

# Media Release

Wednesday 7 February 2024

## ONE HUNDRED COLES DAIRY FARMS SHARE IN \$1.45M IN GRANTS TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE FARMING

### 80kw solar roof system on a Victorian farm among 100 projects supported by Coles' new Dairy Farm Sustainability Accelerator Fund

Coles is supporting sustainability in the dairy industry, announcing that 100 Coles dairy farms around the country will share in \$1.45 million in grants as part of the newly developed Dairy Farm Sustainability Accelerator Fund.

Grants of up to \$50,000 have been awarded to Coles' direct sourcing dairy farmers to drive innovation and fund projects which invest in animal welfare, solar energy, and infrastructure improvements.

Coles General Manager Dairy, Freezer and Convenience Brad Gorman said Coles wanted to give its direct sourcing dairy farmers opportunities to invest in research and projects which boosted sustainable farming and drove innovation.

Under its direct sourcing model, Coles directly contracts with farms in Victoria, Southern New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania to supply more than 490 million litres of milk each year for Coles Brand Fresh milk and some Coles Brand cheese.

"There are dozens of impressive, farmer-led projects that will focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving soil nutrients and quality, water management, biodiversity and animal welfare. We're very excited to see the impact of these initiatives," he said.

"We look forward to working with our farmers and learning how much of a difference these projects will make to their operations and to the environment as they evolve and establish."

Coles dairy farmers and grant recipients Benjamin and Melissa Holloway will use the funds to help install an 80kw solar roof system on their farm in Victoria's southwest.

The new 80kw system will be a significant addition to the Holloways existing roof solar system, providing their farm an extra 106,000kw a year in clean, renewable energy.

"For over 10 years now, our business has been evolving to become more sustainable. It's important we show our team, families, consumers and community that we are making a difference to be more sustainable as dairy farmers," Ben said.

"This investment from Coles will help us upgrade our current solar system. Energy on our farm will nearly all be generated from the solar roof, reducing our carbon footprint, while providing us with clean, renewable energy that can be stored and used as required. We're incredibly grateful to Coles and proud to help drive change in our industry."

Victorian Coles dairy farmers the Parkinsons, are also grant recipients and will use the funds from Coles to support the construction of a 100ML mega dam on one of their properties. Daniel Parkinson said he and his family are passionate about creating lasting change.

“We're a family business that runs across multiple dairy farms in Victoria. The funds from Coles will support the construction of a 100ML mega dam that will service our properties by storing excess wastewater and will store water to use throughout summer and autumn,” he said.

“My father David, four brothers and I are all passionate about sustainable farming. The construction of the mega dam is another step to help our business and industry evolve sustainably so farmers like us can supply quality milk to Aussies for years to come.”

**Other projects to receive grants include:**

- Development and upgrade of eight portable shade shelters and the planting of tree shelter belts around a West Australian farm to provide the cattle with additional, flexible shade areas.
- Construction of a new methane catchment pond - a system that captures landfill methane in pipes and reproduces clean energy, supporting a Western Victorian farm's carbon neutral targets.
- In southwest Victoria, touch screens will be installed across the farm, allowing staff greater access to herd management information.
- An upgrade of an open channel irrigation system which is set to save approximately 20% of water on a Western Australian farm.
- A New South Wales farm will install two additional rainwater tanks, increasing fresh water supply to calf sheds and adding greater water storage capacity.

The Coles Sustainable Dairy Development Group was established to work collaboratively with and support directly supplying dairy farmers in becoming more sustainable.

To date, the CSDDG has invested more than \$3.78 million in on-farm initiatives, including farmer education and training, and improving herd health and milk quality.

**-ends-**

**For media enquiries, please contact**

Coles Media Line (03) 9829 5250 or [media.relations@coles.com.au](mailto:media.relations@coles.com.au)