

## Deputy Chairman's Report

**As everyone is aware, the COVID-19 situation has worsened considerably in metropolitan Melbourne. The Board and staff of Hico are acutely tuned to working with you to minimise any effect on your business.**

Focussing on day-to-day business, being able to make timely decisions either during joining or pre dry off is incredibly valuable to the profitability of your business. The accuracy and ease at which you are able to determine pregnancy through our "Milk Pregnancy Testing" system makes implementation into your herd obvious. There are numerous ways that you can strategically tailor this technology to suit your farming system, which allows for you to identify profit drivers and optimise your productivity.

Throughout the last year we have seen a significant increase in the utilisation of sexed semen across many herds, particularly in heifers and more recently in cows. Whether you're aiming to generate key replacements early and diversify your business with the addition of extra income streams with the use of beef semen or alternatively capitalise on export opportunities, sexed semen allows you to do so with confidence.

I would like to make shareholders aware of the upcoming opportunity to join the Hico Board. The current term of two farmer elected Directors of Herd Improvement Co-operative Australia Ltd expire in accordance with the rules of the Co-operative. I therefore encourage you to consider becoming part of Hico's

strong history by nominating yourself and giving you the chance to positively impact our future. In addition, the annual election of two Independent Directors is available to suitably skilled individuals. Any member of the Co-operative wishing to offer him or herself for election must lodge a nomination with the Secretary, Herd Improvement Co-operative Australia Ltd, 2 Foster Street Maffra 3860, before Friday 21st August 2020. Expressions of interest are called for professional Independent Directors, closing date also being 21 August 2020.

Regards,

*Andrew Verboon*  
*Deputy Chairman*



## The Herd Testing Fee Structure is slightly different now

**From the 1st of July 2020, the Service Fee structure of herd testing has a new, simpler look. With a unique list across the state, and two tiers of testing frequency per year, herd testing fees are clearer and simpler.**

Although, it is necessary to keep the per sample and visit fees, so the balance between fixed and variable costs is correct. The two frequency options now are 3 to

6 or 7 to 12 tests a year. An annual cow fee is charged depending on the chosen frequency and type of meter used. Alternatively, spot tests can also be organised. Hico offers the service of milk sampling procedure for individual cows using two types of meters, Mechanical Meters (known also as the farmer collected system) and Electronic Milk Meters (EMM). The assistance of a sampling officer is

optional with the mechanical meters but is compulsory with the EMMs. The sampling procedure can involve one or two consecutive milkings, using either type of meter.

Please contact your preferred branch or Hico representative should you require an annual estimation of the herd testing fees for your farm.

## There Are No "Sacred Cows" For the Nicoll Family

**Graeme & Gillian Nicoll from Fish Creek milk a 3-way crossbred herd averaging 560kg of milk solids a year. Graeme began the journey of sexed semen utilisation 5 years ago, with the trial of the product in heifers.**

His interest in the product grew as he started to take advantage of the opportunity of herd segmentation, by breeding genetically superior heifer replacements out of his top performing animals, and using beef semen over the lower ranking end of his herd. Conventional semen is then used on the middle portion of his cow herd by selecting top ranking progeny test semen. Bulls are selected to meet a range of traits and are chosen based on BPI/HWI per dollar invested. This allows for a profitable dairy space



whereby your lower ranking females are producing a high return saleable beef animal, without compromising genetic gain or production.

The integration of automated heat detection into his herd a year ago has added ease and total confidence to Graeme's decision to implement sexed semen into

his milking herd. On selection he categorises animals based on their age, whether or not they have cycled at least once and what their health history is like in order to maximise his results when using the sexed semen. The Cow Manager software assists identifying critical sexed semen joining windows to allow for optimal conception rates. Through using this dual system of correct animal selection and optimum insemination time he has been able to maintain an average conception rate of 50% when using sexed semen in his cows.

There are no "sacred cows" with this former Nuffield Scholar when it comes to challenging his farming philosophy to find highly efficient and productive animals adapted to his unique farming system.

# Jacqueline Soares – An Honourable Achievement



On behalf of all of us at Hico we would like to recognise Jacqui Soares, wife of Ross Soares former Hico Director, for receiving the Order of Australia medal in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List.

Over the last 26 years, Jacqui has continued to make a difference in the lives of those living with a disability particularly in Colac and Western Victoria.

Jacqui and her husband Ross are well known for the influential roles they have played within the dairy industry, although Jacqui's active involvement in the disability space was ignited over 40 years ago with the birth of their daughter Mia. Her continued contribution and advocacy for those with a disability has proven to be very rewarding, with her efforts having a significant impact on the Community.

## COVID-19 Update

The autumn joining season is over and spring is nearly upon us. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, we are well equipped to ensure the health and safety of customers and staff are maintained whilst still providing you with the quality service that you rely on to maintain your business

In line with relevant protocols and restrictions, we have set high standards in terms of public health. Biosecurity is at the forefront, with our aim to minimise the introduction and spread of organisms on and between farms.

## South Gippsland Dairy Expo

Hico is Australia's leading Herd Improvement Co-operative, delivering high quality services and value to dairy farmers.

We are committed to providing the best service possible and aim to deliver a whole-of-business approach to each and every customer. Visit us online at the South Gippsland Dairy Expo to learn more and go in the running to win prizes and discounts.



Along with current protocols that can be viewed on our website, we have now introduced the requirement of wearing masks for any face-to-face interactions. The measures set in place are there to safeguard the health and wellbeing of farmers and Hico staff alike. During these uncertain times we are committed to providing you with quality products, services and information to better your farm business.

## Milestone



### Ray Elliott - 15 Years of Service

We would like to acknowledge Ray Elliott for his 15 years of service working across all branches as the Senior Stock Controller. Ray's passion for stock control started at a young age working across numerous motor dealerships dealing with spare parts, before moving into the field of milk machine installation for 10 years.

## Announcement



### Welcome Sandy Kurzman to the East Gippsland Team

We would like to welcome Sandy Kurzman to the sales team in East Gippsland as our Customer Relationship Representative. Sandy started her career in the dairy industry at the age of nineteen in Rotorua on the North Island of New Zealand working in administration for her local DeLaval franchise. Her specialisation evolved into dairy hygiene and sales with her role at Alfa Laval Agri. She was the first owner operator of an Alfa Laval Mobile Truck Shop in the Otorohanga region and later with an additional truck in the Cambridge region servicing 1000 customers. Twenty years ago Sandy had the opportunity to relocate to Australia to train the DeLaval franchise businesses, which led her to work in the Western District specialising in dairy plant hygiene. Sandy has since relocated to a dairy farm in Cowwarr. We are excited to have her wealth of knowledge and experience in our team. She is looking forward to the new challenge ahead through joining Hico.

## Sexed semen, plan for your future

The unprecedented demand along with COVID-19 has seen strains on sexed semen supplies. We therefore urge you to plan ahead and order early to ensure

optimum results for spring joining. If you are planning a synchronisation program, please notify your local herd services supervisor should you require



extra technicians. Please contact your local Hico representative now to discuss your sexed semen needs.



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