



Heavy loads head to Aussie Farmers

Up to 10 semi-trailer loads of heavy equipment will make their way to Camperdown in the coming days as Aussie Farmers Dairy ramps up its factory operations.

Setting up business in the town's former Bonlac Foods factory, Aussie Farmers Dairy plans to begin its milk processing operations before the end of this year.

Company chief executive officer Peter Skene said the trucks would travel from Melbourne with the first expected either today or tomorrow.

Taking up one and a half road lanes, the oversized vehicles are expected to create plenty of interest with locals.

Mr Skene said the first trucks would deliver two milk silos – one with a 60,000 litre capacity and the other with a 30,000 litre capacity.

"I think it's quite ironic that the first two pieces of equipment to be moved on to the site are both milk silos – it will be very exciting to see them back on the site," he said.

Speaking to *The Camperdown Chronicle* Mr Skene said locals could expect to see two or three truck loads of equipment arriving in town each day.

"This is certainly an exciting phase we are in now; accepting delivery of vital pieces of equipment.

"We will have a team of workers on site to ensure the equipment is placed where it needs to go and is properly assembled."

Aussie Farmers Dairy's new Camperdown site, which the company believes is in the "perfect position" in terms of western Victoria's dairying community, will provide employment for between 30 and 40 staff in its first year.

Mr Skene said the figure would rise to around 100 employees over a five year period.

"Aussie Farmers Direct is a company that is less than five years old, however, it has been widely recognised as one of the fastest growing businesses in Australia," he said.

"Currently we have 170 delivery vans on the road each day, bringing top quality products to the people of Australia."

Since taking over the lease on the former Bonlac site on April 6, around \$500,000 has already been invested on maintenance work and improvements.

"Basically we took over a vacant, run-down site and have worked hard ever since to bring it up to a modern facility," Mr Skene said.

"We are looking to start production by Christmas which would mean that in a period of less than nine months, we have gone from taking over the lease to producing

and delivering milk to locals – I think that's quite an achievement in itself."

The company is now awaiting final confirmation of its operational permit from Dairy Food Safety Victoria.

Once the permit is received, production trials can begin.

"This is certainly a big investment in Camperdown and in the local dairying industry but one we are very excited about," Mr Skene said.

"I can't wait to see the first fully stocked delivery van leave the site."

The arrival of Aussie Farmers Dairy marks the start of a new era for Camperdown and the dairy industry in the Western District after the former Bonlac Foods milk processing plant was closed 10 years ago.

"My first full-time job was on that site, working in the milk powder area as a packer back in 1983," Mr Skene said.

"I was born in Camperdown and lived here for many years so I have quite emotional ties to the town and also to this site.

"It's very rewarding to be able to now come back here as chief executive of Aussie Farmers Dairy – a company that is progressive, proudly Australian owned and operated and will be responsible for breathing life back into this site."