



HOME OF



Woodlands Dairy Newsletter

2026

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message from the CEO



As we reflect on the first half of 2026, market conditions remain challenging and volatile. While volumes have grown across most dairy sub-segments, this growth has again come at the expense of value. Global conflict continues to affect both the economy and our business, with sharply rising oil prices driving significant increases in fuel and other input costs.

After beginning the year with drought, fires and Foot & Mouth disease, the Eastern Cape region - where we and many of our producers are based - was also hit by floods. The impact on people, communities and infrastructure has been devastating, and our thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected.

We are extremely excited and proud to have acquired Ladismith Cheese Company and its subsidiaries from the Sea Harvest Group, effective 1 May. This transaction strongly supports our vision of delivering high-quality, sustainable dairy products to a growing market.

By bringing together Ladismith's strong regional presence and expertise with our extensive network, we are well positioned to offer customers a broader and more specialised product portfolio.

We also extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues at the Ladismith and Mooivallei facilities. Welcome to the Woodlands Dairy Group - we trust you will enjoy a fulfilling career with us.

We are also pleased with the continued innovation in our First Choice High Protein range. In addition to expanding the flavoured milk variants across the 15g, 21g and 27g ranges, we launched the new First Choice High Protein bars, which have been very well received and are absolutely delicious.

The factory continues to operate smoothly, with no significant issues. During the low season, we used the opportunity to upgrade selected facilities and service key equipment to ensure we are well prepared for the milk flush.

Safety remains a key focus for everyone in our business. As we enter our busiest time of year, please ensure that all safety processes and policies are followed at all times.

We continue to make meaningful progress across several business initiatives, strengthening collaboration and creating new opportunities. These efforts support operational efficiency and help offset rising costs. As profitability in our sector remains under pressure, we must continue to review and manage expenditure with discipline.

There is still work to be done to stay on track and deliver our 2026 objectives, and we must remain focused on these goals. Let us continue to uphold a spirit of excellence and work together to move Woodlands Dairy Group forward.

Faith Message

Colossians 3:17

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Helen McDougall
CEO

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BUILDING A STRONGER DAIRY GROUP TOGETHER

The recent acquisition of Ladismith Cheese Company (LCC) and Mooivallei Suiwel (MV) marks an exciting milestone for Woodlands Dairy Group and an important step in our long-term growth strategy.

While the transaction is now complete, the real work is just beginning. Across the Group, teams are coming together to better understand our respective businesses, share knowledge and identify opportunities to leverage our collective strengths. From a marketing perspective, the focus is on understanding our brands, customers, products and capabilities so that we can build a clear and compelling Group story while preserving the unique heritage of each business.

LCC and MV bring respected brands, specialised expertise and strong customer relationships to the Woodlands Dairy Group portfolio.

Together, we now have a broader presence across dairy categories, creating exciting opportunities for growth, innovation and collaboration.

Over the coming months, our teams will continue working closely across the Group to align where it makes sense, learn from one another and unlock opportunities that will create value for our customers, consumers and communities.

Most importantly, this journey is about people. Building relationships, sharing expertise and creating a common vision for the future will be key to a successful integration. While the acquisition may be complete, the integration journey is only beginning. We look forward to working together, learning from one another and unlocking the full potential of Woodlands Dairy Group as we build a stronger, more diverse and more resilient dairy business for the future.



Ladismith Facility



Mooivallei Facility



Hamper giveaway to Mooivallei team members during Townhall held in June '26



Leadership team session in Humansdorp held in May '26

FIRST CHOICE SHINES AT THE 2026 SOUTH AFRICAN DAIRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Woodlands Dairy is pleased to announce exceptional achievements at the esteemed 2026 South African Dairy Championships.

With First Choice products winning three South African Champion titles and one runner-up spot in important dairy categories, Woodlands Dairy once again proved its dedication to dairy excellence.

Our winning products included First Choice UHT Full Cream Milk, First Choice Pouring Cream and First Choice Recovery High Protein Chocolate Flavour, each securing first place in their respective categories against some of the country's leading dairy producers. Adding to the celebration, First Choice Peach & Apricot Flavoured Low Fat Dairy Snack earned a strong second-place finish.

