

SE Finance
 HD **China's Bright Food swallows Mundella**
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 LP

DAIRY: **China's** Bright Food **Group** is the latest foreign player to carve itself a slice of the local **dairy** sector, signing a deal to **buy** privately held WA **cheese** and yoghurt producer Mundella.

Bright Food spokesman Pan Jianjun was reported to have said the state-owned **company** was buying Mundella via its wholly owned Australian subsidiary Manassen Foods, which it acquired in 2011.

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Bright has also been touted as a possible buyer of Australia's largest privately owned **milk** supplier United **Dairy** Power. But UDP general manager Darryl Cardona has said the **Chinese firm** has made no approaches.

The terms of the Mundella sale have reportedly been agreed but the final price will be based on the target **company's** financial performance for last year, which is yet to be reported.

The local sector has drawn great interest from foreign investors seeking to cash in on rampant demand from Asia for **dairy** foods as more Western diets become popular, as do products such as baby formula.

The deal comes as the battle for Warrnambool **Cheese & Butter** remains a two-way contest. Canadian **dairy** major Saputo extended its \$504 **million** takeover offer on Friday after securing a 25.445 per cent **stake**.

The Saputo offer now closes next Wednesday -- more than two weeks before the Australian Competition Tribunal is scheduled to hold a week-long hearing on whether a rival \$530m offer from Murray Goulburn Co-operative should be allowed to proceed.

Saputo has urged WCB shareholders to "take action immediately" by accepting its offer of \$9 a share, rising to \$9.20 should it secure 50 per cent of the **company** and to \$9.60 upon achieving 90 per cent.

Murray Goulburn has urged Warrnambool investors to delay a decision until the outcome of its tribunal hearing, while major WCB shareholders Bega **Cheese** and Lion have yet to declare what they will do with their stakes.

Founded in 1974, Mundella makes soft **cheese** and yoghurt, and has begun exporting to Asia. It has about 40 staff.

CO brgfdc : Bright Food (Group) Co Ltd | mnssfd : Manassen Foods | amezza : Castle Harlan Australian Mezzanine Partners Pty Ltd
 IN i41 : Food/Beverages/Tobacco | icnp : Consumer Goods | ifood : Food Products
 NS cacqu : Acquisitions | c18 : Ownership Changes | c181 : Acquisitions/Mergers/Takeovers | cactio : Corporate Actions | ccat : Corporate/Industrial News | ncat : Content Types | nfact : Factiva Filters | nfcpin : FC&E Industry News Filter

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