

Rural View Holsteins

The Gee Partnership



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Dear Ms. Amy Bellhouse

We are appealing to you on behalf of our family in the dairy industry where the price of our product is decreasing instead of increasing with the cost of living. Now with our sons taking over the business and the grandchildren all keen to work on the dairy farm we have upgraded our dairy to cope with the workload, never contemplating the price of milk being reduced so much. We attended the ACCC meeting in Taree where we felt that all dairy farmers who had the opportunity to speak were listened to and that you understood what we are all going through.

When Lion bought out the Dairy Farmers Brand in 2000 after our contract ran out, Lion dropped the price they were paying by 6c per Litre, \$20 000 per month, \$240 000 per year. This money was earmarked for our bank repayments. Since then a 3c litre deduction for freight, another \$10 000 per month. Then in January 2017 a 2c per litre reduction, \$7000 per month as well as messing around with the fat-protein components = another price reduction, about 1-2c per litre. At one stage milk had a tier 2 price of 13c per litre. We had opportunity to sell the milk at top price but processors would not allow the produces to sell privately due to exclusive contracts.

We attended a stud herd dispersal sale at Dubbo last week, where a family were selling out due to the price they are being paid for their milk and locked in with a contract. Another local farmer in the Hunter Valley is speaking of selling out due to them not being able to cover operating costs on 40c per litre.

Our family is very distressed in the manner the dairy industry is manipulated by processors and Supermarkets. Dairy Farmers produce a quality product and are entitled to a fair and positive return for their business to continue farming and move forward to accommodate the next generations coming through and to enable debt reduction and reinvest in the business.

Four granddaughters are involved in the dairy. One granddaughter is starting her own stud, having bought stud heifers at sales and preparing them for stud shows.

We welcome you to come and visit on our farm, to meet our family and discuss these issues further. We thank you for all you're doing for the Dairy Farmers.

Colin & Rita Gee