Our First Choice Award-Winning Products:

1st Place Qualité Award:

First Choice Recovery High Protein Chocolate Flavour

1st Place SA Champion:

- First Choice Pouring Cream
- First Choice UHT Full Cream Milk
- First Choice Medium Fat Maas

2nd Place SA Champion:

- First Choice Peach & Apricot Flavoured Low Fat Dairy Snack

In addition, products manufactured by Woodlands Dairy Group for retail partners also performed exceptionally well. Among the highlights, manufactured by Fairfield Dairy, were:

1st Place Qualité Award:

- Woolworths Full Cream Fresh Milk
- SPAR Double Cream Yoghurt Granadilla Cheesecake Flavoured

1st Place SA Champion:

- Woolworths Fat Free Smooth Cottage Cheese
- Woolworths Ayrshire Double Thick Cream
- SPAR Kefir
- SPAR Fat Free Peach Apricot Yoghurt
- SPAR Double Cream Chocolate Flavoured Yoghurt

These awards are a testament to the passion, expertise and dedication of our teams across the value chain: from our dairy farmers and manufacturing teams to quality assurance, product development, sales and marketing.

We are incredibly honoured to receive this recognition and remain committed to bringing South Africans dairy products of exceptional quality, taste and value. Congratulations to everyone who contributed to this outstanding achievement!



marketing NEWS



HIGH PROTEIN

HIGH PROTEIN LAUNCHES NEW PROTEIN BAR RANGE

We are excited to announce the launch of the High Protein Fuel Bar, a powerful new addition to the First Choice High Protein range. Each bar delivers 15g of protein and vitamin B12 for sustained energy and muscle support, while being preservative-free and trans-fat-free.

The bold packaging ensures strong shelf impact and aligns with our ready-to-drink range. Available in Salted Caramel, Strawberry Vanilla and Peanut Butter, the bars support muscle growth, repair and all-day energy.

Find them now at Evergreen Stores, Takealot and First Choice Dairy Shops for R29.99 each, with expansion to major retailers coming soon.



HIGH PROTEIN MILK CHECKERS CAMPAIGN

We recently ran a highly successful High Protein campaign at Checkers' Top 50 Flavoured Milk Category stores nationwide.

The promotion, which ran from 27 April – 21 June 2026, gave shoppers the chance to WIN 1 of 4 Fit Kits worth R8 000 each by purchasing a 6-pack of First Choice High Protein and scanning the QR code.

With strong category banner Point of Sale media and excellent shopper engagement, the campaign delivered impressive results, boosting visibility and sales while strengthening brand loyalty.



PUSH PAST POSSIBLE

HIGHPROTEIN.CO.ZA

LET'S GET CHEESY

The First Choice Vacuum-Pack and Sliced Cheese promotion ran in Pick n Pay stores from 30 March to 27 April 2026, with the goal of driving awareness, trial and sales, targeting 10% volume growth.

The campaign was supported by impactful in-store Point of Sale designed to enhance visibility, disrupt shopper flow and communicate strong appetite appeal and product benefits. This approach aimed to improve shopper engagement, strengthen brand presence against competitors and increase conversion rates at shelf.

The key objectives focused on building brand awareness, driving consumption and boosting sales. Increased visibility and consistent messaging position First Choice as a preferred brand, while highlighting product versatility and quality encourages repeat purchase and greater household penetration. A sampling activation on 25 April across 21 PnP Hyper stores further drove trial and purchase, supporting overall sales growth and improved performance during the promotional period.



COLLABORATION IS THE SECRET INGREDIENT IN NPD SUCCESS

In New Product Development (NPD), successful innovation is about more than a great recipe or packaging design - it's about collaboration. Bringing the right people together from idea generation to product launch helps ensure we deliver products that meet consumer expectations while maintaining quality, efficiency and commercial success.

Successful launches rely on strong teamwork between NPD, Production, Engineering, Quality, Sales, Marketing and Finance. By working together from the outset, teams can address technical feasibility, quality requirements, customer needs and commercial viability, reducing risk and improving speed to market.

The recent Zoho Project Management Tool onboarding initiative for New Product Development (NPD) has further strengthened collaboration by providing a centralised platform for project tracking, task management, approvals and real-time communication. This improves visibility, accountability and alignment across departments, enabling faster decision-making and more efficient project execution.

Collaboration also extends beyond our business. Strong partnerships with suppliers and customers, including our private label partners, provide valuable technical expertise, market insights and feedback that help us develop products that meet customer expectations and delight consumers.

