

## Milk's movers and shakers honour dairy pair

Two inspirational dairy leaders, Bill Pyle and Doug Weir, have been recognised for their leadership with scholarships established in their names by the Gardiner Foundation.

In announcing the scholarships, Gardiner Foundation Chairman Mike Taylor paid tribute to them and said "these individuals made contributions which helped re-shape the industry and among other things, enabled the creation of the Gardiner Foundation".

**Bill Pyle** has been a driving force in the dairy industry at both state and national levels. He was the inaugural President of the United Dairyfarmers of Victoria, an organisation that was established during the difficult days of the dairy industry in the 1970's. At the same time, he was Deputy Chairman of the Australian Dairy Corporation.

Mr Taylor said that Bill Pyle placed great emphasis on the profitability of the family farm and improving profitability through improving market access, increasing marketing and promotion, effective research and development, and education and extension of technological improvements.

"Bill Pyle united the dairy industry in Victoria and from this position he effectively negotiated with governments, manufacturers and processors to ensure that all dairy farmers shared in the returns from the fresh milk market," he added.

"At the same time he also lifted the esteem and standing of dairy farmers; his was an immeasurable contribution to the industry."

**Doug Weir** led the Victorian Dairy Industry Authority (VDIA) from 1986 to 1995, after a long and distinguished career in the private business sector. His experience enabled him to recognise the value of the VDIA's assets and the need for them to be proactively managed to ensure the best returns to the industry.

Mr Taylor explained that through R&D partnerships with Melbourne University, the VDIA had developed a number of specialised milk fractions.

"Doug recognised the value of the intellectual property in the research and quickly moved to ensure that it was legally protected and commercially viable," he said. "Even today, these intellectual assets continue to provide a significant flow of revenue to the industry."

Mr Taylor continued: "Doug also managed the VDIA's specialty milk brands, in particular Big M and Rev, to ensure there was a proper return to the industry from use of the brand names. Revenue gained was used for industry good rather than company or retailer good."

"Under Doug's astute management, at the time of dairy deregulation in 2000, the VDIA's intellectual assets were substantial, among them specialty milk brands Big M and Rev, and their sale provided the bulk of the \$62.1 million funds for the establishment of the Gardiner Foundation", he added.

The scholarships were announced at the Gardiner Foundation's Australian Dairy Leaders Luncheon, hosted by the Hon. Peter Walsh MLA, Minister for Agriculture and Food Security.

The **Bill Pyle Dairy Scholarship, awarded by the Geoffrey Gardiner Dairy Foundation**, was presented to **Matthew De Cicco**, from Merrigum in northern Victoria who has been accepted to study Veterinary Science at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. It has been Matthew's ambition since age 8 to become a vet.

The **Doug Weir Dairy Scholarship, awarded by the Geoffrey Gardiner Dairy Foundation**, was presented to **Monique McMahon-Hide**, from Ocean Grove on the Bellarine Peninsula, who has been accepted to study Animal Science at La Trobe University. Monique's interest in the dairy industry was confirmed by her participation in **Cows Create Careers**, a program first supported by the Gardiner Foundation and later by Dairy Australia.

## ENDS

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### **Photos:**

\_MG\_4163 – Gardiner Foundation CEO, Mary Harney with Bill Pyle  
\_MG\_4166 – Gardiner Foundation CEO, Mary Harney with Doug Weir  
\_MG\_4170 - Doug Weir, presenting scholarship to Monique McMahon-Hide, Mary Harney  
\_MG\_4164 – Scholarship recipient Matthew De Cicco, with Bill Pyle and Mary Harney.

### **Print quality photos available**

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