



The Power of People on Australian Dairy Farms

October 2017

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Pictured above : Travis Telford and Ben Sparrow, dairy farmers in South Australia

BACKGROUND

One of the key challenges facing Dairy Australia's investment in the '*capable people*' strategic priority area is responding to the increasing need and priority around people development in and across the dairy industry.

There is little doubt that people are fundamental to all dairy farms. Good people can be the conduit to a successful and well run dairy business, while less capable employees, contractors, farm owners and/or family members can severely inhibit the farm business from reaching its potential.

The industry has identified the need for support, training and development in the people space and so began an industry wide program during 2006. This program has matured, expanded and developed over the past 11 years and remains an important pillar in building success for the industry more generally. A first measure of on farm perceptions, attitudes and behaviours was undertaken in 2014 with a representative sample of n = 401 dairy farmers and farm owners. This measure provided an important baseline measure on some of these key performance areas. The information also provided a strong evidence base on which strategy for improving the reach and effectiveness of the 'capable people' investments.

With this as context, Dairy Australia commissioned research among dairy farmers. The aim of the research was to better understand farmer attitudes, experiences, perceptions, behaviors and needs with regards to:

- attract, transition and retain employees;
- develop skills and capabilities;
- on farm safety;
- a profile of people on farm; as well as a
- a profile of the farm owner (see p11 for farm owner business profile; and p40-41 for respondent profile).

The research involved a 20 minute computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) with 417 dairy farmers. Sample list of farmers were provided by Dairy Australia including details of Regional Development Programs (RDP), region, farm size, principal contact name and contact details.

Quotas were set on RDP to reflect the actual farm distribution. A range of Likert rating scale, closed and open-ended questions were used throughout the survey. The research was conducted over the period 31 August – 14 September 2017.

The key findings from the research follow.





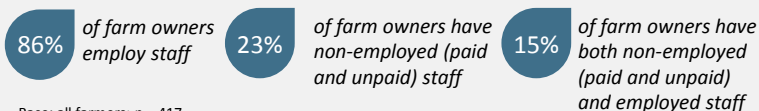
KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

Average size of the farm workforce*

4.0

*Note: Farm workforce is defined as the total amount of people working on the farm in any capacity, including the farmer (see page 8), not EFT.



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Attract, Retain and Transition



Recruitment



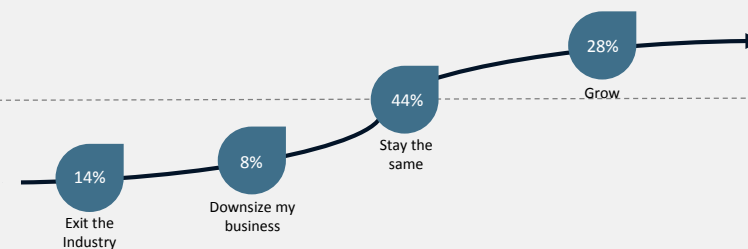
Retention



Transition

- ✓ Almost four in ten (38%) of farms recruited for staff over the last 12 months.
- ✓ This aligns with a similar number who reported losing staff over this same period (29%).
- ✓ Turnover looks to be heavily concentrated in the farm hand positions.
- ✓ Informal networks and word of mouth (61%) continues to be the more widely used source for attracting new staff.
- ✓ Dairy Australia's Employment Starter Kit initiative (ESKi) penetration has now reached an estimated 44% of farms.
- ✓ One in six survey respondents (16%) are expecting to recruit new staff in the next 12 months. Three quarters (77%) of farmers are reporting no intention to recruit in the coming 12 months while 7% are unsure.

Farm business direction over the next 5 years



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Develop Capabilities



Engagement



Impact of Training



Attendance

- ✓ Exposure to training (formal and/or informal) is reasonably widespread with almost 6 in 10 (57%) of farmers indicating they or their staff had been involved over the last 12 months.
- ✓ Perhaps not surprisingly it is the informal training and events that has the strongest level of engagement (47% had staff involved over the past 12 months).
- ✓ The feedback indicates a positive impact as a result of involvement in training and events with:
 - 40% of farm owners reporting they had made changes to the way they run their farms as a result of industry training
 - 59% of farm owners who received industry training in the last 12 months report the training as having a positive impact on work efficiency and effectiveness.

KEY FINDINGS

Farm Safety

WHS

Safety

Injury

- ✓ Only 38% of farm owners reported that they have a written Work Health and Safety plan for their farm. This result is down slightly on that reported in 2014.
- ✓ Adoption of the different farm safety practices varies across farms.
- ✓ Of the farms with quad bikes (86%), over one in five (21%) do not have written or informal standard operating procedures for quad bikes.
- ✓ Of the farms with tractors (>99%), almost one in three (32%) do not have either written or informal standard operating procedures for tractors on the farm.
- ✓ 55% of survey respondents reported that safety guides and templates for things such as standard operating procedures would help them make their farms safer.

Attitudes

Dairy Industry

People management

Farm Management



Farmers reported a consistently less positive attitude towards the dairy industry (compared to that reported in 2014). The largest fall was in the confidence in the future of the dairy industry (down 1.5 points).



By contrast attitudes towards people management have improved – the two largest increases being “I value my staff by investing in them” & “I’m confident I know how to manage my people” (both up 0.7).



Consistent with this, attitudes around farm management also improved with the largest change being reported in “I have a good understanding of my obligations as an employer” (up 0.6).

The detailed results from the research now follow.



DETAILED FINDINGS



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM BUSINESS PROFILE

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Farm workforce

Farmer business
profile

Farm staff profile

Farm business
phase

Feedback was provided on. . . .

In this section of the research, farmers were asked to provide a profile of themselves and their staff – the number, qualifications, employment status and hours worked.

This was collected for all staff members, providing Dairy Australia with a full profile of the farm workforce.

The schematic below provides an outline of the approach taken to assemble a full workforce profile.

Farm Business
Profile



Farm Workforce



Role Profile



Farm Phase

Farm workforce structure

Farm owner



Plus



Farm staff

- Employed
- Non-employed (paid)
- Non-employed (unpaid)



OR

Farm owner



Plus



Sharefarmer



Plus



Farm staff

- Employed
- Non-employed (paid)
- Non-employed (unpaid)



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Farm workforce

Farmer business
profile

Farm staff profile

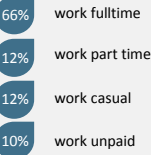
Farm business
phase

Farm workforce

Average size of the
farm workforce*

4.0

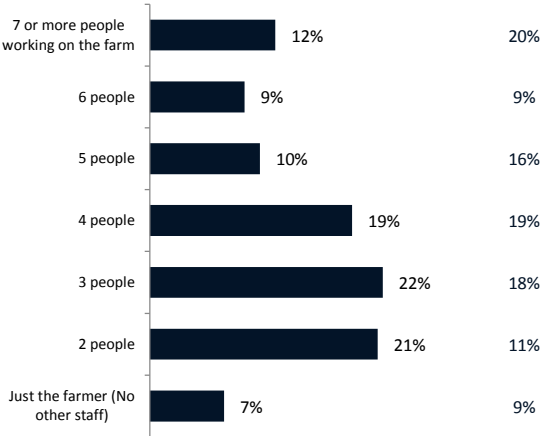
of the staff working under
the farmer...



Base: all farmers; n = 417, all reported farm staff (all positions); n= 1430

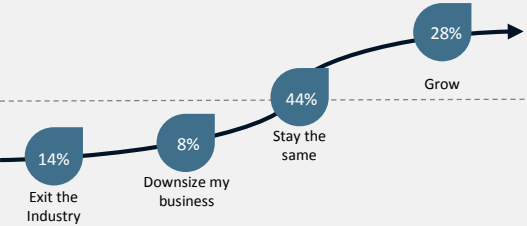
Size of the farm workforce
(employed/non-employed – paid and unpaid)

2014 Results



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Farm business direction over the next 5 years

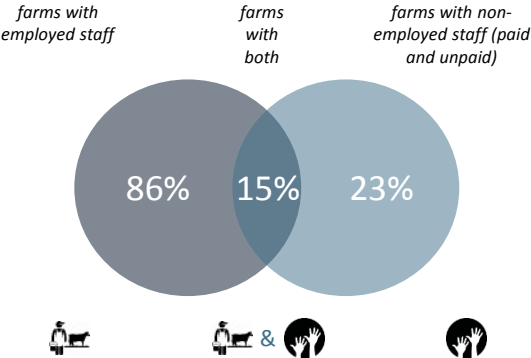


Base: all farmers; n = 417

Proportion of farms with the following roles...

93%

farms with staff (in addition to the farmer) working on the farm



Base: all farmers; n = 417

*Note: Farm workforce is defined as the total amount of people working on the farm in any capacity, including the farmer (see page 8), not EFT. The total of roles reported in the farm workforce; n = 1430.

What was asked...

Including yourself how many people work on your farm? Please also consider any trainees or overseas workers you may have working on your farm?
What role do they work in?

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Farm workforce

Farmer business
profile

Farm staff profile

Farm business
phase

Farmer profile

Base:

	Farmer with no other staff on their farm  (n = 28*)	Farmer with only employed staff on their farm  (n = 295)	Farmer with only non-employed staff (paid and unpaid) on their farm  (n = 31)	Farmer with both employed and non- employed staff (paid and unpaid) on their farm  (n = 63)
Years owned the farm	14.1	16.4	17.2	15.2
Years in the industry	19.5	18.7	19.4	18.1
Average weekly hours on farm	68.5	64.4	71.8	60.1

Their qualifications
and experience

Qualification				
Did not complete secondary school	50%	32%	26%	32%
Completed secondary school	25%	20%	23%	25%
Certificate	11%	16%	26%	21%
Diploma	7%	15%	16%	11%
Bachelors degree	7%	14%	6%	11%
Something else	0%	2%	3%	0%
Business phase over the next 5 years				
Grow my business	0%	27%	32%	43%
Stay the same	36%	46%	39%	41%
Downsize my business	18%	8%	6%	0%
Leave the industry	29%	13%	19%	11%
Not sure	18%	5%	3%	5%

Their recent
staff recruitment
and retention

Recruited over the last 12 months?	14%	42%	3%	48%
Plan to recruiting over the next 12 months?	7%	19%	10%	10%
Had staff leave over the last 12 months?	7%	33%	16%	30%

How they develop
skills and capabilities

I attended either formal or informal training over the last 12 months	32%	56%	42%	76%
Attended a Dairy Australia training program in the last 12 months	0%	12%	3%	16%
Those who have attended training/education that have made changes to their business	11%	40%	46%	46%

Work Health
safety practices on
their farm

Written Work Health and Safety plan	32%	38%	39%	41%
Written Standard Operating Procedures for Quad Bikes	7%	19%	10%	32%
Written Standard Operating Procedures for Tractors	7%	15%	19%	19%
Have a written induction program for new employees	n/a	25%	3%	27%
Have written employment contracts for employees	n/a	24%	3%	35%
Have the Dairy Australia Farm Safety Starter Kit	11%	19%	13%	16%
% reporting workplace injuries over the last 12 months	7%	13%	6%	13%
Number of days off injured	26.00	38.58	71.00	19.25

*Note: low sample
size (n<30). Interpret
results with caution.