Every successful product launch is the result of many teams working towards a common goal. Thank you to everyone who contributes to the NPD process - your expertise, dedication and teamwork are the true secret ingredients behind our success.



events

NEWS

ANNUAL MADIBAZ NETBALL TOURNAMENT

The annual Madibaz Netball Tournament, held at Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha, is a key pre-season event and unofficial curtain-raiser to the Eastern Cape netball season. It attracts a strong mix of clubs, schools and university teams and is widely recognised as one of the largest senior club netball tournaments in the country.

First Choice High Protein Recovery supported the 2026 edition, delivering strong brand visibility and engaging directly with players and spectators in a vibrant, community-focused environment. The event continues to provide a valuable platform to align First Choice High Protein Recovery with performance, recovery and community sport, while strengthening our connection with the netball community.



CAPE TOWN CYCLE TOUR LIFECYCLE EXPO HIGHLIGHTS

The Cape Town Cycle Tour Lifecycle Expo, South Africa's leading cycling, health and fitness event, once again served as the official race registration hub, attracting thousands of cyclists along with an additional 15,000 - 20,000 visitors.

This year, attendance reached 30,931, an increase from the previous year. The First Choice High Protein Recovery Team was on-site, actively supporting cyclists with recovery and engaging with attendees, further boosting brand visibility.



SPAR WOMEN'S CHALLENGE DURBAN 2026

The Durban leg of the SPAR Women's 10km and 5km Challenge took place on 28 June 2026 at the Hollywoodbets Kings Park precinct, welcoming up to 12,500 participants and celebrating women through fitness, community and healthy living. As one of South Africa's premier women's road running events and part of the SPAR Grand Prix Series, the race attracted elite athletes, recreational runners and walkers from across the country, creating an energetic and inspiring atmosphere.

High Protein was proudly represented in the VIP hospitality area, where approximately 300 invited guests attended throughout the event.

Elite runners were provided with a range of High Protein Drinks and High Protein Fuel Bars, offering convenient post-race nutritional support to aid recovery following their performances. The activation provided an excellent opportunity to showcase High Protein's commitment to supporting athletic performance and recovery, while engaging directly with professional athletes, industry stakeholders and event guests.

The positive reception reinforced High Protein's position as a trusted sports nutrition brand and strengthened its association with one of South Africa's leading road running events.



FIRST CHOICE SHOWCASED AT THE AFRICA FOOD SHOW 2026

First Choice proudly showcased in the 2026 Africa Food Show, held from 10-12 June at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC). As one of Africa's leading food and beverage trade exhibitions, the event brought together more than 350 exhibitors and over 8,000 industry professionals from more than 60 countries, creating valuable opportunities for networking, product innovation and business growth across the continent.

As a trusted supplier to Econofoods Food Services, First Choice was prominently featured on the Econofoods stand, where visitors had the opportunity to explore a wide range of premium dairy products tailored for both the retail and food service sectors. The exhibition also served as the launch platform for several exciting additions to the High Protein range, including High

Protein Balance 15g, High Protein MAX 27g and the High Protein Fuel Bar 15g. These innovative products generated significant interest from buyers, distributors and food service professionals seeking nutritious, high-protein solutions that align with evolving consumer trends.

The Africa Food Show provided an excellent platform to strengthen existing partnerships, engage with prospective customers and showcase First Choice's commitment to innovation, quality and delivering dairy solutions that meet the needs of a growing African market. The strong response received throughout the exhibition reaffirmed the brand's position as a trusted leader in the dairy industry and highlighted the increasing demand for functional, value-added dairy products across the continent.



SANLAM CAPE TOWN MARATHON EXPO HIGHLIGHTS

The 2026 Sanlam Cape Town Marathon Expo, held at DHL Stadium from 21–23 May, hosted 27 000 runners for race pack collection and showcased Cape Town's bid for Abbott World Marathon Major status. Key sponsors, led by Sanlam, along with various fitness and wellness brands, engaged attendees through activations and product experiences.

First Choice featured its High Protein range, MAX and the newly launched Protein Fuel Bar, attracting strong consumer interest.



