

Dear Senators

My wife and I are dairyfarmers in northern NSW.

All of our milk is used for the fresh milk market.

You will be aware that the profit margins that we work with are minimal. The recent drop in the retail price of milk is already putting pressure on small shops and milk vendors to reduce their price per litre of milk. The longterm outcome will be the further loss of dairy farmers in Northern NSW and Queensland, and the inevitable loss of milk vendors, and the small shops not offering milk as part of their groceries line, unless they can halve the price per litre of milk paid to the farmer.

I draw your attention to the recent editions of Queensland Country Life. Since the announced dropped in milk prices, there has already been four dairy herds put on the market. If the price of milk drops to farmers, there will be a flood of sales.

In northern Europe, the governments are paying dairyfarmers to milk cows and have them in fields, for the sole purpose of tourism and education of their people. Australia does not need to go down a similar path. Consumers are generally happy to pay what ever they need to keep their farmers viable.

We are not asking for much. All we need is a reasonable price for our milk, and we will continue to work our 12 hour days, seven days a week, for an hourly rate of return that is less than the unemployed get now. We believe as Australians that this is what we should do. Call us mad, but longlife milk from New Zealand is not a good option.

With enough political pressure from the senate, the major retailers can be made to re-access their position.

Yours Faithfully
Philip and Mary Lever