

Foreword

The 6th Australasian Dairy Science Symposium was held in Hamilton, New Zealand from 19–21 November 2014. As with previous symposia, it brought together leading scientists from Australia and New Zealand to review and present research findings from recent scientific endeavours. To add to the vast wealth of knowledge residing within the antipodes, a number of international speakers were also invited to present reviews of topical areas highly relevant to our grazing systems.

The symposium provided an ideal forum for our emerging and future scientists to interact with internationally renowned scientists from a range of disciplines. Key theme areas for the symposium included resilient dairy systems for the future, environmental sustainability, forages, young stock, precision farming, and nutrition and animal health.

The invited review papers were commissioned by the organising committee (John Roche, Kerst Stelwagen, Racheal Bryant, Joe Jacobs, Yani Garcia, Danny Donaghy, Jane Kay, Warren King, Bill Wales, Chris Murphy, and David Pacheco). In selecting author teams, the organising committee applied criteria related to the scientific achievements of the prospective authors and their standing in the discipline. The committee also sought a balance in the number of invitations issued to Australian and New Zealand scientists and, where possible, sought to invite early career scientists to lead the author team. In addition, international speakers were asked to provide a different perspective to certain topics and issues.

This Special Issue brings together a selection of the invited research papers that were presented at the symposium and covers (i) the challenges and opportunities for farming systems and farmers in Australia and New Zealand, (ii) recent advances in plant biotechnology, (iii) precision technologies to improve labour management and animal productivity, (iv) water quality, (v) nutrition and animal health, (vi) opportunities to manipulate the feedbase through improved breeding strategies and/or use of alternative forages to traditional species, and (vii) young stock nutrition and parasite treatment.

The organising committee of the Australasian Dairy Science Symposium sincerely thank the authors for their contributions and participation in this event and their subsequent commitment to delivering papers for this special edition of *Animal Production Science*. We also thank the main sponsors, DairyNZ and Dairy Australia, for their ongoing support for the Symposium, as well as all of the sponsors of this Symposium, without whose support the event would not have been possible.

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