2026 ABSA WILDEKLAWER SPORTS TOURNAMENT

The 2026 Absa Wildeklaar Senior Tournament was held from 24–27 April 2026 in Kimberley, with matches hosted at Hoërskool Diamantveld, Kimberley Boys' High School and Sol Plaatje University. Widely regarded as one of South Africa's premier school sports festivals, the tournament welcomed a record 192 teams from 111 schools, with 4,303 players and officials participating across rugby, netball and soccer. The event continues to serve as a significant contributor to youth sport development while delivering a substantial economic and tourism boost to the Kimberley region. The tournament provided a high-performance environment where South Africa's most promising young athletes competed against the country's leading school teams, gaining valuable exposure in front of coaches, selectors and talent scouts. Renowned for its competitive standard, Absa

Wildeklawer remains an important stepping stone for many athletes progressing to provincial and national representation.

First Choice High Protein, in partnership with the Athletic Recovery Centre, proudly supported the tournament as the official recovery provider. Throughout the event, players had access to First Choice High Protein Recovery Drinks and Protein Bars as part of a dedicated recovery program designed to support muscle recovery, replenish energy and promote overall athlete well-being. The partnership reinforced First Choice High Protein's commitment to supporting the next generation of South African sporting talent while demonstrating the important role of quality nutrition in athletic performance and recovery.



CREAMY CAPE MALAY CHICKEN CURRY

Prep Time: 20 minutes (plus 30 mins marinating)

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Makes: 4-6 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

For the Chicken & Marinade:

- 1 kg boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 C First Choice Double Cream Plain Dairy Snack
- 1 Tbsp ginger
- 1 Tbsp garlic
- 1 tsp salt

For the Curry Base:

- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 3 cardamom pods, cracked
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 tsp whole coriander seeds
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 Tbsp mild Cape Malay curry powder
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp sugar

For the Sauce & Finishing:

- 1 tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
- 1 C water
- 2 -3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into big cubes
- ½ C First Choice Double Cream Plain Dairy Snack
- Fresh coriander leaves, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl with the chicken, add the First Choice Double Cream Plain Dairy Snack, ginger, garlic and salt.
2. Mix together and marinate for 30 minutes.
3. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add whole spices (cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, bay leaves, cumin and coriander seeds) and fry for 1 minute until fragrant.
4. Add onions and sauté for 5-7 minutes until soft and golden brown. Stir in the ground spices and sugar. Cook for 1 minute to release the oils.
5. Add the marinated chicken and the marinade. Cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring to brown the meat.
6. Pour in the tomatoes, water, and potatoes. Bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook for 25-30 minutes until potatoes are tender and the sauce has thickened.
7. Remove from heat. Stir in a ½ cup of First Choice Double Cream Plain Dairy Snack to create a velvety, mild finish.
8. Garnish the pot with a generous handful of fresh coriander.
9. Serve alongside warm, flaky roti or fragrant basmati rice. Accompany it with a fresh sambal made of diced tomatoes, onions, and green chillies.
10. For an extra creamy touch, serve with a dollop of First Choice Double Cream Plain Dairy Snack.

SUPPORTING HEALTHY FUTURES ON WORLD OBESITY DAY 2026

Woodlands Dairy supported the Department of Basic Education's World Obesity Day 2026 celebration at Welverdiend Primary School in Bushbuckridge.

The event focused on raising awareness about obesity prevention and encouraging learners to adopt healthier lifestyle habits through balanced nutrition and regular physical activity.

Aligned with the global theme: "8 Billion Reasons to Act on Obesity" and South Africa's sub-theme: "Healthy Environments, Healthy Futures," learners received health education and practical guidance to support informed lifestyle choices.



SUPPORTING KOUGA COMMUNITIES AFTER THE FLOODS

Following the devastating floods that affected communities across the Kouga region, we partnered with Care4U to provide relief to families impacted by the disaster. Through the donation of essential food ingredients, Care4U was able to expand its meal program and provide warm, nutritious meals to those in need.

The support was distributed across affected communities as recovery efforts continued, helping Care4U reach vulnerable households during a particularly challenging period for the region.



WOODLANDS DAIRY GOLF EVENT '26 DRIVING SUPPORT FOR ST FRANCIS HOSPICE

The 2026 Woodlands Dairy Golf Day in aid of St Francis Hospice was a remarkable success, raising an impressive R820,000 in support of the organisation's ongoing work. Hosted at St Francis Links on 14 and 15 May, the event brought together golfers, sponsors and supporters under the theme "No DNA, Just RSA."

