancock

NBO Task Force
- Joanne Dickson, Graeme Gillan, Patrick Glass, Daryl Hoey, Mike Huth, Ray Kitchen, James Neal, Matthew Radford, Matthew Shaffer, Peter Thurn

Science Team
- Jennie Pryce & a team of 13 scientists from DEPI-V, AbacusBio and University of New England

Farmwalk Team
- The team of 26 families and 16 farm consultants who hosted Australia’s Longest Farmwalk
- Dairy Australia Extension Co-ordinators

Resourced by
- Dairy Australia
- DEPI-V and Dairy Futures CRC

With support from
- Australian Dairy Farmers
- Regional Development Programs
- NHIA, breed societies, bull companies and resellers

With input from
- Australian Dairy Products Federation
- MLA
- Red Sky
- Dairy Farm Monitor Project
- 27 private consultants, veterinarians, nutritionists, herd improvement advisors and an epidemiologist
Industry Partners

Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme

Dairy Australia
Your Levy at Work

Australian Dairy Farmers

Dairy Futures CRC

Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources

State Government Victoria