20 February, 2024

**CRÈME DE LA CRÈME OF REFRIGERATED TRUCKS FOR ASHGROVE CHEESE**

Through the winding roads and sleepy hillsides, milk trucks are doing the rounds of Tasmania in the early hours of the morning.

Though chilly glass bottles of milk are no longer delivered to doorsteps, [Ashgrove Cheese Pty Ltd](https://www.ashgrovecheese.com.au/) keeps the tradition alive by delivering fresh, locally made dairy products to customers throughout the region.

Situated in the rural farming district of Elizabeth Town, Ashgrove has been supplying Coles, Woolworths, IGAs, local restaurants, cafes and coffee shops in Tasmania with nutritious dairy products and farm-fresh milk for over three decades.

The company, run by the local Bennett families, also provides milk to local businesses and partners, along with aged care centres, community care centres, health services, school canteens and hospitals such as Launceston General, Mersey Community, North West Regional and Royal Hobart.

Milk for Ashgrove products is sourced from the family farms, which run a range of breeds, including Holstein-Friesians, Brown Swiss, and Jersey cows.

The Bennetts believe this mix contributes to the rich flavour of their milk. With over 100 years of history behind them as dairy farmers in the region, it is safe to say they may be onto something.

“We champion a farm-to-table philosophy for our dairy products and work hard to ensure we provide exceptional quality for our customers,” said Ashgrove Cheese Marketing and Communications Manager Anne Bennett.

“Ashgrove also participates in environmental sustainability in the region, reducing plastic waste with [Ashgrove Milk in a reusable keg](https://www.ashgrovecheese.com.au/pages/milk-on-tap), as well as an [ecologically conscious climate-friendly milk](https://www.ashgrovecheese.com.au/pages/climate-friendly-milk), which has been developed with environmental stewardship in mind while retaining all the essential nutrients and flavour of full cream milk.”

**Keep on moo-ving**

Ashgrove's refrigerated delivery truck fleet handles daily milk runs. The newest poddy is an Isuzu [NQR 87-190](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/) with a medium wheelbase and a two-pedal automated manual transmission (AMT).

Bringing up the rest of the herd is a mixed bag of another [NQR 87-190 AMT](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/), an [NMR 45-150](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/), an [NPR 45-155](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/), an [FRR 110-240 AMT](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/f-series/), and a Ready-to-Work [NPR 45-155 Tradepack](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/ready-to-work/tradepack/), used on the farm.

The NQR 87-190 AMT is powered by an ultra-efficient four-cylinder Isuzu 4HK1-TCC engine. With a GVM of 8,700 kg, it provides plenty of pull and payload for heavy milk crates.

Ashgrove opted for the medium wheelbase option on their latest NQR, which measures 3.365 metres. This length perfectly suits the refrigerated body, which maintains dairy products at the proper temperature, ensuring customer satisfaction and quality control.

The NQR's compact turning circle of 12.4 metres (kerb-to-kerb) makes it easy for drivers to navigate the metro laneways and streets of Tassie.

“There were several reasons why we selected Isuzu Trucks as a transport partner for our fleet,” said Corey Harris, Logistics Manager at Ashgrove Cheese.

“We needed trucks that would be cost-effective to run and maintain, reliable, fuel-efficient, comfortable, and have a high level of presentation that can represent our business on the road.”

With drivers getting in and out of the cab frequently and deliveries taking place six days a week from as early as 3 a.m., Corey noted that driver comfort was a must-have for Ashgrove.

Isuzu’s in-cab appointments cater to this desire, with a 10.1-inch touchscreen MyIsuzu Co-Pilot multimedia unit, including Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatibility. This has been a firm favourite with the Ashgrove driver team, who praise its hands-free functions, such as opening apps and maps, meaning fewer distractions whilst on the road.

Isuzu’s easy-to-use, 6-speed AMT is also a highly desirable feature, promoting comfort and working to lessen driver fatigue.

“We are transitioning the whole fleet to AMT from manual for driver comfort. That way we don’t need to muck around with gear changes while in and around the CBD,” said Corey.

“The AMT transmission has been a real benefit for our drivers, and I am quite happy with the feedback.”

**Dealership dependability**

[Refrigerated Truck Bodies](https://rtbodies.com.au/) (RTB) in New South Wales have fitted the trucks with refrigerator body units with Bevan Coleman, a Sales Professional at [Webster Trucks](https://www.webstertrucksisuzu.com.au/?_gl=1*1actk4a*_gcl_au*MTIyNzQ4NDg3Ni4xNzI1MjUyODAw&_ga=2.122376651.1931923583.1732487649-143571600.1717472590), and Cameron Smith, the dealership’s Sales Manager, supporting Corey through the design, purchase, and build process.

“Our relationship with Webster Trucks goes back decades; they have always been a consistent and reliable service provider,” commented Corey.

“I would say their customer-orientated service and support are considerably better than competitors in the area.

“Bevan has always been approachable and very customer-focused, providing us the right level of service.

“I would never go anywhere else after the way they have looked after Ashgrove Cheese and our fleet.”

This type of working relationship between parties goes a long way toward building trust and extends to the fleet's maintenance needs.

Corey, who strives to maintain the fleet in top-notch condition for both drivers and customers, firmly believes in the importance of preventative maintenance. Webster Trucks provides both consistency and care in this regard.

“The last time we needed a replacement for one of the truck parts, Webster’s organised everything within the quoted time frame; it was completed, delivered, and returned on time and within budget.”

**Farm fresh future**

Just as Ashgrove dairy products embody an environmentally conscious approach to dairy farming, Corey has a forward-thinking approach to fleet management, with total cost of ownership a key metric.

A fleet standardisation plan is in place to gradually replace all non-Isuzu vehicles in the Ashgrove Cheese fleet during 2025 and 2026.

“As we work through the rotation of our aging fleet, we're looking at the residual value on that truck, its commercial value as a part of the business, the replacement value of a new unit and the future value that unit will provide,” Corey explained.

“The consistency from Webster Trucks and Isuzu is key to this plan and our business goals.

“We know we can rely on them now and well into the future.”

**ends**

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