The two-day event featured competitive golf, networking opportunities and community engagement, creating an enjoyable experience for all involved. Rugby star Steven Kitshoff was among the special guests, adding to the excitement and helping to make the event a memorable occasion.



GIVING LEARNERS THE TOOLS TO SUCCEED



In partnership with Child Welfare SA Humansdorp, school shoes, warm jackets, stationery and other essential items were donated to learners in need. These contributions helped ensure that children had access to the basic resources required for their education.

The items were distributed through Child Welfare SA Humansdorp's community support programmes, providing practical assistance to learners from local schools ahead of the winter season.

WORLD MILK DAY 2026

World Milk Day was celebrated on the 1st of June 2026, with the donation of First Choice Milk to learners at Mzingisi Primary School and Masikhule Crèche in Kwa-Nomzamo, Humansdorp. The occasion brought together learners, educators and community members to recognise the importance of milk as part of a balanced diet.

As part of the celebration, learners received First Choice Milk and participated in activities marking the global day. The event provided an opportunity to highlight the role of nutritious foods in supporting children's daily diets and overall well-being.



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH MASIKHATHALELELANE



We partnered with Masikhathalelelane, a non-profit organisation dedicated to disaster relief and community support, by donating milk and amasi for inclusion in its food hamper program. The hampers were distributed to families and individuals facing hardship, providing essential food items to vulnerable households within the communities served by the organisation.

The donation formed part of Masikhathalelelane's ongoing community outreach efforts, which support those affected by challenging social and economic circumstances through practical assistance and relief initiatives.

ENHANCING COMFORT

The Healthy Mom & Baby Clinic in Jeffreys Bay has enhanced its reception area through the donation of new chairs for patients and visitors. The additional seating provides greater comfort for mothers, babies and caregivers accessing the clinic's services. The contribution has improved the clinic environment, helping to create a more welcoming and pleasant space for the many families who visit the facility each day.



CRANES: THE GUARDIANS OF OUR WETLANDS

Few birds are as closely connected to the health of South Africa's landscapes as cranes. Graceful and unmistakable, these iconic birds are more than symbols of the country's natural heritage; they are indicators of healthy wetlands and grasslands. Where cranes thrive, wetlands function well, biodiversity is supported and water resources are protected. Their presence reflects ecosystems that benefit not only wildlife, but also the farming communities and people who depend on them.

South Africa is home to three crane species: the Blue Crane, our country's national bird; the Grey Crowned Crane; and the critically endangered Wattled Crane. All three rely on wetlands and grasslands for breeding, feeding and nesting. These ecosystems perform essential ecological functions by filtering water, storing carbon, reducing flood risk and providing habitat for countless plant and animal species. They also support sustainable agriculture by regulating water supplies and maintaining healthy soils.

Despite their ecological importance, South Africa's crane populations face increasing threats. Habitat loss, environmental degradation and climate change are placing pressure on both the birds and the wetland ecosystems they depend on. Climate change is especially significant, as shifting rainfall patterns affect water availability across the country. Prolonged droughts degrade critical wetland habitats, while intense rainfall and flooding can destroy nests, disrupt breeding cycles and reduce chick survival. As extreme weather events become more frequent and unpredictable, conservation efforts are more important than ever.

Agricultural expansion, infrastructure development and changing land-use practices have fragmented many of the wetlands and grasslands cranes need to survive. Other threats, including power-line collisions, illegal hunting and disturbance from human activity, continue to affect crane populations. Wetland degradation also has wider consequences, reducing water quality, biodiversity and the ecosystem services that support agriculture and surrounding communities.

In response to these challenges, the KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation protects cranes and their habitats through an integrated conservation approach built around three key pillars: Nature-Based Experiences and Education, Farming for Biodiversity and Preservation and Species Protection Advocacy.

Nature-Based Experiences and Education

Long-term conservation begins by building a connection between people and nature. Through its



education programmes, the foundation helps learners, teachers and communities understand wetlands, biodiversity and the importance of protecting natural ecosystems.

During 2025, the Education Project reached more than 1,000 pupils and teachers through interactive, curriculum-linked environmental learning experiences. Three environmental education workshops were conducted for educators from local rural schools, providing practical resources and training to strengthen environmental education in classrooms and communities.

