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AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE TASTING MILK RAISES NEARLY \$100,000 FOR FARMER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Media Release – Dairy milk drinkers across the country have helped Norco, Australia's oldest and largest 100% farmer owned dairy co-operative raise an incredible \$87,913 for Black Dog Institute and the thousands of Australians in regional areas who require mental health support.

With nearly one-third (30%) of Australian farming communities admitting a decline in their mental health and close to half (45%) having had thoughts of self-harm or suicide, the monies will go to help fund research, resources, and digital tools, which are particularly essential in regional areas where access to traditional mental health support is limited.

The funds were raised through a promotion whereby five cents of every Norco branded white milk purchased at Coles throughout March and April this year were earmarked for donation to Black Dog Institute.

An initiative spearheaded by Norco, the partnership with Black Dog Institute was immediately formed following research that found close to one in ten farmers felt unsupported through their mental health issues and one in seven could not access mental health services¹.

Professor Samuel Harvey, Chief Scientist at the Black Dog Institute said there is a clear need for better access to mental health support and it is especially prevalent amongst people living in regional and rural areas of Australia.

"Regional and rural Australians deal with drought, bushfire, floods, and isolation on top of all of life's other pressures yet access to mental health support is less than a fifth of the rate of people in cities," Professor Harvey said.

"We are beyond grateful for partners like Norco who want to help and show their support in any way they can. We will be putting Norco's much needed funding to immediate use including an Adult Wellbeing Program research project; and a digital therapy treatment model application to be used alongside traditional face-to-face methods of mental health support.

Norco's General Manager of Commercial and Strategy, Ben Menzies said it was fantastic to see so many committed Aussie consumers supporting the backbone of this country.

"Thank you to all our loyal customers who chose our dairy milk and generously donated to this very important cause that hopes to help address the issue of mental health in regional communities," said Mr Menzies.

"Being a 100% farmer-owned co-operative, Norco takes immense pride in its commitment to supporting our farmers, their families and the communities in which they live and work, and it's incredible to see this enthusiasm extended to our customers who love what our farmers produce.

"Norco is honoured to have been able to support Black Dog Institute and the vital work they do for Australians. With the record number of people needing support, the funds raised is essential and will help strengthen our regional and rural communities," Mr Menzies said.

The timing of the initiative coincided with the launch of [The National Farmer Wellbeing Report](#), a first-of-its-kind study into farmer mental health, commissioned by Norco and in partnership with the National Farmers' Federation.

For more information about the Norco and Black Dog Institute partnership, please visit [here](#).

If you or anyone you know needs help:

- [Lifeline](#) on 13 11 14

¹ National Farmer Wellbeing Report 2023.



- [Kids Helpline](#) on 1800 551 800
- [Beyond Blue](#) on 1300 224 636
- [Suicide Call Back Service](#) on 1300 659 467
- [Headspace](#) on 1800 650 890
- [ReachOut](#) at au.reachout.com
- [MensLine Australia](#) on 1300 789 978
- [Head to Health](#) at headtohealth.gov.au

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

- Please refer to the [Mindframe Guidelines](#) for relevant media codes of practice related to this topic

ABOUT NORCO CO-OPERATIVE

Established in Byron Bay, New South Wales in 1895 Norco is a 100% Australian farmer owned dairy co-operative with 281 active members on 190 dairy farms in northern New South Wales and southeast Queensland. Annual milk production is 219 million litres. For more information visit <https://norcofoods.com.au/>

ABOUT BLACK DOG INSTITUTE

Founded in 1985, Black Dog Institute is the only medical research institute in Australia to investigate mental health across the lifespan, with an aim to create a mentally healthier world for everyone. Discovering new solutions and creating real-world change through translational research.

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