

Media release

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Good biosecurity practices protect livestock producers

Livestock producers who complete a farm biosecurity plan, and regularly review their biosecurity practices, know they're doing their best to protect their business.

The farm biosecurity plan is a tool that underpins two significant changes to the management of on-farm biosecurity over the coming months.

- The integration of on-farm biosecurity requirements into the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program for cattle, sheep and goats
- A new national farm-based approach to John's disease (JD) management in cattle using the voluntary risk management tool John's Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS)

Both initiatives are led by industry and focus on ensuring livestock producers are well prepared to manage the risk of infectious disease, pests and weeds on their properties.

LPA Changes

From 1 October 2017, LPA accredited sheep, goat and cattle producers will need to complete a Farm Biosecurity Plan to demonstrate they:

- minimise the risk of introducing and spreading infectious diseases on their properties
- manage and record the introduction and movement of livestock
- where practical control and record people, equipment and vehicles entering the property
- control and regularly monitor livestock health on farm
- ensure all livestock movements between owners are accompanied by an Animal Health Declaration (or equivalent)

Cattle producers who have developed a Farm Biosecurity Plan as part of their approach to JD management will not need to complete another to meet LPA requirements.

For more information on LPA requirements, or to download a Farm Biosecurity Plan template, producers can visit www.mla.com.au/integrity. All LPA-accredited producers will receive information on the changes towards the end of July.

John's Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS) Changes

Cattle producers wishing to identify and manage the risk of JD occurring in their herd through J-BAS must complete a biosecurity plan for each property.

Key points include:

- herds with a transition score of J-BAS 7 or 8 will have changed to a J-BAS 6 if no biosecurity plan was in place by 1 July 2017
- producers who do not have a biosecurity plan can return their herds to J-BAS 7 or 8 by implementing a biosecurity plan signed by their vet, who can also advise on what testing is required
- a J-BAS of 6 with a biosecurity plan in place will meet the marketing requirements of most producers (without the need for a vet signature).
- cattle moving into NT need a J-BAS of 6 (or higher) and a Cattle Health Declaration
- cattle moving into Western Australia need a J-BAS of 7 or 8 (depending on origin)
- having sheep or goats on the property does not by itself affect J-BAS, but in giving cattle a J-BAS, producers need to take into account if and when JD was last seen in any species on the property.



QUOTES:

Red Meat Advisory Council Chair, Don Mackay:

“Biosecurity is a key competitive advantage for Australian red meat producers. Most livestock producers understand the benefits of robust on-farm biosecurity practices to their individual businesses but also to the future productivity and sustainability of the industry both domestically and globally.”

“The integration of biosecurity requirements into the LPA program highlights the significance of completing a thorough farm biosecurity plan, and to help producers understand what is required under these new program changes, a specific learning module to guide them through LPA’s on-farm biosecurity requirements will be available in July.”

CCA President, Howard Smith:

“The J-BAS scores have been developed to allow a producer to assess the risk of a herd for JD and are based on having a biosecurity plan for the property. When buying in cattle, producers should ask the vendor further questions if worried about JD, and not just focus on the score alone.”

“Importantly, having other JD susceptible species (sheep, goats, alpacas) on the property is in itself not an issue for J-BAS; however, if there’s a history of JD infection in these species on the property, producers should consider this when assessing the JD risk for their cattle grazing on the same property.”

“Sheep producers who participate in a sheep OJD management system and vaccinate their sheep for JD present a lower risk for cattle grazed on the same property.”

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Susan McNair, LPA communications, 0439 389 202 or susan@curriecommunications.com.au

Margo Andrae, CCA Communications Manager, 0404 836 631 or commsmanager@cattlecouncil.com.au



SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Frequently asked questions

LPA changes: <https://www.mla.com.au/meat-safety-and-traceability/red-meat-integrity-system/lpa-changes/>

JD changes: <https://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/johnes-disease-frequently-asked-questions/>

Complete an on-farm biosecurity plan in seven easy steps

1. Download a template from [Animal Health Australia](#) or [Livestock Biosecurity Network](#).
2. Fill out the template and answer each question honestly. This will identify the biosecurity strengths and weaknesses of your property.
3. A 'no' doesn't mean you fail; it helps you find ways to improve your biosecurity practices over time.
4. Ensure your family and/or staff are familiar with your plan.
5. If you're seeking a score of J-BAS 6, complete the template and file. If you're after J-BAS 7 or 8, work with your vet to finalise your plan.
6. There is no need to lodge your plan with anyone, but keep it somewhere easily accessible as you may be asked to provide a copy to buyers or LPA auditors.
7. Review and update your plan yearly.

Biosecurity workshops

Workshops are continuing to be held across the country. Visit Meat & Livestock Australia and [Livestock Biosecurity Network](#) for upcoming dates.

ABOUT

LPA

The Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program is the Australian livestock industry's on-farm assurance program covering food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity. It provides evidence of livestock history and on-farm practices when transferring livestock through the value chain. LPA is managed on behalf of industry by Integrity Systems Company.

J-BAS

The Johnes' Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS) is a voluntary risk-profiling tool to assist beef cattle producers identify the risk of JD occurring in a herd. The scoring system is from 0 – 8 (0 being 'Unmanaged risk', 8 is 'High Assurance'). Cattle Council Australia (CCA) owns the J-BAS tool and is also responsible for national beef cattle industry policy. Animal Health Australia manages the tool, based on CCA guidance.

Integrity Systems Company

A wholly owned subsidiary of Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), the Integrity Systems Company – formerly NLIS Ltd – delivers the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program, National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) and the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). LPA, industry's on-farm assurance program meets the stringent requirements of our export markets, providing an assurance of the safety of red meat grown by Australia's producers, while the NVD provides the platform for the transfer of information and the NLIS system supports the identification and traceability of cattle, sheep and goats through the value chain.

Cattle Council of Australia

The Cattle Council of Australia is the peak producer organisation representing Australia's beef cattle producers. CCA was established in July 1979, bringing together for the first time all farmer organisations whose members had beef cattle enterprises.

Sheepmeat Council of Australia

The Sheepmeat Council of Australia is the national peak industry body representing and promoting the interests of lamb and sheepmeat producers in Australia. The SCA aims to enhance the productivity, profitability and sustainability of the Australian sheepmeat industry by representing all producers to industry decision-makers and stakeholders.

Animal Health Australia

Animal Health Australia works in partnership with its Members and other stakeholders to keep Australia free of new and emerging diseases and to improve animal health, enhance market access and foster resilience and integrity of the Australian animal health system.