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## South Australian Farmer Wins Top Dairy Innovation Award

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South Australian dairy farmer Reece Donhardt has been recognised for his forward-thinking approach to agriculture, receiving the Innovation Award at the annual South Australian Dairy Awards.

Donhardt, who operates Nangkita Dairies, was celebrated for introducing modern practices that have helped improve productivity, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability within the dairy sector. The award highlights his individual initiative and commitment to private innovation without relying on heavy government intervention, showing how new technologies and strategies can strengthen both his business and the state's dairy industry.

The South Australian Dairy Awards, held each year, recognise excellence across the sector, including quality produce, innovation, and contribution to the broader farming community. The Innovation Award is one of the event's most prestigious honours, acknowledging individuals who set new benchmarks for best practice.

Organisers said Donhardt's work stood out for his practical integration of technology and data-driven solutions into everyday farming operations. From refining herd management

systems to trialling advanced feeding programs, his efforts have led to measurable improvements in milk quality and efficiency.

Industry leaders praised the win as an example of how local farmers are adapting to challenges facing the dairy industry, such as fluctuating market conditions, climate variability, and rising input costs. By focusing on long-term sustainability, award recipients like Donhardt demonstrate how personal responsibility and entrepreneurial choices can help safeguard the future of dairy farming in South Australia.

Speaking after the ceremony, Donhardt said the recognition reflected the hard work of his team and the importance of continually looking for ways to improve. “It’s about making sure we’re not just keeping up, but also setting standards for what the industry can achieve,” he said.

The award comes at a time when South Australia’s dairy sector continues to play a vital role in the state’s economy, contributing millions annually and supporting rural communities. According to the South Australian Dairyfarmers’ Association, the industry supplies both domestic markets and export demand, making market-driven innovation and resilience critical for long-term growth.

Event organisers also emphasised the importance of celebrating farmers who take bold steps to modernise their operations. They noted that recognising innovation not only benefits individual businesses but also inspires broader adoption of new methods across the industry.

The South Australian Dairy Awards serve as a platform to showcase the achievements of local farmers and encourage collaboration between producers, researchers, and industry bodies. Alongside innovation, awards are also presented for milk quality, sustainability practices, and community engagement.

For Nangkita Dairies, the Innovation Award reinforces its position as a leader in the state’s dairy sector. Donhardt’s win is seen as proof that self-reliant farmers can drive progress and encourage others to pursue fresh ideas that enhance both productivity and environmental outcomes.

As South Australia’s dairy industry looks ahead, the recognition of innovators like Donhardt demonstrates the sector’s ongoing commitment to progress, adaptation, and excellence.