



We are now well into the new financial year with the outlook more positive than this time last year. It has been great to see an increased use of our herd testing services by customers across all our service regions.

#### MIR for Profit

We have an increased number of our customers participating in the MIR for Profit trial this year. This trial is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural R&D for Profit Programme. MIR for Profit is led by Dairy Australia and supported by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, DataGene and National Herd Improvement Association.

To date, the research team has been developing and fine-tuning methods of predicting energy balance, fatty acid profiles and methane emissions using the MIR spectral data collected during 2016. The early results are looking promising.

#### Mistro Finance

I am pleased to announce that a software update is currently in progress for the Mistro Finance Software to improve a number of its features. It is anticipated that this release will be available in late 2017.

#### Customer Feedback

We have a customer feedback reporting system that records compliments, complaints & suggestions from users of our services. This feedback is recorded and copies are tabled at each month's Board Meeting. The report also looks at options for improving our services as well as highlighting the good things that are being supported. If you have some feedback please feel free to talk to one of our service staff or contact one of our offices.

#### Colac Office

The Board of Herd Improvement Co-operative Australia (HICO) determined some months ago to relocate the HICO offices to a more prominent commercial site on the west side of Colac. Most of our Western District client base is situated to the west of Colac with the potential for growth in this region. We have received feedback that this would be a far more accessible and visible location for the majority of our customers. We are excited about the opportunity to further improve and enhance our service to all existing and new customers, and are fully committed to continuing our role as your independent herd improvement provider. Consequently we have elected to try and sell our existing site in Clark Street in Colac, prior to moving to this new site. We will keep all our customers updated as this progresses.

Regards,

**Michael Lee, General Manager.**



## Quick overview of the August Proof Release.

#### Top 6 BPI Australian Proven Holsteins

Name	BPI
De-Su 11236 Balisto #	338
De-Su 11228 Topsy	321
Calister Maebull	303
Rengaw Manoman Hummer	293
Jet Star ManoMan Trickin	293
Mainstream Manifold	282

#### Top 6 BPI Genomic Holsteins

Name	BPI
St Gen Director Chairman	357
Mr Seagull-Bay Sandal	342
Westcoast Perseis	342
Cookiecutter Harper	339
Sandy-Valley Fivestar	338
Coomboona Ocean Suits PP	330

#### Top 6 BPI Australian Proven Jerseys

Name	BPI
Sunset Canyon David #	362
All Lynns Louie Valentino	286
Beulah Tahblik	276
Cairnbrae Jaces Elton	269
Riverside Ambition	252
Wallacedale Melvara	243

#### Top 6 BPI Genomic Jerseys

Name	BPI
Broadlin Hilux	278
Sunset Canyon Jordananche	280
Brookbora Aramac	270
Nowell Shaq	275
Evleen Intergrity Larson	262
Kaarmona Glenferrie	261

# Note this sire is below publishable reliability for the Good Bulls Guide (DataGene)

## Hico AGM

The 2017 Annual General Meeting of Herd Improvement Co-operative Australia Ltd was held on Thursday 31st August at Duart Homestead in Maffra. While numbers were down on previous years it was pleasing to see some loyal shareholders in attendance.

Hico Chairman Stewart McRae delivered his report and fielded a few questions from attending shareholders. If you are interested in becoming a Hico shareholder please contact your local Hico representative. If you would like to learn more about becoming a Hico director please feel free to contact Stewart McRae on 0428 878 471.



Pictured above is Chairman Stewart McRae delivering his annual report to those in attendance.

## Do you understand how the PI is measured in your herd test results?

Production Index (PI) is a measure of cow production performance. It's value is a tool to identify under-performing animals and thus aid the farmer in culling decisions.

Adjustments are made for age and days in milk to put all animals in the herd on an equal footing. You can thus compare a two year old to a six year old milking in the herd.

It is important to note, that it is within breed, within herd and even within calving season and it is an estimate based solely on the cows own performance. It is not a genetic measure.

The formula to calculate the PI takes into consideration the number of test yields that the cow has and the accuracy of estimating lactation yield from the number of test day yields. Other factors affecting profit such as cow size, temperament or survival are not included in the PI.

You must remember that the base for the PI is 100, so if all cows were present at all test days the average PI would be 100. As it is extremely rare that all cows are present on test day the average may vary slightly to account for this.

Furthermore, it is important to note that no adjustments are made for environmental factors such as a difficult calving, mastitis, lameness or metabolic issue and this is where your own farm health and management records are vital to get the full picture before making a decision.

Never forget that the PI is a within herd measure and a PI of a cow in your herd cannot be compared with a PI of a cow in another herd .

Like top athletes, a cow can have a bad year and yet still be above average for her lifetime figure.



## Meet Hico Warragul's employee Matt Russell

Working with passionate farmers who are passionate about their farm is what Matt Russell enjoys most about his role at Hico as a Livestock Service Technician.

Before working in the service industry Matt milked cows on a dairy farm for two years after finishing year 12 and completing his Certificate 2 and 4 in Agriculture at McMillan Campus.

Having worked in the industry for 7 years now Matt brings to Hico years of experience in his day to day roles. When you ask Matt what his week consists of he comments "My weeks are always different filled with many different tasks depending on the time of year Calf Dehorning, AI run, Freeze Branding, LN<sup>2</sup> and semen deliveries being the main tasks performed."

**"In my job I get to meet so many different people and learn from each one of them about how they run their farm business professionally. There is always something to learn from each customer," Matt believes.**

The biggest change Matt has seen over the years in his role is the introduction of pain free dehorning.

Matt enjoys working at Hico "The workplace is a fun and friendly environment to work in" Matt comments. Outside of work Matt is heavily involved in the Warragul Gulls Football Club and enjoys a Parma for tea at the local Pub.



**Do you wish to receive this newsletter electronically?  
Please send us your email address to receive this newsletter electronically.**

**Have you got feedback?  
Please email us at [info@hico.com.au](mailto:info@hico.com.au)**

## Are you interested in learning more about the reproductive performance of your herd?

### How do you benchmark your herd's reproductive performance year on year? Hico can help!

*An analysis can be performed using your previous joining and pregnancy test information to help provide some insight to your herd's reproductive performance and some possible future recommendations to improve your herd's reproductive performance.*

To find out more information speak to your local Hico representative.

Tim King (South West Gippsland) 0409 082 840

Stuart Jackson (Western District) 0407 553 847

Carey Walters (East Gippsland) 0429 471 633

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR UPCOMING EVENTS:

**September 22nd**  
Jindivick Focus Farm Open Day (Gippsdairy)

**September 26th**  
Fish Creek Focus Farm Open Day (Gippsdairy)

**September 27th**  
WestVic Dairy Innovation Day - Warrambol

**September 27th and 28th**  
South Gippsland Dairy Expo, Korumburra



**HERD IMPROVEMENT  
CO-OPERATIVE AUSTRALIA LTD**

### Contact Hico today:

#### KORUMBURRA

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Fax: 03 5655 2784

#### WARRAGUL

18A Pearse Street  
Warragul 3820  
Phone: 03 5623 2207  
Fax: 03 5623 4031

#### Maffra

2 Foster Street  
Maffra 3860  
Phone: 5147 1633  
Fax: 5147 2993

#### COLAC

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