



IMPROVING HERDS

Herd decisions made easy

“In the future, all dairy farmers will easily use herd improvement to contribute to informed decisions, which leads to healthier cows, a smaller carbon footprint and greater profits.” – ImProving Herds’ Project Vision

ImProving Herds is an Australian dairy initiative, made possible by the Gardiner Dairy Foundation.

The three-year, \$3.3 million project brings together world-class experts in a significant collaboration of the dairy industry, aiming to make it easier for farmers to make quick, data-driven decisions to increase herd profitability.

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The project is backed by 30 years of data and genetic testing. Over the course of the three-year project, you can expect to see:

- 25 focus farms testing the link between profitability, focused bull selections and genomic testing of females
- 6 focus farms that test how data-driven decisions can lead to improved profitability
- Demonstrate the contribution of better herd data and higher genetic merit to on-farm financial performance
- Sophisticated modelling that can be used to test scenarios, including the impact of genetic gain on resource use and methane emissions

A wealth of collaboration, science and understanding

The project will be led by Associate Professor Ben Hayes from the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) and will be supported by Dairy Australia, Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme (ADHIS), National Herd Improvement Association of Australia (NHIA) and Holstein Australia.

In addition, National Herd Development, HiCo, Dairy Express, Tas Herd, FarmWest, Richard Shephard, Herd Health Pty Ltd, Nicolas Friggens, INRA and Eileen Wall, SRUC are supporting ImProving Herds.

To find out more about ImProving Herds and how your organisation can be involved please contact: Michelle Axford on 0427 573 330 or maxford@adhis.com.au.

Figure 1: An overview of ImProving Herds activities

YEAR 1 – 2015/2016

- Herd test focus farms commence
- Retrospective financial analysis
- Herd level modelling

YEAR 2 – 2016/2017

- Training program developed
- Genetic focus farms commence
- Focus farm financial analysis
- Model benefits of heifer genotyping

YEAR 3 – 2017/2018

- New decision making software released
- Genotype cost benefit analysis
- Sire decisions report



Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