FARM ROLE & BUSINESS PHASE PROFILE

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Farm workforce






Farmer business
profile

Farm staff profile

Farm business
phase

Farm roles profile

Farmers reported the number of people in each role. It is clear that in some cases, farmers may describe roles somewhat differently.

	 Calf rearers and Farm hands (n = 904)	 Farm managers (n = 345)	 Share farmers* (n = 37)	 Non-employed (paid and unpaid) staff (n = 144)	 Farm staff overall (n = 1430)
Average number reported per farm owner	2.2	0.8	0.1	0.3	3.4
Type of employment					
Full time	64%	86%	94%	22%	66%
Part time	14%	8%	3%	8%	12%
Casual	18%	1%	0%	6%	12%
Unpaid	4%	5%	3%	64%	10%
Average hours worked per week					
Less than 10 hours	7%	3%	0%	8%	6%
10-19 hours	7%	4%	0%	10%	7%
20-29 hours	9%	4%	0%	20%	8%
30-39 hours	21%	7%	3%	7%	16%
More than 40 hours	56%	82%	97%	55%	63%
Education					
Secondary school	50%	48%	57%	52%	50%
Certificate	12%	19%	19%	17%	15%
Diploma	3%	14%	8%	16%	7%
Undergraduate	3%	11%	5%	11%	6%
Other	32%	8%	11%	4%	23%



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Farm workforce

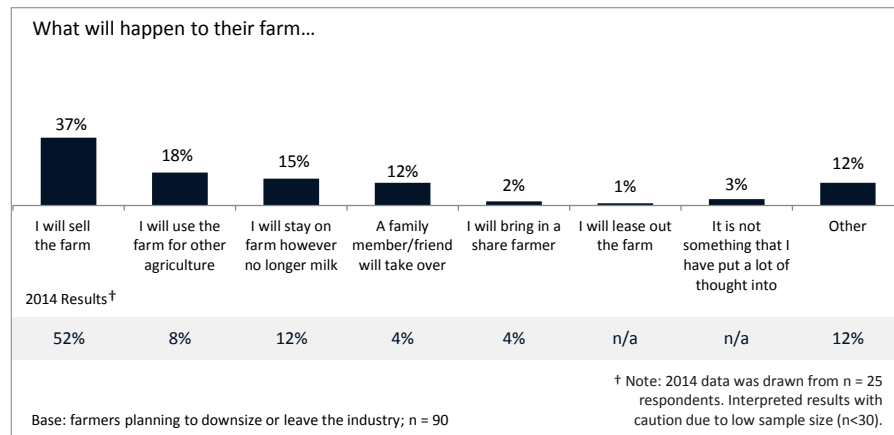
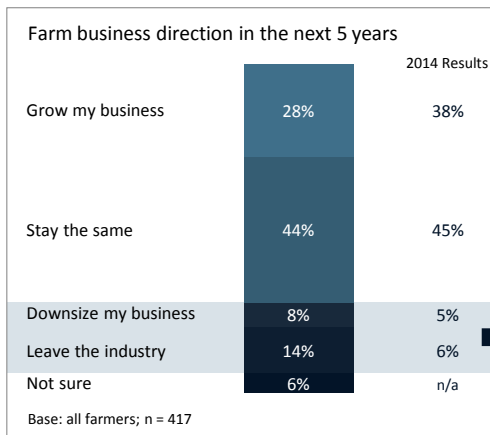
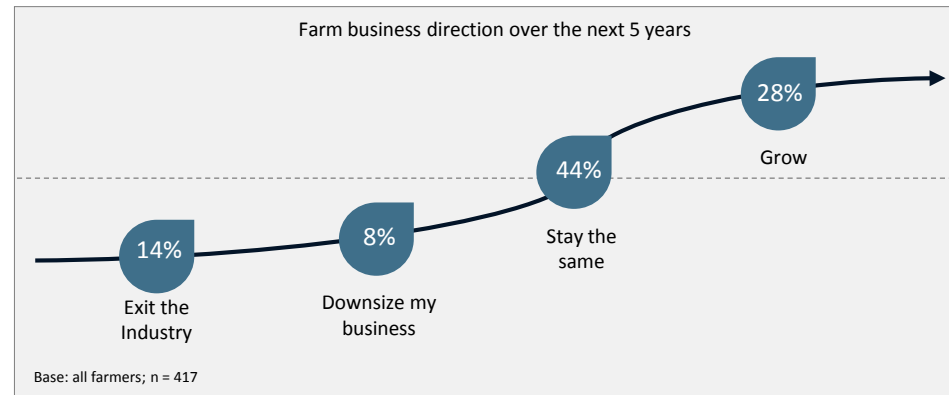
Farmer business profile

Farm staff profile

Farm business phase

Farm business direction

Farmers were asked about the direction of their farm business over the next 5 years.



What was asked...

In relation to your farm business, over the next five years are you looking to grow, downsize or stay the same?
What's likely to happen to you farm?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Attracting New
Staff

Overseas workers

Retaining Current
Staff

Transitioning the
Farm

Feedback was provided on. . . .

In this section of the research, farmers were asked to provide information around their experience with recruiting and retaining staff, their use of overseas workers and what, if any, plans they had in place for succession planning.

Some of the key results from the feedback provided by farmers is shown in the schematic below.

Attract , Retain
and Transition



Recruitment



Retention



Transition

- ✓ Almost four in ten (38%) of farms recruited for staff over the last 12 months.
- ✓ This aligns with a similar number who reported losing staff over this same period (29%).
- ✓ Turnover looks to be heavily concentrated in the farm hand positions.
- ✓ Informal networks and word of mouth (61%) continues to be the more widely used source for attracting new staff.
- ✓ Dairy Australia's Employment Starter Kit initiative (ESKi) penetration has now reached an estimated 44% of farms.
- ✓ Three in four (74%) of farms are reporting no intention to recruit in the coming 12 months.
- ✓ About one in two farms are using incentives to help retain staff.



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Attracting New
Staff

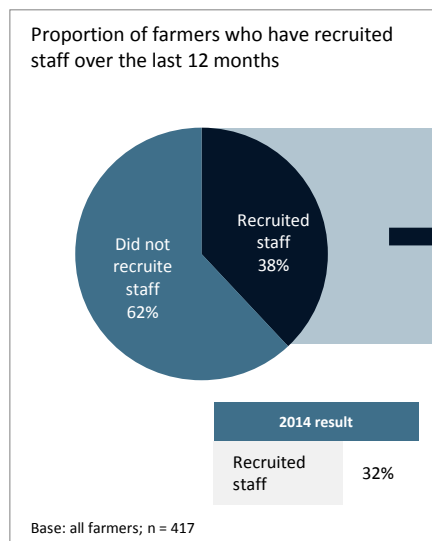
Overseas workers

Retaining Current
Staff

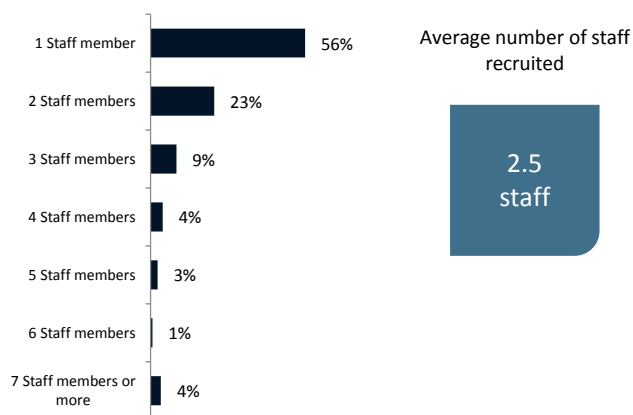
Transitioning the
Farm

Staff recruitment

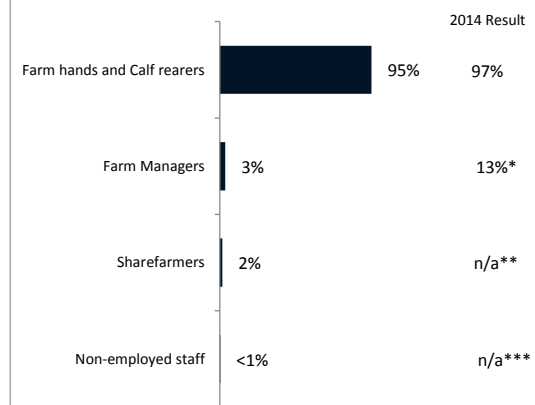
Farmers who report recruiting over the last 12 months



Staff recruitment in the last 12 months[†]



Proportion of roles they recruited for in the last 12 months



[†]Note: data on the quantity of staff recruited in the last 12 months was not gathered during the 2014 research. No data for comparison.

*Note: This figure does not include reported recruitment of Farm Business Managers. In 2014, data on the recruitment of Farm Business Managers and share farmers was recorded as a single category.

**Note: no comparable data as per aforementioned note.

***Note: no data on recruitment of non-employed staff was recorded in 2014

What was asked...

