

NEWS

On its whey back

DAIRY production in the Murraylands could be looking at a bright future, according to the region's top economic development manager.

Last week, Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland (RDAMR) chief executive Brenton Lewis said he saw a good future for the region's depleted dairy industry, with a new processor moving to the area and the return of strong flows in the River Murray with the promise of more water to come.

"The move by United Dairy Power (UDP) to acquire two former National Food Dairy factories at Murray Bridge and Jervois has already proved extremely valuable," Mr Lewis said.

"A completely new cheese shredding line is being installed at the Murray Bridge plant; this will increase the jobs available within the company in the region."

Mr Lewis said UDP had also attracted investors to relocate probiotic processing business to its Jervois site, and there were positive signs for farmers as well.

"With the return of flows in the River Murray, promises of future flows

through the (Murray Darling) Basin Plan, and renewed interest through Dairy Australia projects, as well as the confidence in UDP as a legitimate market outlet, I see good things ahead for dairy production," he said.

However, Mr Lewis said there were still challenges and questions over the future use of the Lower Murray Floodplain - which was currently the subject of an ongoing study - salinity in Lake Albert, near other good dairy land, and access to water.

The RDAMR head also paid tribute to Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick and Murray Bridge Mayor Allan Arbon for their roles in brightening the future of the dairy industry.

"UDP were unsuccessful in gaining any State Government assistance to invest in the region and the decision to invest in South Australia was a strong move by UDP at the time," Mr Lewis said.

"Local government, through Mayor Arbon, and our local member for Hammond Adrian Pederick, all played an important role in attracting the UDP investment and we can now see the results."