Farming for Biodiversity

Healthy farming systems and healthy ecosystems can exist side by side. The foundation's Farming for Biodiversity program shows how conservation and agriculture can work together to benefit both people and nature.

A key example is the Bill Barnes Crane and Oribi Nature Reserve, situated within the Mooi River Mist Belt Grassland Biome. Through ongoing habitat management and ecological monitoring, including a comprehensive five-year grassland assessment, the reserve continues to evaluate ecosystem health and refine conservation practices that support long-term sustainability. These initiatives show how biodiversity conservation can be successfully integrated into productive agricultural landscapes.

Preservation and Species Protection Advocacy

Protecting cranes requires protecting the habitats they depend on. Through habitat conservation, research and advocacy, the KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation works to safeguard vulnerable crane populations while promoting broader biodiversity conservation beyond protected areas.

The success of these initiatives relies on partnerships and collaborative support. Every contribution helps strengthen habitat restoration, species protection, environmental education and community engagement, ensuring that conservation efforts continue to grow and make a lasting impact. Together, these three pillars create a holistic approach to conservation, recognising that protecting biodiversity also means educating communities, supporting sustainable farming and preserving healthy ecosystems for future generations.

As part of its commitment to environmental stewardship, Fairfield Dairy is proud to support the KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation and its ongoing conservation work. By investing in initiatives that protect wetlands, grasslands and endangered species, Fairfield Dairy contributes to resilient ecosystems that benefit biodiversity, agriculture and the communities that depend on these natural landscapes. Conserving

cranes is ultimately about protecting the ecosystems that sustain life and ensuring that future generations inherit a healthier, more resilient environment.

Compiled by: Moedisha Phadu



Crane and chick

FROM DROUGHT TO FLOODS

The Kouga region has always experienced a variable climate, but recent years have shown increasingly unpredictable extremes. Prolonged droughts have reduced dam levels, strained agriculture and led to water restrictions, while intense rainfall events have caused severe flooding. This cycle of drought followed by extreme rainfall reflects the changing climate that communities, farmers and businesses must increasingly adapt to. 2026 became one of the clearest examples of this shift.

The Kouga area started the year under severe environmental pressure after one of the driest periods many residents and farmers could remember. By late January, the Department of Water and Sanitation warned that below-average rainfall was straining Eastern Cape water resources, with Kouga and Impofu dams below 50% capacity. As conditions worsened, Kouga Local Municipality strengthened water restrictions and approved a revised Drought Mitigation Plan after the drought was classified as a disaster. By early April, combined dam storage had fallen to approximately 40%. The dry conditions also fuelled wildfires across parts of the Eastern and Western Cape, damaging grazing land, natural vegetation and property at a time when producers were already facing rising fuel, fertiliser and production costs.

Just months later, the weather shifted dramatically. In early May, a cut-off low-pressure system brought widespread heavy rainfall, strong winds and flooding across much of South Africa.





Floods in the Kouga region 2026

An Orange Level 8 warning was issued for Kouga and neighbouring Koukamma, with forecasts of 150mm to 200mm of rain in some areas. The resulting floods were among the most severe experienced in the region in recent years.

The South African National Space Agency used Sentinel-1 radar imagery to assess the flooding across Kouga Local Municipality. Preliminary mapping identified approximately 261.57 hectares of flood-related surface water and saturated ground, including 2.04 hectares of built-up areas. The worst-affected areas were along river systems and low-lying agricultural and residential zones around Hankey and neighbouring communities. In the Langkloof, some farmers recorded up to 220mm of rainfall within 24 hours, while roads including the R330, N2 and R102 suffered extensive damage.

The events of 2026 showed how climate impacts can compound. Drought hardens soils and dries vegetation, while wildfires remove the plant cover that helps rain soak into the ground. When intense rainfall follows, water runs rapidly across the surface, carrying sediment, ash and debris into rivers and wetlands. By the second flood event at the end of May, soils were already saturated, increasing flood severity and causing natural springs to emerge in some areas. For pasture-based dairy farms, reduced pasture growth, fire-damaged grazing areas and rising production costs placed further pressure on milk production.