How many staff have you recruited (if any) over the last 12 months?
What role did you recruit for?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
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Farm Safety

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Attracting New
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Overseas workers

Retaining Current
Staff

Transitioning the
Farm

Staff recruitment

A profile of the staff farmers report
recruiting over the last 12 months

Calf rearers and Farm hands

Farm managers

Share farmers

Non-employed (paid and
unpaid) staff



Base (all reported staff):	(n = 381)	(n = 14*)	(n = 6*)	(n = 2*)
Average number recruited per the n = 160 farms that recruited staff in the last 12 months	2.4	0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Type of employment				
Full time	59%	93%	83%	0%
Part time	14%	7%	17%	50%
Casual	27%	0%	0%	0%
Unpaid	0%	0%	0%	50%
Where their qualifications considered?				
Yes, they were	32%	57%	16%	0%
No, they weren't	65%	29%	68%	100%
Unsure	3%	14%	16%	0%
Were the recruits new to the dairy industry?				
Yes, they were	35%	29%	17%	50%
No, they weren't	63%	57%	83%	50%
Unsure	2%	14%	0%	0%

*Note: low sample size (n<30). Interpret results with caution.



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

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Attracting New
Staff

Overseas workers

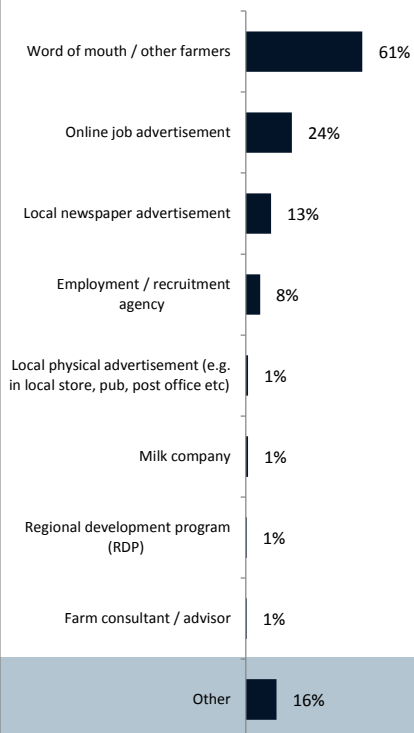
Retaining Current
Staff

Transitioning the
Farm

Staff recruitment

Methods used to recruit staff over
the last 12 months

How staff were recruited in the last 12 months



Base: farmers who have recruited staff in the last 12 months; n = 160

^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Other methods of staff recruitment



Base: farmers who have recruited staff in the last 12 months; n = 160

What was asked...

How did you recruit these staff?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

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Attract, Retain
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Farm Safety

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Staff

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Retaining Current
Staff

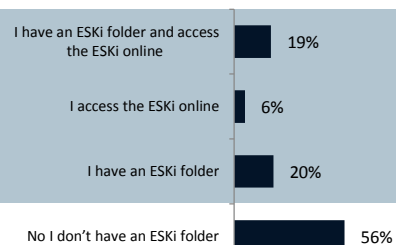
Transitioning the
Farm



*Dairy Australia's
Employment Starter
Kit initiative (ESKi)*

*Access to and benefit from
using the ESKi*

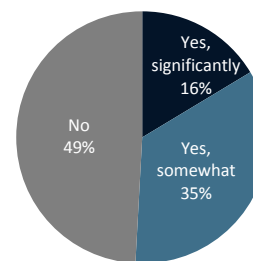
Farmers using ESKi[†]



[†]Note: This question was asked to all respondents, but only 89% of respondents have farm staff in their farm workforce.

Base: all farmers; n = 417

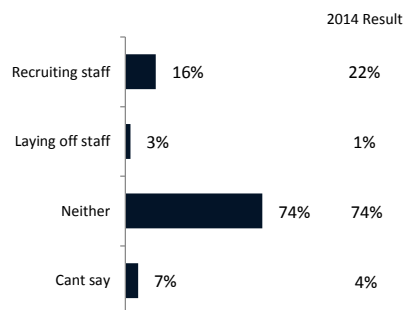
Has ESKi improved farmers' employment and recruitment practices?



Base: all farmers with access to ESKi; n = 183

*Future recruitment
intentions
The next 12 months*

Recruitment and retention intentions over the next 12 months



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Over **one in six** survey respondents (16%) are expecting to **recruit new staff** in the next 12 months.

Three in four (77%) farms are reporting **no intention to recruit** in the coming 12 months while 7% are unsure.

What was asked...

Do you have a Dairy Australia Employment Starter Kit (ESKi) folder and/or access the ESKi online?
Has the ESKi improved your recruitment and employment practices?
Over the next 12 months, do you expect to be...



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

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Attracting New Staff

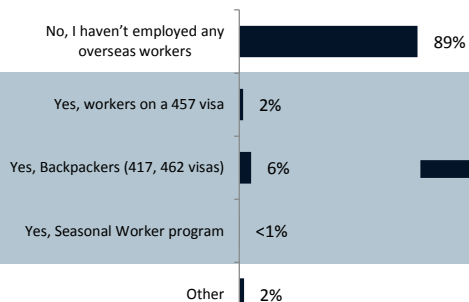
Overseas workers

Retaining Current Staff

Transitioning the Farm

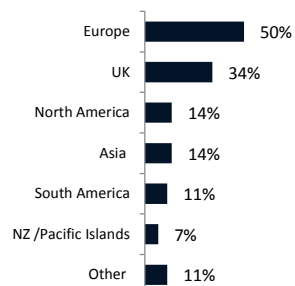
Overseas workers

Have they employed overseas workers in the last 12 months on their farm?†



Base: all farmers; n = 417

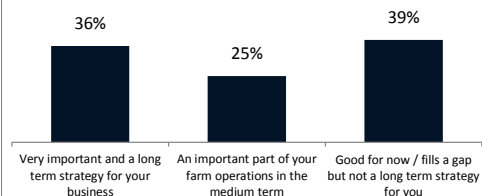
Where their overseas workers came from†



Base: all farmers who have employed overseas workers in the last 12 months; n = 44

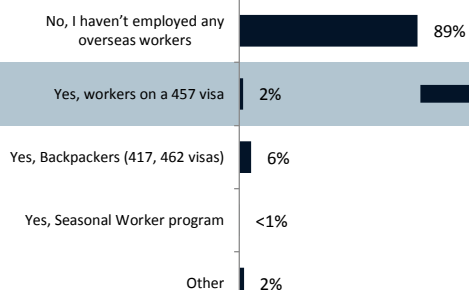
^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Their approach to skilled migration†



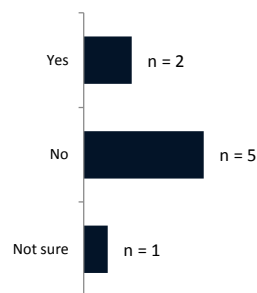
Base: all farmers who have employed overseas workers in the last 12 months; n = 44

Have they employed overseas workers in the last 12 months on their farm?†



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Did they use the industry labour template agreement?†



Base: farmers who have employed 457 visa workers in the last 12 months; n = 8*

*Note: low sample size (n<30). Results indicative only. Additionally, n provided instead of frequency due to low sample size.

†Note: Questions regarding the recruitment and employment of overseas workers were not asked during the 2014 research.

What was asked...

In the last 12 months have you employed any overseas workers on your farm?
Did you use the dairy industry labour template agreement?
Which countries did your overseas workers come from?

Which of the following best describes your approach to skilled migration?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

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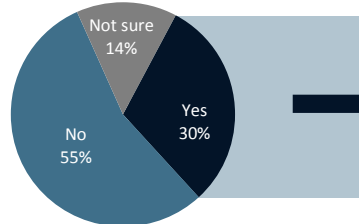
Retaining Current
Staff

Transitioning the
Farm

Overseas workers

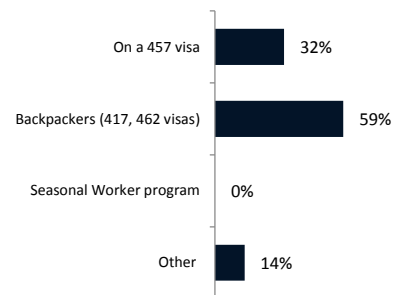
Future intended use of overseas workers among those farmers who have used previously is low.

Plans on recruiting overseas workers in the next 12 months[†]



Base: farmers planning to recruit staff in the next 12 months; n = 69

Employment arrangement[†]



*Note: small sample size (n<30). Results indicative only

^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Base: farmers; planning to recruit overseas workers n = 21*

[†]Note: Questions regarding the recruitment and employment of overseas workers were not asked during the 2014 research.

What was asked...

In the next 12 months, do you expect to recruit any overseas workers?
Under what arrangement will you recruit these overseas workers?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

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Staff

Transitioning the
Farm

Retaining current staff

Proportion of farmers who have had staff resign over the last 12 months

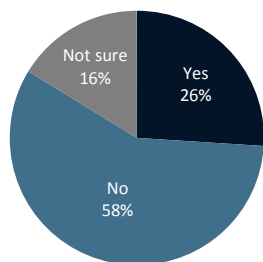


2017 Base: all farmers; n = 417



2014 Base: all farmers; n = 401

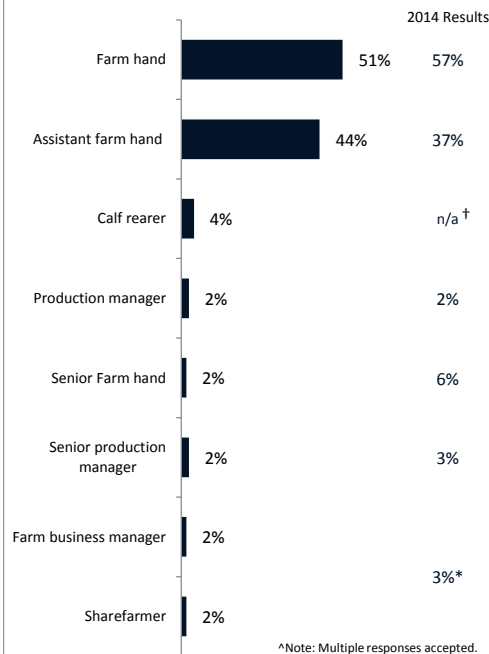
Did the staff who left stay in the dairy industry



2014 result
Yes 33%

Base: all farmers who have had staff leave in the last 12 months; n = 123

Of the 29% of farmers that reported staff attrition over the last 12 months: Roles of the staff they report having left their business



^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

†Note: these questions were not asked in 2014

*Note: 2014 report provided the figure for Farm Business Manager and Sharefarmer together.

