

MEDIA RELEASE

Tocal Upgrades its Dairy Farm

Tocal College and the NSW Department of Primary Industries are committed to the long-term future of the dairy industry in NSW. This commitment is demonstrated through a major upgrade to the Tocal dairy farm. The upgrade includes growing the milking herd to 300 cows, expanding the milking shed to improve capacity, safety and efficiency, and replacing an outdated irrigation system to improve water use efficiency and production.

The increase in herd size reflects the national trend and will provide students with a better experience in working with a larger commercial scale herd and preparing them for jobs in the dairy sector.

The company DeLaval has been commissioned to expand the capacity of the dairy shed to a 15 aside parallel dairy resulting in an increase of 40 -50 cows milked per hour and improved safety for students and operators.

The bike shift irrigation system was installed over 20 years ago on 38 hectares and will be replaced with 3 centre pivot units. The bike shift system relied upon sprinklers being moved using operators on quad bikes and was a significant safety risk. The bike shift system is labour intensive and has poor water use efficiency and distribution compared to the latest centre pivot technology.

The move to centre pivot requires a significant redesign of the farm including the removal of some large eucalypts and some existing tree lots. Some trees will remain to protect the habitat of the endangered White-bellied sea eagle. The trees being removed will be replaced with expansive tree planting on the farm, including new tree lots, shade trees and areas for habitat and biodiversity. These plantings will complement and connect with earlier commitments to vegetation planning and management at Tocal.

Much thought and planning has gone into the redevelopment, with staff working closely with the vegetation specialists from Local Land Services to develop a Property Vegetation Plan.

These initiatives will ensure that the Tocal Dairy remains a viable, efficient and productive enterprise into the future. It has to both stand on its own as a business and meet the educational needs of the College for school student field studies, full time and part time students, short courses, professional development activities and farmer field days.

The Tocal dairy redevelopment will lead to improved farm, education and environmental outcomes.

Maps of the redesigned farm are available on the both the Tocal college website and Facebook page.

Media Contact:

Michael Ison, Centre Manager
michael.ison@dpi.nsw.gov.au
P: 02 4939 8811
Mob: 0413 692201

Alternatively

Robyn Papworth, Assistant to Principal
robyn.papworth@dpi.nsw.gov.au
02 4939 8865