



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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CCA representative participates in 'real-time' FMD training in Nepal

Cattle Council Animal Health and Welfare Adviser, Justin Toohey, as part of a team of ten Australian delegates, attended the fourth EU Foot and Mouth Disease 'real-time' training program from 25 February to 1 March 2013 in Nepal.

During their time in Nepal the Australian delegates had the opportunity to examine active FMD in cattle and pigs and develop some ideas on how to improve the adoption of FMD control measures by farmers.

"FMD is endemic in Nepal," said Mr Toohey. "It has a huge impact on the national economy resulting from a dramatic fall in milk production and, in some cases, the deaths of animals. Between 2001 and 2011 there was an average of 870 yearly outbreaks, with an estimated per annum financial loss of US\$66m.

"Most rural Nepalese are self-sufficient from their farms and milk is an important food for the family; cows that recover from FMD usually suffer a permanent reduction in lactation, so the effects of infection are long-term.

The Nepalese Government initiated an FMD control program that includes free vaccination and active surveillance in 2012. Uncontrolled movement of animals within the country and across borders facilitates the spread of FMD in Nepal. Cultural celebrations, including the ritual slaughter of imported FMD infected goats often initiate outbreaks in Nepalese villages.

"Biosecurity and control measures used concurrently are the keys to success. Our delegation collated for the Nepalese Government a list of short-term and long-term strategies for farm biosecurity and vaccination; these included strategies for increasing education, communication and funding for FMD programs.

"Nepal's farming system differs markedly from ours; nevertheless, witnessing FMD first hand has given delegates a genuine appreciation of the impact it would have in this country," Mr Toohey said.

"I would like to thank the Australian Government and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation for organising and assisting with the conduct of this tour."

Note: Tour Report available on request.

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