Base: all farmers who have had staff leave in the last 12 months; n = 123

What was asked...

Have you had any staff leave over the last 12 months? Please include both staff that have been let go, completed their contract and staff that have resigned.

How many people in each of these roles have left the farm?

To the best of your knowledge, did most of the employees who left your farm in the last 12 months stay in dairy industry?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

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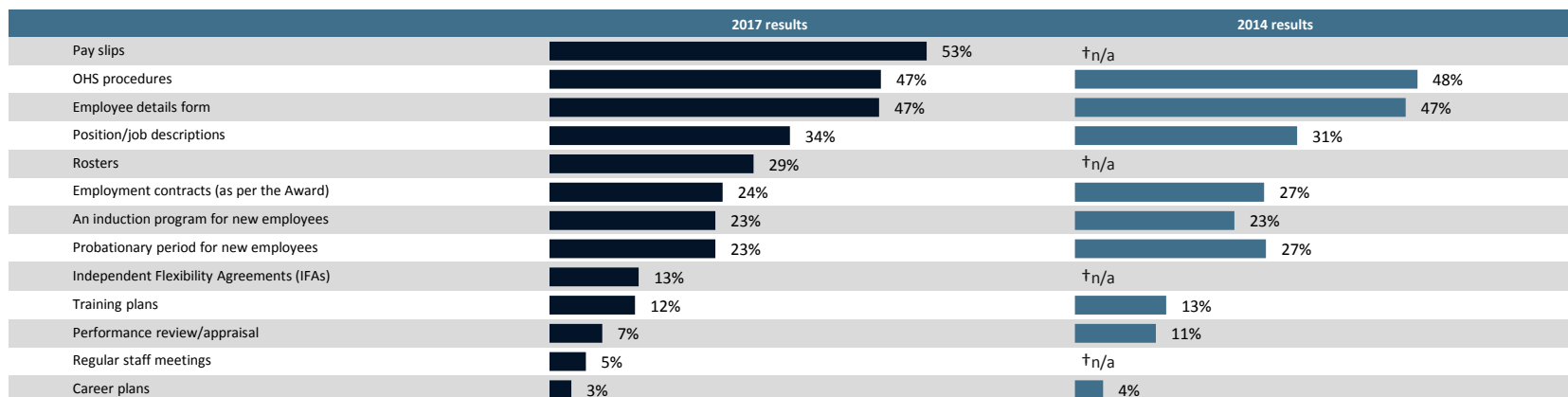
Overseas workers

Retaining Current
Staff

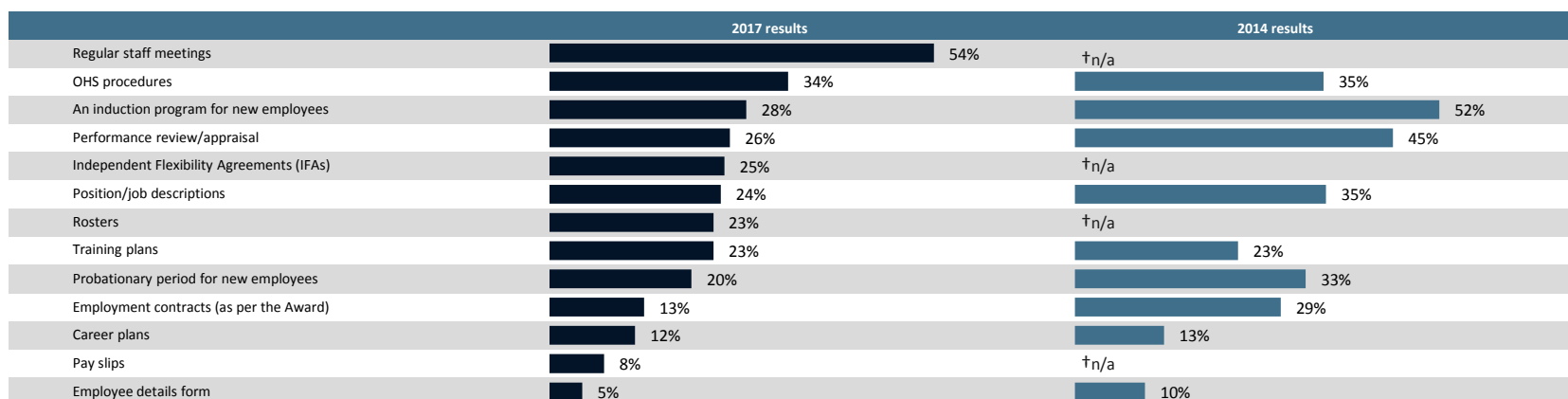
Transitioning the
Farm

Workplace practices for staff and family on the farm (inc. employed, non-employed and unpaid)

*Farms with
formal written
workplace
documentation
in place*



*Farms with
informal
workplace
agreements
in place*



Base: all farmers with staff on their farm; n = 389

† Note: these questions were not asked in 2014

What was asked...

Do you have any of the following in place for your employees and your family on the farm?



DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTRACT, RETAIN AND TRANSITION

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Attracting New
Staff

Overseas workers

Retaining Current
Staff

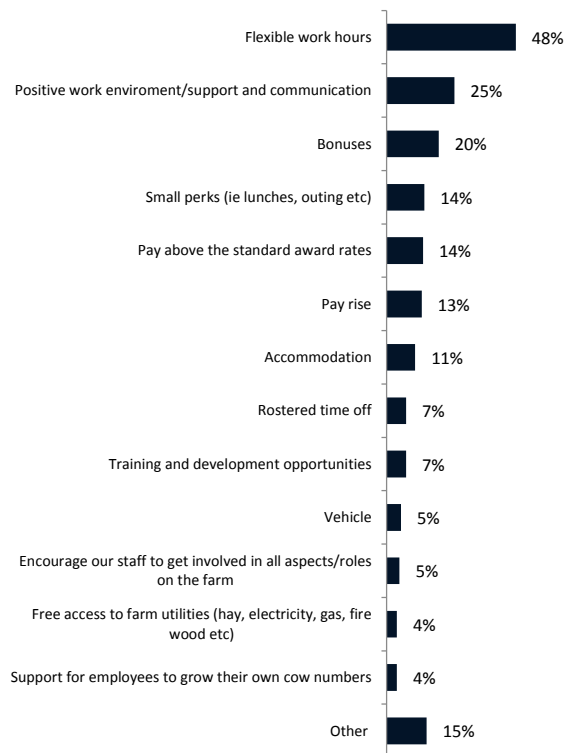
Transitioning the
Farm

Using incentives to retain current staff

Of the farmers with staff
in their farm workforce,
49%*
mentioned using
incentives to help retain
there staff.

These were the retention
measures they mentioned

Staff retention measures they have put in place†



Base: all farmers using incentives; n = 205

^Note: Multiple responses
accepted. Results may
exceed 100%.

†Note: No comparable data to 2014 study: In 2014, this question was asked in a close-ended 'yes/no' format. In 2017, this question was asked without prompted responses and the agents recorded which retention methods were used by farmers.

*Note: In 2014, 64% of farms reported using retention methods to retain staff

What was asked...

What have you done or put in place to help keep or retain your employees?



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

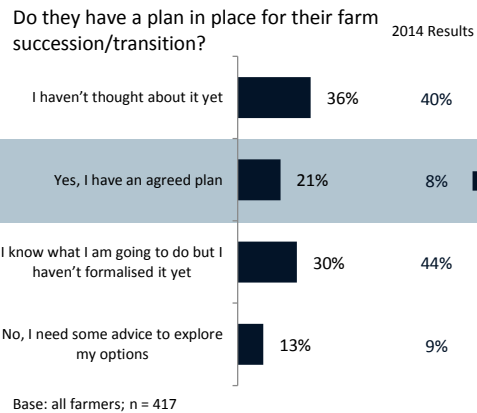
Attracting New Staff

Overseas workers

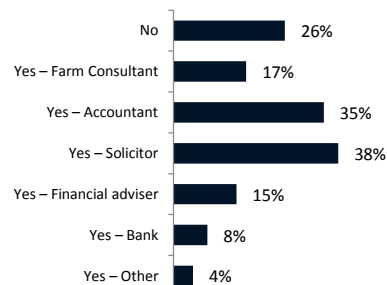
Retaining Current Staff

Transitioning the Farm

Farm transition / succession



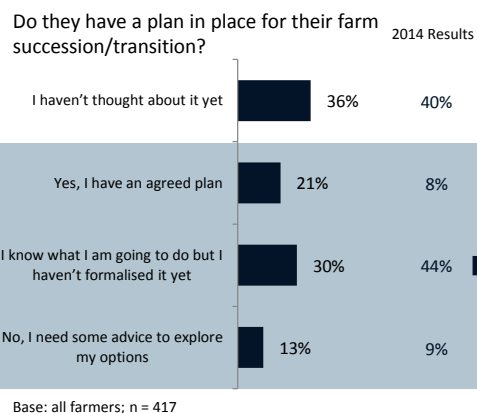
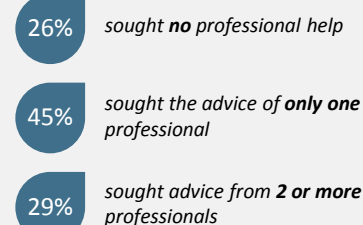
Did they use a professional to assist with their transition/succession plan?



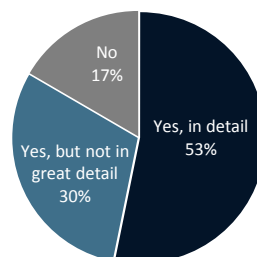
Base: all farmers with an agreed succession/transition plan; n = 89

^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

of the farmers with an agreed succession/transition plan in place for their farm...