When the heavy rains arrived, waterlogged pastures made grazing management difficult, limited livestock movement and increased the risk of soil damage, foot rot, lameness and environmental mastitis. These conditions affected animal welfare, somatic cell counts and milk quality. The impact also extended beyond farms, as damaged roads and flooded infrastructure disrupted communities, businesses and milk collection. Throughout the crisis, the Woodlands Dairy Logistics team prioritised tanker

driver safety, vehicle protection and product quality through early-morning road inspections, continuous communication with producers and careful route planning.

Despite the hardships, 2026 also highlighted the resilience of the Kouga community. Farmers helped fight wildfires, residents assisted during evacuations and municipal officials, emergency responders and industry partners supported affected areas. Woodlands Dairy, its milk producers and local communities worked together throughout the crisis. Recovery continues, with municipalities repairing roads, stormwater systems and infrastructure, while farmers restore pastures, improve drainage, protect waterways and monitor livestock health.

Looking ahead, Kouga will need stronger resilience to more frequent climate extremes. This includes investing in resilient infrastructure, protecting wetlands and drainage systems, improving water resource management and supporting climate-smart farming practices. The fires and floods of 2026 are a powerful reminder that climate change is already reshaping how communities live, farm and do business. The year brought major challenges, but also showed the collaboration and determination needed to adapt to an increasingly uncertain climate.



Overflowing Kouga Dam

FAIRFIELD DAIRY ACCELERATES ITS RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION WITH BIOMASS AND SOLAR INVESTMENTS

At Fairfield Dairy, sustainability is a conscious cultural and financial commitment that shapes its decisions, investments and long-term vision. This commitment has led management to focus on reducing the environmental impact of the production processes through investment in renewable energy and efficient resource usage. A major milestone in Fairfield Dairy's renewable energy journey is the commissioning of the new biomass boiler.

Biomass is a renewable energy source derived from organic materials and forms part of the natural carbon cycle, making it a more sustainable alternative to fossil fuels. With the commissioning of the biomass boiler, Fairfield Dairy has significantly reduced its reliance on fossil fuels by successfully transitioning to sustainably sourced biomass briquettes as its primary fuel source. This transition supports a cleaner energy strategy, ensuring a reliable and efficient energy supply for production while substantially lowering the factory's overall carbon footprint. From 2025 onwards, this initiative is expected to reduce the factory's carbon emissions by approximately 68%, representing a major step towards achieving Fairfield Dairy's sustainability and climate goals.



RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION

Fairfield Dairy has further strengthened its sustainability initiatives through the expansion of its solar photovoltaic (PV) system, in addition to the existing biomass boiler.

The installation of extra solar panels has increased on-site clean electricity generation and reduced the facility's dependence on grid electricity. The new solar capacity of 106 kWp adds to the site's already installed 950 kWp roof-mounted solar system, further improving overall energy performance. This investment forms part of Fairfield Dairy's broader commitment to environmental responsibility and operational resilience.

By generating more electricity on site, the factory is better positioned to manage energy demand, reduce exposure to power interruptions, and lower operating costs over time.

At the same time, the increased use of renewable energy supports the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions linked to conventional electricity generation. Solar energy remains an important element of the factory's long-term sustainability strategy, contributing to both energy security and a reduced environmental footprint.



employee NEWS



WELCOME BABY AZALIYAH!

We are delighted to share the joyful news that Siseko Maninjwa, our Finance Accountant, and his wife, Cherneal have welcomed their first baby Azaliyah Sihle into the world on 21 April 2026.

Azaliyah has already brought immense happiness to her proud parents and we couldn't be more thrilled to celebrate this special moment with them.

Congratulations to Siseko and Cherneal on the arrival of their precious little one. I bet you looked at this photo and said aww!



WELCOME BABY ZURIEL!

We are absolutely thrilled to share some wonderful news from our KZN sales office! Warmest congratulations to Christina Pillay (Sales Administrator) on the birth of her beautiful baby boy.

Zuriel Jediah Pillay, weighing 3.05 kg was born 30 January 2026. His name means 'The Lord is my rock' and 'Beloved of the Lord'. Both mom and baby are doing well. We wish Christina and her family endless joy, love and wonderful memories during this special new chapter.

Congratulations, Christina!

Online NEWSLETTER

Did you know that you can also read our newsletter online? Explore what's happening at work, follow live links to videos, discover delicious recipes and so much more!



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