

## **A case study in collaboration between industry and a VET institution delivering a quality assurance program to diary farmers**

*Douglas Maclean  
Centre for Rural Vocational Education Training  
University of Melbourne*

Over 4,000 diary farmers are undertaking the MG MILKCARE quality assurance program. The program, utilising the new Agricultural Training Package involves the collaboration between the Murray Goulburn Cooperative Limited, a Victorian milk processor, and the Institute of Land and Food Resources. The program utilising a Unit of Competency from the Agricultural Training Package has been developed and piloted with 471 participants in late 1999. The first phase of the program will deliver 130 courses between 11 February and 25 May 2000 across the three Victorian diary regions. Workplace assessment of individual participants is linked to the on farm MG MILKCARE audit. Successful completion of the audit will provide a pass in the Unit of Competency “Establish and Implement a QA Program.” Farmers undertaking the course and successfully implementing the audit requirements will be paid an annual premium of between \$4,000 - 8,000.

Within a week of commencing the delivery of the program the demand is outstripping supply resulting in requests to deliver additional courses beyond the 130 scheduled. The partnership between Murray Goulburn and the Institute is providing improved resources and viability with the additional benefit of farmers moving towards a formal qualification.

**Key words:** industry and VET collaboration, flexible delivery, partnerships