

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **New approach to managing BJD continues to make progress**

The new Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD) [Framework document](#), facilitated by Animal Health Australia (AHA) on behalf of industry and governments, was released in March 2016. The Framework offers a fresh approach to the management of the endemic disease and prioritises on-farm biosecurity risk management, leading to increased market options for every livestock producer.

The Framework is now in the implementation phase, with AHA working with the state departments of agriculture, industry bodies and producers to finalise a cohesive communications plan to educate all affected parties, said AHA's Executive Manager of Biosecurity Services, Duncan Rowland.

"Now that the new approach to the management of BJD has been agreed upon it's time to shift the thinking of industry away from regulated control of an individual disease to the broader on-farm risk-based approach to biosecurity," said Mr Rowland.

"The state governments are currently reviewing how they are going to address the Framework recommendations, and are working with their industries to finalise their respective implementation plans. Although implementation timeframes will vary from state-to-state there is certainly an understanding for the need to embark upon the new approach as soon as possible," said Mr Rowland.

The communications plan will support the state-based implementation by building awareness of the new approach and highlighting the need for strong biosecurity planning on-farm. The plan will also emphasise how Australian producers, supported by minimal regulation where required, are able to manage their own biosecurity risk status.

"This is a significant step forward for the industry with Australian livestock producers now able to take control of their own productivity and profitability," said Mr Rowland.

Next steps in the implementation process include:

- the deregulation and removal of zoning, which will occur as the state governments implement the new Framework
- the development of tools and resources (such as biosecurity checklists, a risk profiling tool and cooperative biosecurity guidelines) to assist producers reduce the prevalence of production diseases and improve the management of these diseases
- the enhancement of the existing National Cattle Health Statement
- the hosting of two public forums, to meet with producers and address any questions they may have
- an evaluation of the CattleMAP and its relevance to the new Framework.

AHA will continue to work with affected stakeholders on the implementation of the Framework and the shared goal of improved management of endemic diseases.

**ENDS**

**Media enquiries:** Jackie Poyser, AHA Communications and Partnerships Manager 0410 994 410, [jpoyser@animalhealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:jpoyser@animalhealthaustralia.com.au)

## BJD FRAMEWORK SUMMARY

The Framework Document: *BJD - Where to from here? A Fresh Approach to the Management of Johne's Disease in Cattle: Management Plan for Cattle Production Conditions* is available [here](#)

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### Background

JD in cattle is endemic in some cattle production areas of Australia but in other areas the disease is not known to exist (or exists at a low to very low level).

### The need for a different approach

The review identified there was a groundswell of support for JD to be dealt with differently from the way in which it has been over the past 12 years. There was general support for JD to be addressed under a common biosecurity approach for endemic diseases, with less emphasis placed on an individual disease. It was not appropriate for the existing strategic plan to continue in its current state. Through an extensive consultative process a revised plan has been developed for implementation in early 2016. This has been a collaborative effort of industry and governments.

### Participation

The plan has been prepared by the Australian cattle industries (Australian Dairy Farmers, Australian Live Exporters' Council, Australian Lot Feeders' Association, the Australian Registered Cattle Breeders' Association and Cattle Council of Australia) in conjunction with the Australian Veterinary Association, Meat & Livestock Australia, Dairy Australia and the Australian, State & Territory Governments after extensive consultation with Australian cattle producers and interested stakeholders.

### Fundamental objectives

The objectives of the recast Management Strategy for JD in cattle are to:

- manage and reduce the impact of clinical Johne's disease
- provide tools to allow individual producers to manage the spread of *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* infection in accordance with their business requirements.

### The review process

In early 2015, at the request of the BJD Steering Committee<sup>1</sup> and the Animal Health Committee, AHA commenced the coordination of the BJD Review process. The review process allowed for all parties (including industry, government and community) to provide input into how Australia was going to manage BJD into the future. The process allowed for a wide range of views to be considered and broad consultation to take place.

<sup>1</sup> BJD Steering Committee: The Australian cattle industries (Australian Dairy Farmers, Australian Lot Feeders' Association, and Cattle Council of Australia) in conjunction with the Goat Industry Council of Australia, Meat & Livestock Australia, Dairy Australia and Animal Health Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Reference Panel participants: The Australian cattle industries (Australian Dairy Farmers, Australian Live Exporters' Council, Australian Lot Feeders' Association, the Australian Registered Cattle Breeders' Association and Cattle Council of Australia) in conjunction with the Australian Veterinary Association, Meat & Livestock Australia, Dairy Australia and the Australian, State & Territory Governments.

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### About Animal Health Australia

Animal Health Australia works in partnership with our 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.

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