

Automated Milking Systems (AMS) – Making it work.
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In its early days AMS was targeted at small indoor farms where cows were housed and had very short distances to walk to the milking stations. The thought of incorporating the technology into a pasture-based system was stretching our imaginations. The uncertainty was so great that in NZ the AMS research farm started with only 10 cows. The success was beyond our expectations and in 2006 the Australian industry saw the need for knowledge increasing.

Since the Camden AMS research farm was commissioned in 2006 our knowledge of AMS has increased significantly. We now understand that as a system it has a place in the Australian dairy industry. Now the time has come to help those farmers contemplating and committing to AMS to be as successful as we have.

The key purposes of this workshop is to:

- Σ Ensure that you as farmers have appropriate expectations of the technology. One of the greatest causes for failure around the world has been where farmers have invested in the technology believing it will deliver things it is just not capable of or not understanding the true impact the technology will have on their business
- Σ Help you to understand the key factors that make the system successful. You must understand that cows do not stand in a paddock or feedpad and make the decision to traffic to the dairy for milking because the pressure on their udder needs relieving or because “it’s that time of day” or any other reason. Cows move around the system in search of something they desire – the most reliable incentive to generate cow traffic is FOOD!!
- Σ Put you in a better position to decide if this is a technology that may have a place in your business in the future. An informed decision requires that you have sufficient information to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages and the true feasibility for your cows, your farm, your business and your family.
- Σ Ensure that you know where to go to get the information you require, when you require it. If you embark on AMS in Australia you are no longer one of the pioneers taking a punt on a technology that is unproven. As a dairy farmer your levy has contributed to the generation of a wealth of knowledge regarding AMS in an Australian environment. Knowing where to access the information and what forms it is available in will ensure that you capture the knowledge in a manner that suits you.

This workshop will be very interactive and will provide you with the opportunity to get answers to all the questions you have around AMS. As you contemplate your future farming system and address management of your resources don’t forget about the key resources – YOU and your family. Will AMS give you the options that you need to continue to be part of the Australian dairy industry as we move into the future?