

SE News  
 HD **Chinese** tour our dairies  
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A DELEGATION of 31 **Chinese** investors will spend the next two days in Tasmania looking for opportunities in the state's **dairy** industry.

DairyTas executive officer Mark Smith said yesterday the mixed **business group** was due to arrive in Launceston last night and would be looking at a combination of processing plants and **dairy** farms in the state's North.

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The **group** is expected to visit Ashgrove **cheese** factory at Elizabeth Town today followed by Fonterra's processing plant at Spreyton and irrigation developments and a **dairy** farm for **sale** in the Deloraine area.

Before flying out, the **group** will also visit an irrigated farm in the Northern Midlands operated by a former national **dairy** farmer of the year.

"The delegation chose to come to Tasmania because they have a strong interest in **dairy** farms. It is an exciting time for the industry," Mr Smith said.

The industry aims to unlock potential for major expansion, increasing capacity by 350 **million** litres a year or 40 per cent with its IntoDairy program.

The state produced about 800 **million** litres last year.

"They [the **Chinese** delegation] will look at a **dairy** farm on the market and two more farms that offer potential for **dairy** conversion," Mr Smith said.

Earlier this week a \$3 **billion Chinese** agricultural fund to invest in local **dairy** farms was announced. Trade and Investment Minister Andrew Robb said the Beijing Australia Agricultural Resource Co-operative Development Fund would supply Australian agricultural products and services to **China**, the world's biggest **dairy** importing market.

And one of **China's** biggest **milk** companies, Ningbo **Dairy Group**, said this week it was keen to produce as much **milk** as it could to fly from its Victorian farms.

Tasmanian Irrigation, which has developed a major water scheme infrastructure program, will give a presentation on how Tasmania is droughtproofing itself by providing surety of water through its schemes. The tour has been organised with Austrade and Department of State Growth and Harcourts Real Estate, which is marketing properties to **Chinese** investors.

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