



26 NOV, 2019

Put pressure on supermarkets over milk prices

The Tablelander, Atherton

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MILK | David Anthony

WOOLWORTHS and Coles need to be made accountable for the low prices they are paying dairy farmers.

Liberal National Party senators Susan McDonald and James McGrath met with dairy farmers while on the Tablelands to listen to their concerns about low milk prices.

The supermarket giants recently increased the price of their home brand milk products from \$1.10 to \$1.20 a litre.

But the increase was not passed on to farmers.

“Our dairy farmers are being paid less than the cost of production,” Senator McDonald said.

“This is unsustainable and the community can do something to help.

“We need to ask the managers at Woolies and Coles about the ethical supply of milk.

“Ring them, visit them and email them telling them farmers should be paid a fair price.

“They need to find a moral backbone and do the right thing by the farmers.

“Fair prices are the solution.”

She said the community had forced the big supermarkets to demand the ethical supply of coffee and other products.

“Since the introduction of

dollar milk eight years ago, dairy farmers have been getting bad prices,” Senator McDonald said.

Senator McGrath agreed the community needed to put pressure on the supermarkets.

“Coles and Woolies are letting down the farmers,” he said.

Millaa Millaa producer Col Daley said the national pricing was “killing us”.

Tablelands Regional Mayor Joe Paronella told the senators that the Tablelands only had 43 dairy farmers and the Lion Dairy and Drinks’ Malanda Milk Factory employed 100 people.

“The low prices will have flow-on effects in our communities,” he said.

“We are at the crisis stage and farmers say they are in a dire position.

“They have a lot to lose.

“They are holding on for as

long as they can in the hope of a solution.”

The number of dairy farms on the Tablelands plummeted from about 400 to 43 since deregulation in 2000.

Today Queensland only has 450 dairy farms.



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Townsville-based Senator Susan McDonald (third from right) met with dairy farmers in Yungaburra last week, from left: Bob Daley (Upper Barron), Senator James McGrath, Tablelands Regional Mayor Joe Paronella, Senator Susan McDonald, Col Daley (Millaa Millaa) and Dennis Byrnes (Yungaburra).

Picture: DAVID ANTHONY