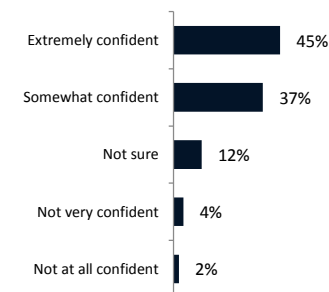


Have you discussed your aims and plans for the future of your business with all of your family members affected by the plan?



Base: farmers who have considered transitioning/succession; n = 265

How confident they are that they have the knowledge and support with successfully transition/succeed their farm...



What was asked...

Do you have an agreed plan in place for succession / transition of your farm?

Did you use a professional to assist with your plan and if so what type of professional help did you use?

In relation to your farm transition / succession, how confident are you that you have the knowledge and support available to reach the goals of your farm transition/succession plan?

Have you discussed your aims and plans for the future of your business with all of your family members affected by the plan?



DETAILED FINDINGS

DEVELOPING CAPABILITIES

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Engagement

Impact

Attendance

Further training

Feedback was provided on. . . .

In this section of the research, farmers were asked to provide information around what exposure, if any they or their staff had to formal and informal training and events. Among those exposed to training, farmers were asked to provide an indication of the perceived impact of this training on farm practices and productivity.

Some of the key results from the feedback provided by farmers is shown in the schematic below.

Develop
Capabilities



Engagement



Impact of
Training



Attendance

- ✓ Exposure to training (formal and/or informal) is reasonably widespread with almost 6 in 10 (57%) of farmers indicating they or their staff had been involved over the last 12 months.
- ✓ Perhaps not surprisingly, it is the informal training and events that has the strongest level of engagement (47% had staff involved over the past 12 months).
- ✓ The feedback indicates a positive impact as a result of involvement in training and events with:
 - 40% of farm owners reporting they had made changes to the way they run their farms as a result of industry training
 - 59% of farm owners who received industry training in the last 12 months report the training as having a positive impact on work efficiency and effectiveness.



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Engagement

Impact

Attendance

Further training

Industry education, training and events

Farmers who reported engagement over
the last 12 months

Industry education, training and events attended in the last 12 months

Yes, my staff or I have attended formal
industry education courses

18%

Yes my staff or I staff have attended
informal training & events

47%

No one has attended either formal
training or informational training or
events

43%

Base: all farmers; n = 417

*Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Nett
57%
report attending,
or sending staff to,
either formal or
informal training.

Attendance of formal education versus informal events

57%

Undertake
formal training

Undertake
informal training

10%

8%

39%

2014
results:

7%

26%

13%

2017 Base: all farmers; n = 417

2014 Base: all farmers; n = 401

What was asked...

Have you or any of your staff attended any industry education, training and events over the last 12 months?



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Engagement

Impact

Attendance

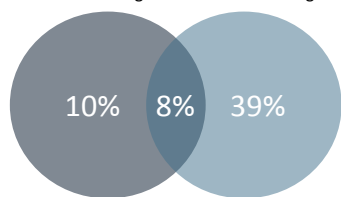
Further training

Farms that have people attend industry training and/or education in the last 12 months

57%[†]

Undertake formal training

Undertake informal training



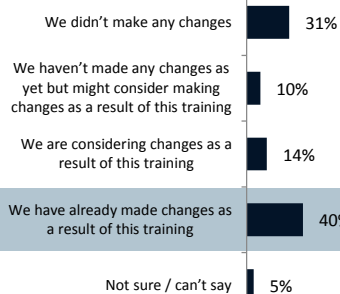
Base: all farmers; n = 417

[†]Note: 2014 nett engagement with industry training and education was 39% (based off all respondents; n = 401)

of the 57% of farmers
that reported attending
education/training

Those that have made
changes to their business

Did their most recent education/training impact the way their farm is run?[†]



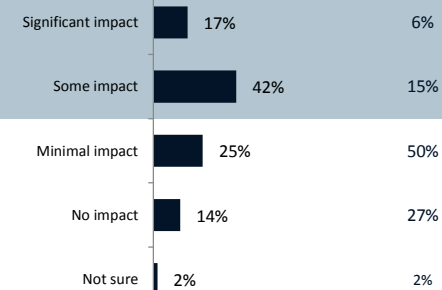
Base: all farmers that attended training and/or education; n = 236

[†]Note: No comparable data to 2014 as this question was not asked.

Those that have noticed
improvements in staff
effectiveness

Overall impact of education/training on staff efficiency/effectiveness

2014 Results



Base: all farmers that attended training and/or education; n = 236

What was asked...

Have you or any of your staff attended any industry education, training and events over the last 12 months?
Thinking of this most recent education, training and events, did you make any changes to the way you run the farm business?
Overall what impact has recent education, training and events had on [employee/your] efficiency/effectiveness on your farm



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Engagement

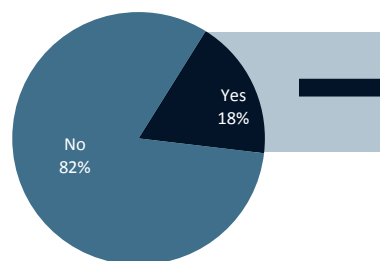
Impact

Attendance

Further training

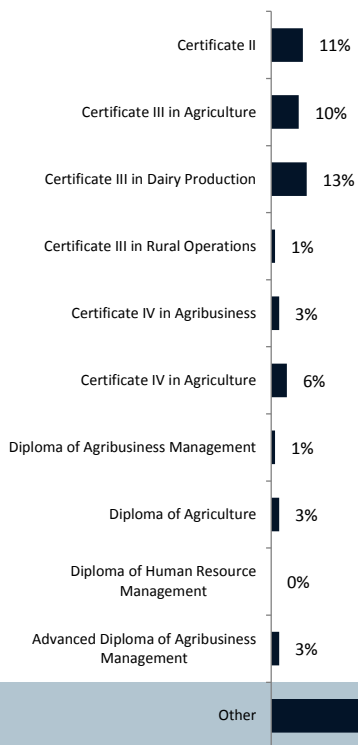
Formal education

Percentage of farms that have attended formal training and education in the last 12 months



Base: all farmers; n = 417

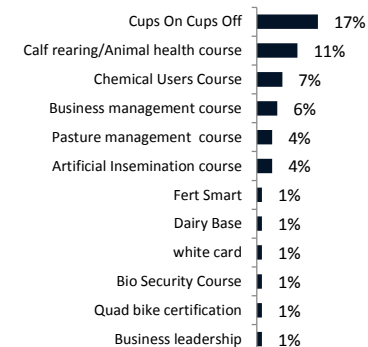
Formal training and education they were involved in†



^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Base: all farmers (and/or farmers' staff) that have attended formal industry education; n = 72

Other formal training courses



^Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Base: all farmers (and/or farmers' staff) that have attended formal industry education; n = 72

†Note: This question was not asked in 2014, comparative data is not available.

What was asked...

Have you or any of your staff attended any industry education, training and events over the last 12 months?
What was the course they were involved in?



Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Engagement

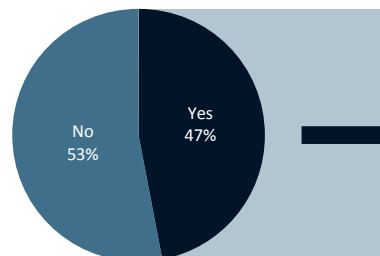
Impact

Attendance

Further training

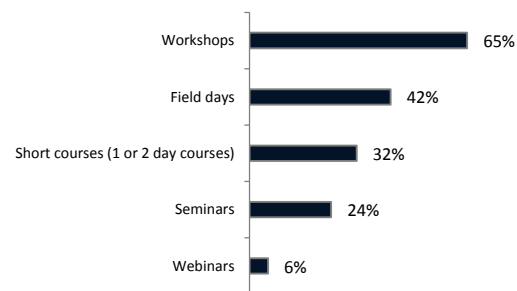
Informal training

Percentage of farms that have attended informal training and events in the last 12 months



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Informal training and events they were involved in†



[^]Note: Multiple responses accepted. Results may exceed 100%.

Base: all farmers (and/or farmers' staff) that have attended informal industry training; n = 196

The informal training events farmers report sending their Farm hands and/or Farm managers to

	Base: (n of farmers that sent staff to each event)	Farm hands and Calf rearers 	Farm managers
Workshops	(n = 128)	30%	70%
Field days	(n = 83)	23%	77%
Short courses (1 or 2 day courses)	(n = 63)	34%	66%
Seminars	(n = 48)	28%	72%
Webinars	(n = 11*)	28%	72%

Base: all farmers (and/or farmers' staff) that have attended informal industry training; n = 196

*Note: small sample size (n<30). Interpret results with caution.

†Note: This question was not asked in 2014, comparative data is not available.

What was asked...

Have you or any of your staff attended any industry education, training and events over the last 12 months?
What was the course they were involved in?
What was the role they have on farm?



DETAILED FINDINGS

DEVELOPING CAPABILITIES

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Further training

What they said...

Herd health

I'd like to do a Cups On Cups Off (COCO) course. I really value the discussion group I'm a member of. The DA facilitators are excellent. Really top shelf!

More courses on grading grain, dairy farmers need a better awareness of the grain that we're feeding our cattle

Animal welfare/animal health issues eg neospora and pestivirus/Q Fever vaccination

Cups On Cups Off style programs for my staff

Financial assistance with setting up GST and setting things up for the banks. Budgets and that sort of financial training, practical stuff.

It is a profitable business

How to succeed in the current situation - economic management, farming has changed its no longer a way of life but rather a big business and you have to be up with it all and a jack of all trades and very adaptable - it is good because you learn a lot self-taught skills.

Financials - understanding how to make money, some do for love it but making money out of it is important.

Succession Planning and better financial management.

