

NETWORK FOR WOMEN IN DAIRYING TRUST BOARD

ANNUAL MEETING October 18th 2006

General managers Report - Lynda Clark

It is a real pleasure to present this General Managers report to the Network for Women in Dairying AGM. The Network's purpose*aiming to educate and develop women to add value to the business of dairying*' continues to be the guiding force for activities delivered to dairying women over the past year.

It was with much excitement that the Network for Women in Dairying commissioned Colmar Brunton (CB) to conduct the NZ wide survey of dairywomen in gain a better understanding of how women are contributing to the NZ dairy business. The Network also carried out a survey of conference 05 participants (N=245), and a website survey. Information from these surveys has been instrumental in the development of programmes for the year.

The surveys indicated topics women would like more information on. This reflects the involvement women have in the dairy business – compliance, strategic planning, accounts and staff management. Additionally more information on general cow health and diseases, calf rearing ranks highly. General cow health was the highest ranked topic from the CB survey.

The survey also highlighted that newspapers, informal and formal discussions with colleagues (networking) are important information sources for women in dairying. This re-enforced the importance for the Network for Women in Dairying to provide 'face to face' forums for women to learn.

The Network implemented the delivery of a regional learning event (now branded Dairy Day) - Cow Health for Better Returns. This was delivered in November to 340 women nationally, in association with Dexcel, Dairy InSight and Ancare as a prime sponsor of the event. The regions were: Whangarei, Cambridge, Stratford, Palmerston North, Nelson, Greymouth, Christchurch and Gore. Dairy Days will continue to be an important part of the Network's activity, providing the opportunity for women to learn from industry experts and their colleagues in a non threatening environment.

Regional groups provide another forum where women can meet. Support to regional group convenors is on-going. Information about regional group meetings is loaded onto the web-site and phone support is given as required, although time is limited to grow this. The Network in association with Dexcel has carried out regional group needs analysis. This will give us valuable information of the needs of individual groups, plus the ability to identify areas of national interest. This will be presented to the Trust Board in October. The regional group convenors play a vital role in these groups and I would like acknowledge the time and effort put in by convenors in a voluntary capacity, thank you. Effective leadership at a regional level results in strong regional groups providing the opportunity for dairy women to learn from their colleagues, and access local expertise.

Four groups took up the opportunity to access funds from WID to fund speakers. Most groups have access to speakers locally and often this is co-funded by the National Bank, and at times sponsored locally. Thank you to the National Bank for your role in many of the regional groups. Also some presenters donate their time to local community events, e.g. Cheryl Randal presented to the Pukekohe group at no charge.

The web-site and e-mail network continue to develop to provide relevant information to women that can be accessed at their convenience. Charlotte Glass, now with Dexcel, was again contracted to continue her role as industry specialist on the e-mail network, and to provide articles for the web-site. These articles are topical and a useful bank of information is now available.

Charlotte's contribution to the e-mail network is valued by that community, and a wonderful informative chatty style is evident, thank you Charlotte. Cathy Seal continues to capably assist women with any technical issues relating to the e-mail network. Thank you Cathy, we really appreciate your friendly, approachable style. The Network Administrator continues to maintain the web-site. There were 2959 sessions recorded for the month February, and it peaked in April at 4568. Since the beginning of the 06 year the average daily use is 131 sessions. This is certainly on the increase and the Network is discussing ways of adding value to the web site. The e-mail community had 475 members at the end of May. The traffic flow is monitored and we continue to grow in our understanding of such communities.

Conference for 2006 was on the 11th and 12th May in Palmerston North. The conference extended in to a second day this year. The general theme was 'Managing your Dairy Business Today for Tomorrow...' pulled together under the one heading 'Dynamic Dairying'. Day one was about managing your dairy business for today, a combination of speakers and workshops, and time for Networking. Day 2 started with an optional breakfast with Dairy 21 Chair – Graham Fraser, this was attended by 115 women, and was a vibrant session. The rest of the morning was about taking the business out there to the future – products, cows and grasses. Conference experience continues to be an energising experiencing for many women.

Personnel

Kelly Olsen resigned from the position of Network Administrator (Part time) at the end of May. Thanks are to be extended to Kelly for her work with the Network. We welcomed Samantha Palmer to this position. We are privileged to have Sam join our team.

Training and development is part of our annual calendar. This year the focus has been on Trustee training, and we were able to include new trustees in the Governance training, held earlier this year. A Business Planning session facilitated by Annette Ryan, Effective 4, Hamilton, was also held with attention to business sustainability and updating the Strategic Direction.

Communications between WID and other education providers continue to be fostered. Meetings with Dexcel, AgITO and Fonterra have taken place over the last year. Coverage of the Network activates by the media has been very good. It has been great to work on this with Heather Claycomb, HMC communications.

The database of WID participants continues to grow. Presently we have over 1200 listings with postal addresses. This does not include those on the email network for which we have e-mail addresses only (e-mail network membership – 470). It is anticipated that this number will increase once again as those women attending Dairy Days are added.

I would like to say a very special thank you to all Trustees for the considerable voluntary hours they have contributed to the many activities of the Network, and the support given to me as General Manager. You are a group of energetic, professional business women. I enjoy the contact I have with you all. This year has seen a change in the position of Network Chair. Hilary and Willy a special thanks to you for the leadership qualities you have demonstrated as Chair of this organisation. I have thoroughly enjoyed the working relationship that has developed as you have capably Chaired the Network. Thank You.