

Interactions between the dairy and oyster sectors in NW Tasmania:

Current knowledge and future planning

**Smithton Hockey Centre
Friday, December 4, 2009**

**Workshop report
presented by
Oysters Tasmania**



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Regional
Development
Program



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Acknowledgements

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We thank our industry and research presenters for giving freely of their time and expertise to the workshop:

- Jon Poke, Managing Director, Bolduans Bay Oysters
- Mark Smith, Executive Officer, DairyTas
- Greg Holz, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research
- Bill Cotching, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research
- Christine Crawford, Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute
- Kirsten Verburg, CSIRO Canberra

Thanks also go to Philip Spratt, for his effective workshop facilitation, to the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association for hosting a workshop planning meeting, and to DairyTas and Bolduans Bay Oysters for providing post-workshop cheese and oysters.

Summary – current knowledge, future planning

Workshop

The workshop was held in Smithton, as a key focus has been on the interactions between dairy and oyster farming in that area. It was attended by 21 people including dairy and oyster farmers and industry representatives, government representatives and individuals from Tasmanian and interstate research organisations.

The “current knowledge” section was addressed through presentations as shown in the workshop agenda (below); “future planning” was addressed during the final session, where the issues and concerns from the day were examined, discussed and prioritised.

Presentations for which permission for posting to the public domain has been granted will be available on the Oysters Tasmania website (www.oysterstamania.org) in early 2010 – following launch of that website.

Three key themes emerged from the workshop:

1. That continued open communication between oyster and dairy stakeholders will be welcomed by both sectors.
2. That efforts to reduce any impacts on the oyster industry should concentrate on minimising coliform levels in estuarine waters
3. That efforts should focus on ensuring that the current closure window (typically July-September) does not widen and, if possible, is reduced at both ends

Where to from here?

It was agreed that DairyTas and Oysters Tasmania will work together to:

- Establish an *ad hoc* working group to:
 - Ensure communication channels are kept open and functional
 - Hold another workshop in 12-15 months to hear from continuing research projects
 - Ensure that, where appropriate, current and future projects regarding run-off and effluent flow in this area integrate collection of data relating to the source, route and sinks for coliform bacteria in the Duck and Montague estuaries.
 - Explore and develop a project specifically designed to improve understanding of:
 - The factors that influence the levels of coliform bacteria in these estuaries (this exploration will be done in collaboration with Dairy Australia)
 - Methods to minimise the closure of local oyster leases due to coliform levels

Evaluation

As part of our standard practice, we sought participant evaluation of the workshop on the day (see page 5) and in a follow up email in the week following the workshop.

Responses indicate participants thought the workshop was a very useful and well run event, showed both what went well and what could have been better about the event, and threw into relief underlying tensions and issues that the event was aiming to identify and in so doing, start a dialogue for management.

Responses to the question: “Was the workshop Hot or Not?”

- *I think it was great seeing the two industries learning more about each other's issues. An eye opener for all. Final discussion managed to even narrow it down to some core issues to focus on*
- *Good forum, clarified issues, identified areas for further work*
- *An excellent first step - important to follow up with further meetings and feedback*
- *Understanding of oyster industry issues. Have been able to identify 2 key issues of oyster mortality and season closure*
- *Great to have the two industries talking and looking for solutions*
- *Very useful discussion. Very important to keep this information transfer going. Need to know the coliforms*
- *Good to know what is going on - lots of studies. Great to see the two industries in positive discussion*
- *Interesting day, lots of valuable information, which provided a greater understanding of operational and logistical environments of both sectors. Gives a clear picture of desirable outcomes from an oyster industry perspective. Actions by Dairy farmers not so clear*

- *Excellent meeting. Scientific input greatly appreciated. Very difficult issues to "solve" but goodwill displayed by both sides. Excellent starting point for continued exchange of ideas and issues in hope of improvement for all stakeholders*
- *Good to see dairy farmers come to the discussion. Learned something from most presentations*

- *Good interchange of information. Continue ongoing dialogue and presentations as projects get done. What further investigations might be useful*
- *Coliforms haven't been strongly on the radar and this workshop has highlighted the need to look into this area*
- *Good response from all participants and goodwill between industries*
- *I believe we have opened discussion between both industries which has to be good. We need to keep this happening and to find synergies to ensure dairy and oysters can grow*
- *Non political. Scientific*
- *The opportunity to get together in a safe and friendly learning environment to address real and relevant issues*
- *Very well facilitated. Excellent at maintaining the key focus. Good mix of talks and attendees*

Workshop Agenda

- 10:00 Arrival and morning tea
- 10:30 Welcome (Tom Lewis, Executive Officer, Oysters Tasmania)
- 10:40 Introduction, Expectations/Concerns (Phillip Spratt, Facilitator)
- 11:00 *Perspectives from the oyster industry*
-Jon Poke, Managing Director, Bolduans Bay Oysters
- 11:30 *Perspectives from the dairy industry*
-Mark Smith, Executive Officer, DairyTas
- 12:00 Lunch**
- 12:30 *Montagu River catchment: intensive grazing, drainage and water quality*
-Greg Holz, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research
- 1:00 *Nutrient budgeting on dairy farms in the Duck River catchment*
-Bill Cotching, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research
- 1:30 *The effect of single and split applications of phosphorus fertiliser on runoff P concentrations*
-Bill Cotching, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research
- 2:00 Afternoon tea**
- 2:15 *Health of the Duck and Montagu estuaries*
-Christine Crawford, Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute
- 2:45 *Landscape Logic's water quality study in the Duck River catchment: tracking sources and pathways of nutrients and sediments*
-Kirsten Verburg, CSIRO Canberra
- 3:15 Wrap up, actions and evaluation
(participants may leave from 3.45pm)
- 3:45 Refreshments:**
**Oysters (courtesy Bolduans Bay Oysters),
Cheese (courtesy DairyTas) and Drinks (cash bar)**

Workshop group

Name	Organisation/Industry	Role
Alison Turnbull	Tasmanian Quality Assurance Program	Participant
Bill Cotching	University of Tasmania/ Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research	Presenter
Cathy Phelps	Dairy Australia	Participant
Christine Crawford	University of Tasmania/ Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute	Presenter
Dan Sutton	Roberts	Participant
Daryl Quilliam	Circular Head Council	Participant
Doug Doherty	Circular Head Council	Participant
Greg Holz	University of Tasmania/ Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research	Presenter
Jason Lynch	Serve-Ag	Participant
Jon Poke	Bolduans Bay Oysters	Presenter
Kirsten Verburg	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	Presenter
Leigh Austin	Tasmanian Dairy Industry Authority	Participant
Mark Smith	DairyTas	Presenter, Co-facilitator
Neil Stump	Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council	Participant
Paul Viney	Smithton Shellfish	Participant
Phillip Spratt		Facilitator
Ray Brown	Department of Health and Human Services	Participant
Ray Murphy	Murphy Enterprises - oyster grower	Participant
Sandra Bales	Dairy farmer	Participant
Sarah Gatenby	Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association	Participant
Tom Kennedy	Shipwreck Point Oysters	Participant
Tom Lewis	Oysters Tasmania	Co-facilitator

Workshop evaluation

How did you feel?

Before the workshop	During the workshop	After the workshop

What did we do?

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.....

What had meaning for you?

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.....

What will you do to make a difference?

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.....

So... what did you think?

Simply indicate on our thermometer your overall impression.

HOT!



If hot, please say why...

If *not*, please say why...

NOT...

Can we use these comments? (*tick for 'Yes' leave blank for 'No'*)

Can we use your name?

Name/title:

Thank you for taking the time to join us today in Smithton