

# Media Release



Wednesday 7 August 2019

## ACCC Dairy Committee must protect all dairy farmers

The United Dairyfarmers of Victoria (UDV) today welcomes the new ACCC Dairy Consultative Committee and says the Committee must be given the power to consider all claims relating to breaches of the mandatory code of conduct.

“For this Committee to effectively enforce the dairy mandatory code, they must consider claims of code breaches made by all dairy farmers, regardless of size,” said Mr Paul Mumford, UDV President.

When enforcing industry codes of conduct, the ACCC has a public benefit test to determine if it will peruse an alleged breach.

“We are concerned that many dairy farmers will not meet the requirements set out under the public benefit test, potentially leading to the dairy farmers with the least amount of bargaining power in the dairy supply chain being disadvantaged,” said Mr Mumford.

“In 2017, the Senate Economics Reference Committee concluded that the ACCC’s current investigation process is letting Australian farmers down.

“It is important that this new Committee ensures all dairy farmers are treated fairly as they all contribute to the dairy industry and the community, and deserve equal protections under the mandatory code,” said Mr Mumford.

Mr Mumford said the UDV is looking forward to working with the new dairy specialists within ACCC to ensure the development of a mandatory code of conduct that is fit for purpose for all dairy farmers.

“I commend Minister McKenzie for establishing a Dairy Consultative Committee and Dairy Specialist in the ACCC, and injecting \$8.1 million into the ACCC Agriculture Unit.

“In light of this funding boost, we implore the ACCC to use their powers under the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 to investigate claims of power imbalances along the dairy supply chain, particularly in the retail sector,” said Mr Mumford.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources is currently drafting the mandatory code of conduct following two rounds of consultation. Later this year a third round of consultation will take place to gain industry feedback on the draft code.

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### About the VFF

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is dedicated to representing the interests of farmers and making a positive difference to their businesses and communities. We strive to create an environment for our members, our farmers, that enables profitable, safe, sustainable production to ensure an enduring social licence in a community that respects and values the sector.

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