

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 1045
Asked on Thursday, 8 June 2006

MR HOOLIHAN asked the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries (MR MULHERIN)-

QUESTION:

How has the 2005 Dairy Water Use for Profit project study tour of Tasmanian industries benefited the Queensland dairy industry?

ANSWER:

Dairy study tours are a practical and enjoyable means for participants to gain valuable information and ideas that can be implemented to improve the profitability and sustainability of their own dairy businesses.

The October 2005 Dairy Study Tour of Tasmania proved to be very successful with the tour group meeting some of the most progressive farm managers in Tasmania to discuss irrigation, pasture, environmental and business management.

Along with the dairy farm visits, the tour group investigated marine, forestry, food processing (cheese and chocolate) and viticulture industries. This exposed the participants to the management of other primary production ventures. It was evident that different industries share similar challenges.

The information transfer and networking will facilitate the adoption of innovative practices that will improve productivity and provide business development.

An outstanding feature of Tasmanian dairy businesses was the return on capital of 8 –12%. It highlighted the fact that dairying could be profitable and provided the tour group with inspiration and a target to achieve in Queensland.

Irrigation sites visited demonstrated very good water efficiency practices. Applying the most efficient amount of water at the correct time coupled with crop selection, good grazing management and fertilizer application were the key messages.

The use of low pressure irrigation equipment was another learning identified by the tour group. The key benefit of using low pressure irrigation is that less water is used per hour.

Positive attitudes and outlook for a prosperous future were an outstanding characteristic of the farmers that the tour group visited. Their enthusiasm spread to the tour group and inspired all to come back to Queensland and reinvigorate their dairying businesses.

Visiting a range of diversified businesses focusing on supply chain management and value adding also gave the group insight into broader business operations.