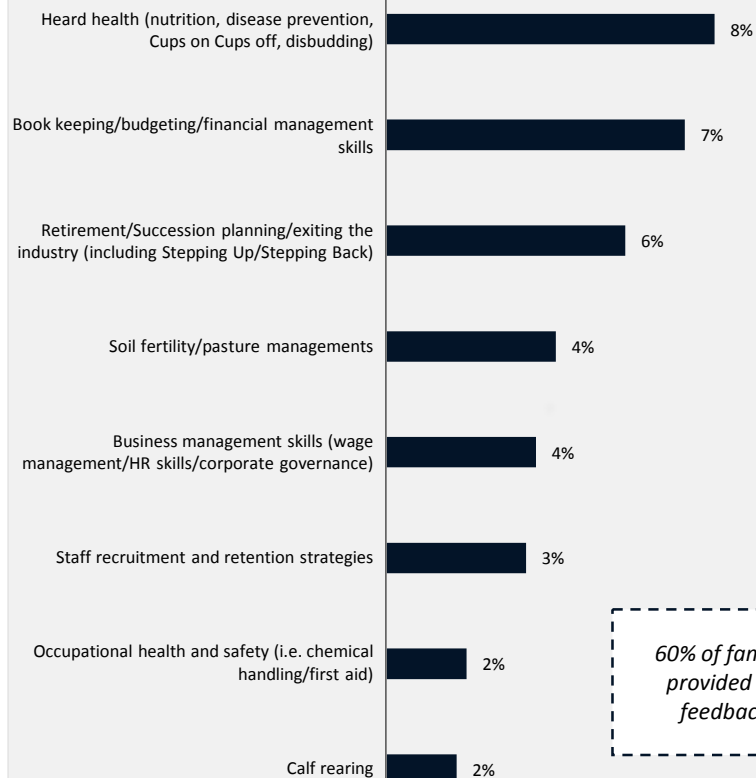
Retirement and Succession planning

Main thing is people want to farm buying into farm getting old and getting out meeting people who interested in farming.

Succession. Different plans and ways to hand the farm over. Finding loopholes financially to make things a lot easier.

To get a reasonable succession plan in place, I keep hitting brick walls with the succession plan.

Education, training and events they would like to be offered in the next 12 months



60% of famers provided no feedback

Base: all farmers; n = 417

What was asked...

What education, training and events would you like to be offered in the next 12 months?



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM SAFETY

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

WHS

Safety Practices

Workplace
Injuries

Feedback was provided on. . . .

Farm safety was one of the key areas explored in this research. Farmers were asked to report on their adoption of a range of different farm safety practices, report on whether they had existing (formal or otherwise) operating procedures and provide an indication of injuries over the last 12 months.

Some of the key results from the feedback provided by farmers is shown in the schematic below.

Farm Safety



WHS



Safety



Injury

- ✓ Only 38% of farm owners reported that they have a written Work Health and Safety plan for their farm. This result is down slightly on that reported in 2014.
- ✓ Adoption of the different farm safety practices varies across farms.
- ✓ Of the farms with quad bikes (86%), over one in five (21%) do not have written or informal standard operating procedures for quad bikes.
- ✓ Of the farms with tractors (>99%), almost one in three (32%) do not have either written or informal standard operating procedures for tractors on the farm.
- ✓ 55% of survey respondents reported that safety guides and templates for things such as standard operating procedures would help them make their farms safer.



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM SAFETY

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

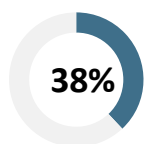
Attitudes

WHS

Safety Practices

Workplace
Injuries

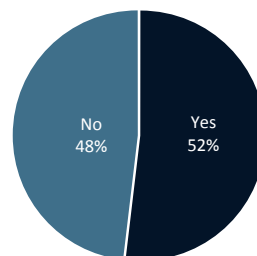
Farmers with a written Work Health and Safety plan
for their farm



2014 result: 46%

Base: all farmers; n = 417

Farmers who have updated their Work Health and
Safety plan in the past 12 months†



Base: farmers with a written Work Health and Safety plan; n = 160

Farmers with a Dairy Australia Farm Safety Starter Kit†

17%
of farmers report that they have
the Dairy Australia Farm Safety
Starter Kit



Base: all farmers; n = 417



†Note: These questions were not asked
in 2014, comparative data is not
available.

What was asked...

Do you have a written Work Health and Safety plan for your farm?
Have you updated your Work Health and Safety Plan in the last 12 months?
Do you have a Dairy Australia Farm Safety Starter Kit?



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM SAFETY

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

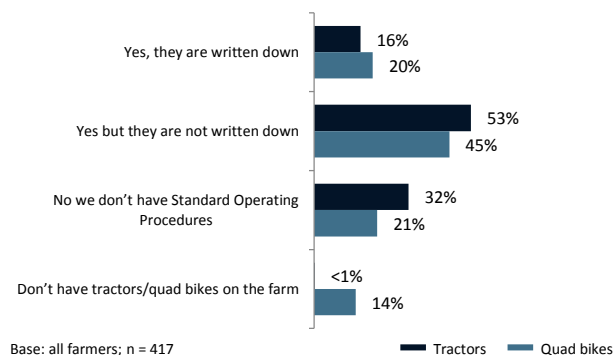
Attitudes

WHS

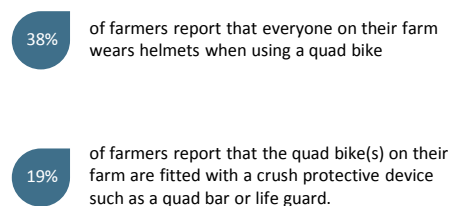
Safety Practices

Workplace
Injuries

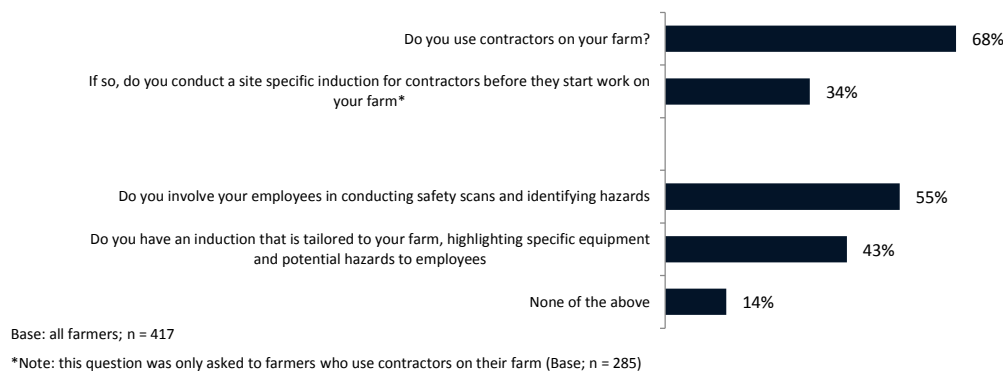
Farmers with Standard Operating Procedures for tractors and quad bikes on their farm†



Safety measures employed by farmers with quad bike(s) on their farms†



Work Health and Safety Practices farms employ on their farm†



†Note: These questions were not asked in 2014, comparative data is not available.

What was asked...

Do you have Standard Operating Procedures for Quad bikes on your farm?
Do you have Standard Operating Procedures for tractors on your farm?
Thinking about safety on your farm...
Do you...



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM SAFETY

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

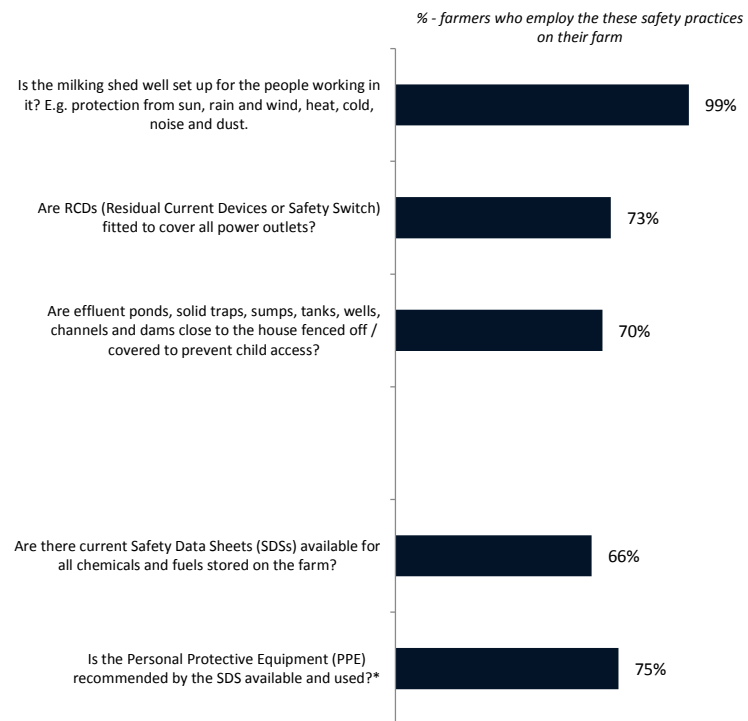
Attitudes

WHS

Safety Practices

Workplace
Injuries

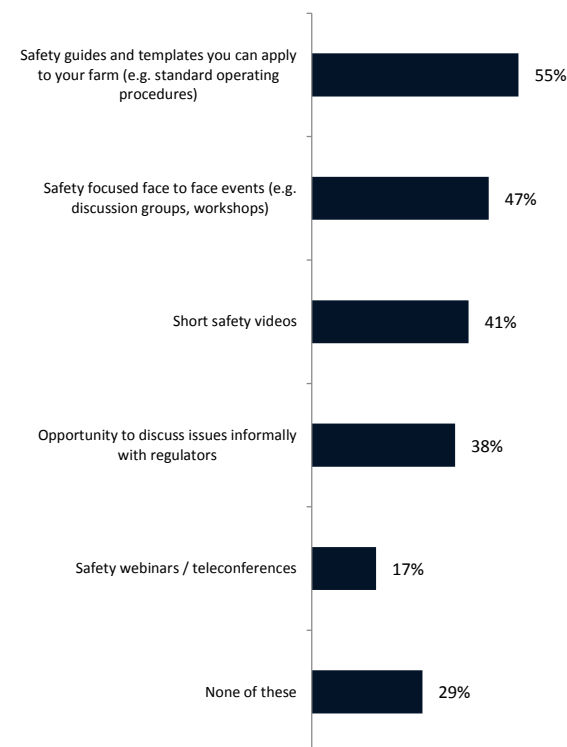
Thinking about safety on the farm, does any of the following take place on your farm...†



Base: all farmers; n = 417

*Note: this question was only asked to farmers with an SDSs on their farm (Base; n = 277)

Which of the following would you be interested in to help your business to be safe? †



Base: all farmers; n = 417

†Note: Questions were not asked in 2014, comparative data is not available.

