

Media Release



Victorian
Farmers
Federation

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Dairy farmers take aim at MDBA commentary

The Victorian Farmers Federation United Dairy Farmers of Victoria (VFF/UDV) believes the impacts of the Basin Plan on the Northern Victorian Dairy industry have been completely ignored in the recent press club address by the Murray Darling Basin CEO, Andrew McConville.

VFF/UDV President Mark Billing said the MDBA and Commonwealth Government need to recognise the impact of the Murray Darling Basin Plan on farming communities and the dairy industry.

“A recent report commissioned by the Victorian Government found the Plan was responsible for reducing milk production in the state by 420 million litres.”

“Northern Victoria produces over 80 per cent of the milk in the Basin, it’s high time politicians and bureaucrats acknowledge the importance of food production and make some effort to protect it.”

Mr Billing said dairy farmers disagreed with Mr McConville’s assertion that all state government signed up to a 3,200GL plan 10 years ago, which included the 450GL up-water target.

“The MDBA is clearly mistaken, the Victorian Government never signed up to the 450GL and never supported water buybacks”.

“The MDBA seems hellbent on trying to re-write history and wants to misrepresent the facts in order to squeeze blood out of a stone. The fact is that state governments at the time never supported a 3,200GL plan”

Mr Billing said the MDBA’s position on the 450GL ignored the socio-economic test requirements and the impact on communities.

“It’s total rubbish to ignore the facts of the Basin Plan and fact is the 450GL cannot be recovered if there are negative social and economic outcomes”

“All reports suggest the recovery of the 450GL will destroy rural communities and decimate the Northern Victorian dairy industry.”

“An urgent conversation is needed around food security. We need to address a drying climate and ensuring farmers have enough water to grow the nation’s food.”

“Our elected politicians and federal bureaucrats need to understand that the Basin Plan has caused long term economic losses and employment and any further water recovery will simply hurt the economy”

“Canberra cannot continue to ignore the value of the Victorian dairy industry and the people who have legitimate grievances with the Basin Plan,” Mr Billing concluded.

ENDS

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