What was asked...

Thinking about safety on your farm...

Thinking ahead, which of the following would you be interested in to help your business to be safe. Please select all those that would be of interest to you.



DETAILED FINDINGS

FARM SAFETY

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

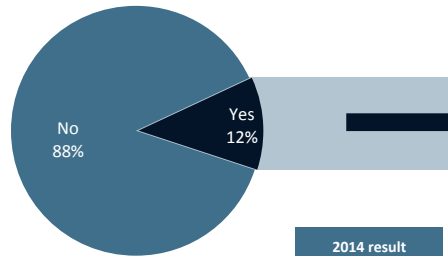
Attitudes

WHS

Safety Practices

Workplace
Injuries

In the last 12 months, have you or any of your staff had an injury on the farm that prevented them from working the next day

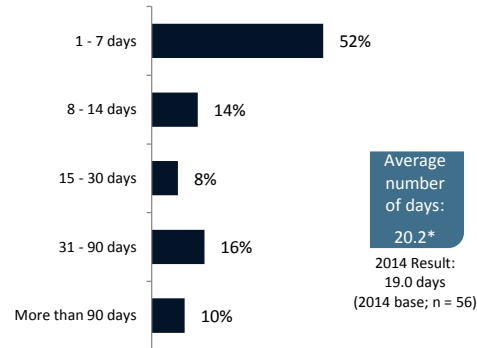


2014 result
(base; n = 401)

Yes 14%

Base: all farmers; n = 417

Average number of days taken off work due to injury per farm



Average
number
of days:

20.2*
2014 Result:
19.0 days
(2014 base; n = 56)

Base: all farmers (or staff) who have taken leave from injury; n = 50

*Note: mean days excludes n = 3 outliers reporting > 6 months absent from work due to injury; (Base: n = 47)

What was asked...

In the last 12 months, have you or any of your staff had an injury on the farm that prevented them from working the next day?
Over the last 12 months, in total how many days have you and your staff had off due to an on farm injury?

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain
and Transition

Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

Feedback was provided on. . . .

In this section of the research, farmers were asked to describe their attitudes around three core areas: their attitudes to the dairy industry at large, their attitudes to people management and importantly farm management. Attitudes in each of these three topic areas was measured across a range of different dimensions or perspectives.

Some of the key results from the feedback provided by farmers is shown in the schematic below.



Farmers reported a consistently less positive attitude towards the dairy industry (compared to that reported in 2014). The largest fall was in the confidence in the future of the dairy industry (down 1.5 points).



By contrast attitudes towards people management have improved – the two largest increases being “I value my staff by investing in them” & “I’m confident I know how to manage my people” (both up 0.7).



Consistent with this, attitudes around farm management also improved with the largest change being reported in “I have a good understanding of my obligations as an employer” (up 0.6).

DETAILED FINDINGS

ATTITUDES

Farm Business Profile

Attract, Retain and Transition

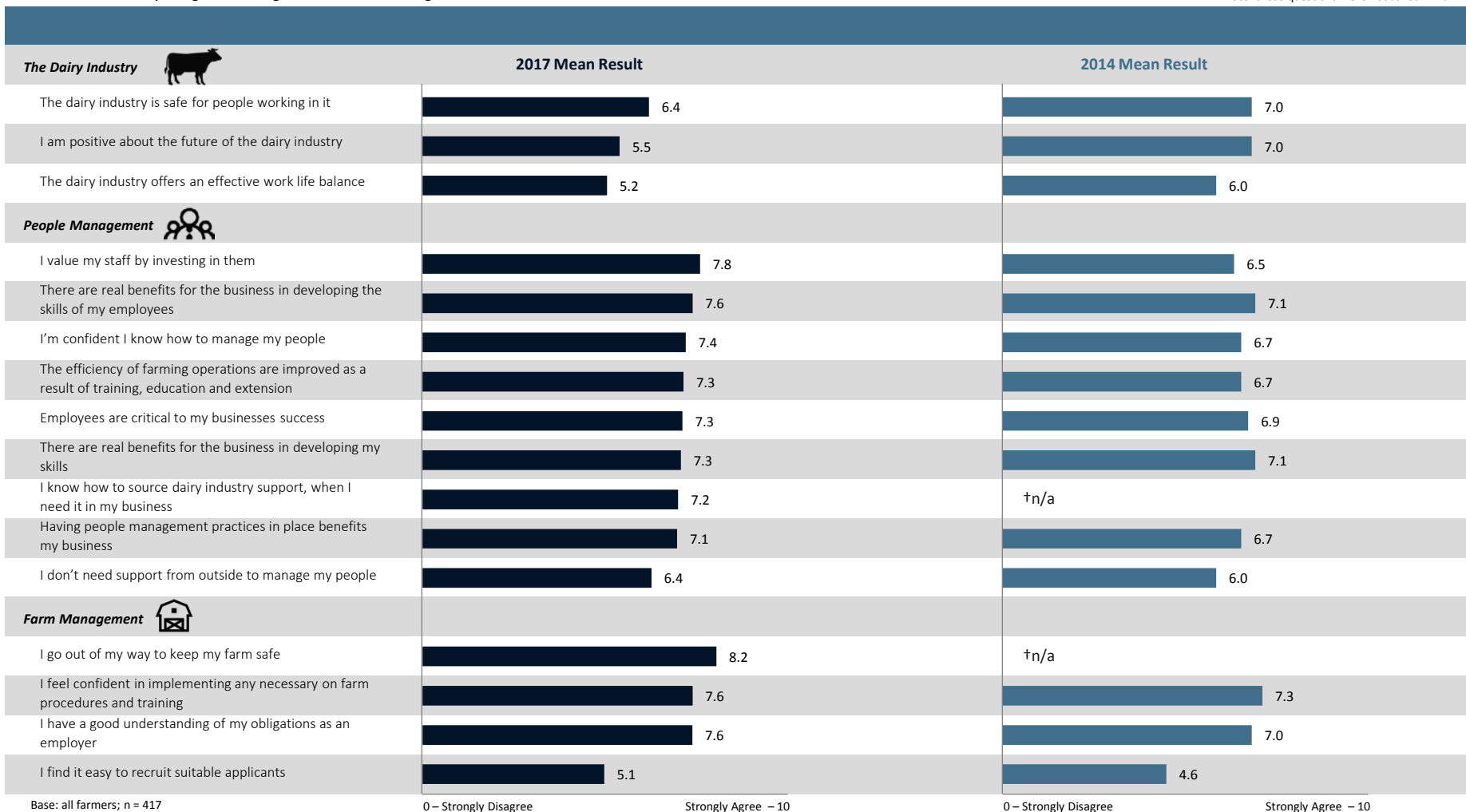
Developing Capabilities

Farm Safety

Attitudes

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements

† Note: these questions were not asked in 2014



What was asked...

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements around the dairy industry.

The next set of statements are around people management. Do you agree or disagree that...

We would now like to understand your views towards farm management. Do you agree or disagree that...

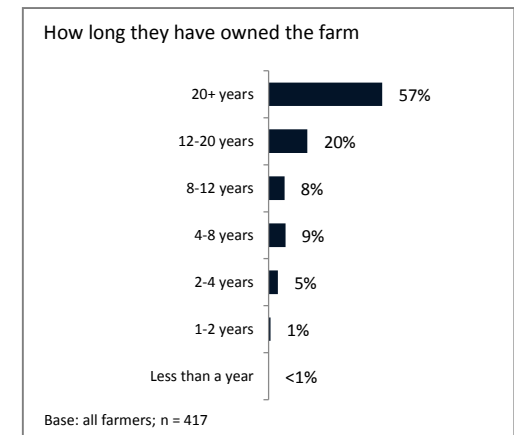
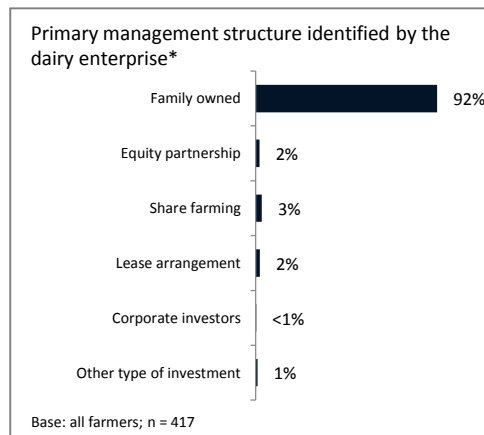
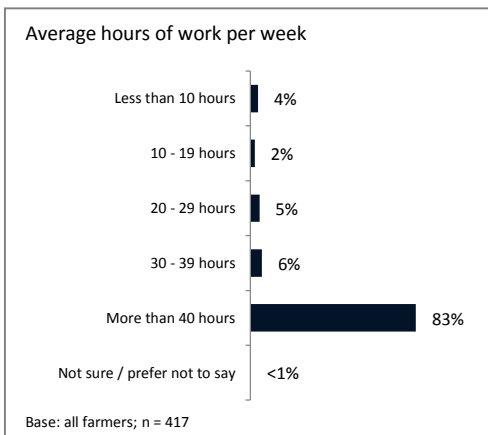
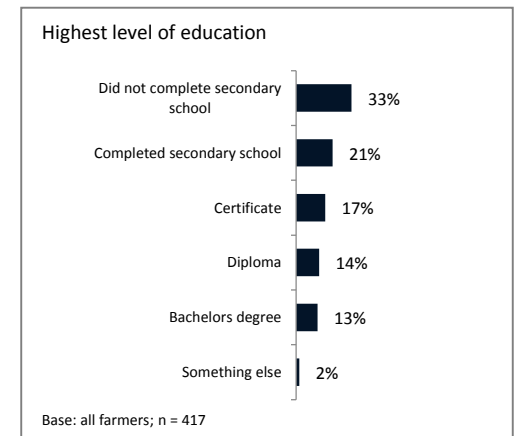
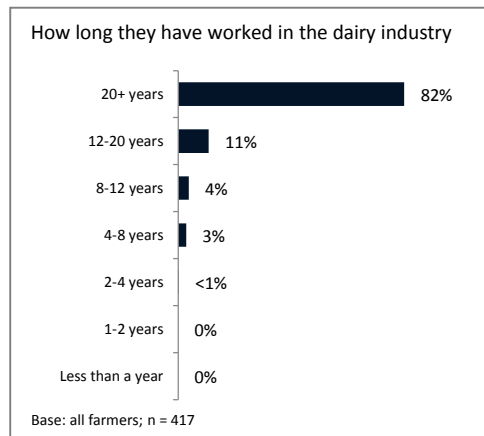
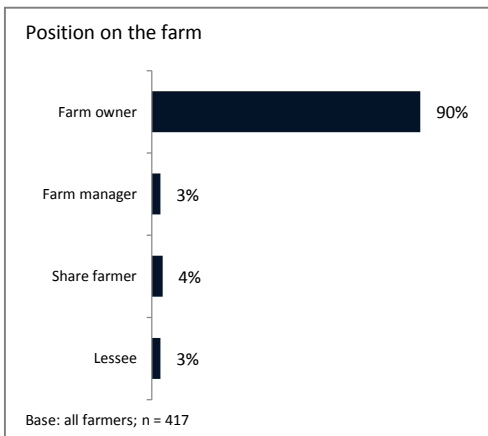


APPENDICES

RESPONDENT PROFILES

APPENDICES

RESPONDENT PROFILES



What was asked...

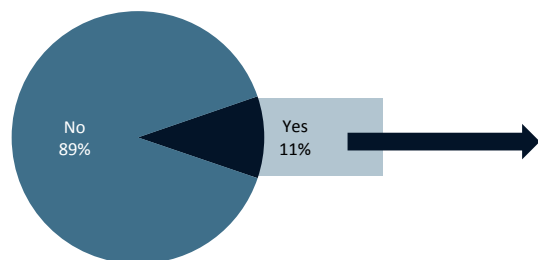
Are you...?
How long have you worked in the dairy industry?
What is the highest level of formal education you reached?
On average how many hours would you work in a typical week?

How would you describe the ownership/management structure of your dairy enterprise?
How long have you owned the farm?

*Note: Family owned farms and corporate investors may include share farming.

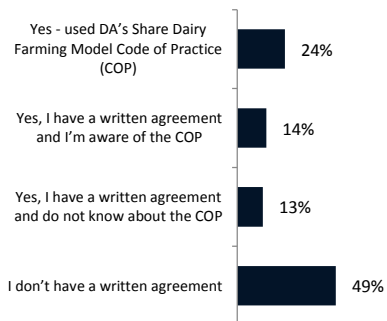
RESPONDENT PROFILES

Farmers who have a sharefarmer on their farm

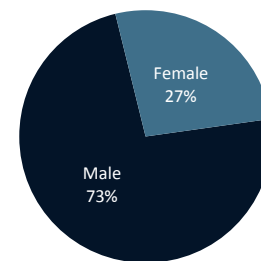


Base: family owned farms and corporate investors; n = 390

The share farming agreement

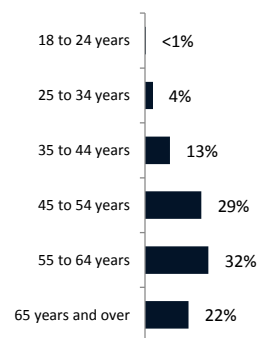
Base: family owned farms and corporate investors **plus** respondents who reported their farm role as share farmer; n = 54

Gender



Base: all farmers; n = 417

Age



Base: all farmers; n = 417

What was asked...

Do you have a share farmer on the farm?
 Do you have a written share farming agreement in place?
 Which of the following Age Groups do you belong to?
 Gender [RECORDED WITHOUT ASKING]

APPENDICES

RESEARCH DESIGN AND TECHNICAL NOTES

APPENDICES

TECHNICAL NOTES

Reliability of the Estimates

The estimates in this report are based on information obtained from a sample survey. Any data collection may encounter factors, known as nonsampling error, which can impact on the reliability of the resulting statistics. In addition, the reliability of estimates based on sample surveys are also subject to sampling variability. That is, the estimates may differ from those that would have been produced had all persons in the population been included in the survey.

Nonsampling error

Nonsampling error may occur in any collection, whether it is based on a sample or a full count such as a census. Sources of nonsampling error include nonresponse, errors in reporting by respondents or recording of answers by interviewers and errors in coding and processing data. Every effort is made to reduce nonsampling error by careful design of survey questionnaires and quality control procedures at all stages of data processing.

Sampling error

One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of persons was included. There are about two chances in three (67%) that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the number that would have been obtained if all persons had been surveyed, and about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two SEs.

Calculation of Confidence Interval

If 50% of all the people in a population of 20,000 people drink coffee in the morning, and if you were repeat the survey of 377 people ("Did you drink coffee this morning?") many times, then 95% of the time, your survey would find that between 45% and 55% of the people in your sample answered "Yes".

The remaining 5% of the time, or for 1 in 20 survey questions, you would expect the survey response to more than the margin of error away from the true answer.

When you survey a sample of the population, you don't know that you've found the correct answer, but you do know that there's a 95% chance that you're within the margin of error of the correct answer.

In terms of the numbers selected above, the margin of error *MoE* is given by:

$$MoE = z * \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p})}{n}}$$

where *n* is the sample size, \hat{p} is the fraction of responses that you are interested in, and *z* is the [critical value](#) for the 95% confidence level (in this case, 1.96).

This calculation is based on the [Normal distribution](#), and assumes you have more than about 30 samples.

Margin of Error for a given sample size and survey estimate.	Sample Size										
	30	50	75	100	150	200	300	500	1,000	1,500	2,000
	10%	n/a	n/a	n/a	± 5.88%	± 4.80%	± 4.16%	± 3.39%	± 2.63%	± 1.86%	± 1.31%
	20%	n/a	± 11.09%	± 9.05%	± 7.84%	± 6.40%	± 5.54%	± 4.53%	± 3.51%	± 2.48%	± 1.75%
	30%	n/a	± 12.70%	± 10.37%	± 8.98%	± 7.33%	± 6.35%	± 5.19%	± 4.02%	± 2.84%	± 2.01%
	40%	± 17.53%	± 13.58%	± 11.09%	± 9.60%	± 7.84%	± 6.79%	± 5.54%	± 4.29%	± 3.04%	± 2.48%
	50%	± 17.89%	± 13.86%	± 11.32%	± 9.80%	± 8.00%	± 6.93%	± 5.66%	± 4.38%	± 3.10%	± 2.53%
	60%	± 17.53%	± 13.58%	± 11.09%	± 9.60%	± 7.84%	± 6.79%	± 5.54%	± 4.29%	± 3.04%	± 2.48%
	70%	n/a	± 12.70%	± 10.37%	± 8.98%	± 7.33%	± 6.35%	± 5.19%	± 4.02%	± 2.84%	± 2.32%
	80%	n/a	± 11.09%	± 9.05%	± 7.84%	± 6.40%	± 5.54%	± 4.53%	± 3.51%	± 2.48%	± 2.02%
90%	n/a	n/a	n/a	± 5.88%	± 4.80%	± 4.16%	± 3.39%	± 2.63%	± 1.86%	± 1.52%	

Note. Margin of Errors are provided at the 95% confidence level on the assumption of a large population size (nonfinite) and normally distributed. Results labelled "n/a" are due to the assumption of the normal distribution not being upheld ($n\hat{p} < 10$ or $n(1\hat{p}) < 10$).

APPENDICES

RESEARCH DESIGN

Objective

One of the key challenges facing Dairy Australia's investment in the 'capable people' strategic priority area is responding to the increasing need and priority around people development in and across the dairy industry. The industry has identified the need for support, training and development in the people space and so began an industry wide program during 2006. This program has matured, expanded and developed over the past 11 years and remains an important pillar in building success for the industry more generally. A first measure of on farm perceptions, attitudes and behaviours was undertaken in 2014. This measure provided an important baseline measure on some of these key performance areas. The information also provided a strong evidence base on which strategy for improving the reach and effectiveness of the 'capable people' investments.

Methodology

The research involved a 20 minute computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) with 417 dairy farmers. Sample list of farmers were provided by Dairy Australia including details of Regional Development Programs (RDP), region, farm size, principal contact name and contact details. Quotas were set on RDP to reflect the actual farm distribution. A range of Likert rating scale, closed and open-ended questions were used throughout the survey.

Sample and quotas

A sample of n = 3,893 dairy farmers was provided by Dairy Australia. In total, n = 417 interviews were completed and are broken down as follows:

	Dairy SA	Dairy TAS	Dairy NSW	Gipps Dairy	Murray Dairy	Sub-tropical Dairy	Western Dairy	West Vic Dairy	Total
Small farms (<150 cows)	9	10	16	30	30	25	4	28	152
Medium farms (150-300 cows)	9	10	13	30	30	10	4	28	134
Large farms (301-500 cows)	1	5	4	20	21	7	1	18	77
Farms with 501+ cows	3	2	3	14	15	3	2	12	54
Total	22	27	36	94	96	45	11	86	417

Questionnaire

Farmers were asked a range of question related, but not limited to the following topics:

- The quantity and type of staff on their farm
- A working profile of their staff (hours worked, employment type, education etc)
- Recruitment efforts for attaining further staff
- Retention methods for keeping current staff
- Staff attrition
- Farm succession/transitioning out the dairy industry
- Industry training and education
- Occupational health and safety practices on their farm
- Workplace injuries
- Attitudes toward the dairy industry, people and farm management

Timing

The online survey was launched on the 31st August 2017 and remained open until the 14th September 2017.

SURVEY QUESTIONS & FURTHER INFORMATION



The Power of People on Australian Dairy Farms 2017 Questionnaire



Adobe Acrobat
Document

*Double click the icon to open a copy of
The Power of People on Australian Dairy
Farms 2017 Questionnaire*

Dairy Australia – The Power of People on Australian Dairy Farms

October 2017

This research was conducted by Intuitive Solutions on behalf of Dairy Australia.

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Intuitive Solutions is an independent market research supplier and member of the Australian Market & Social Research Society (AMSRS). This research was conducted under the AMSRS code of conduct.

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