

Talking Beef with the Minister



L – R Minister Ludwig and CCA President, Greg Brown

Cattle Council of Australia hosted The Big Beef Brekkie at Parliament House, Canberra, on Wednesday 2 March.

Beef producers from each State and Territory from across Australia forming Cattle Council, met with relevant Ministers and Senators, including the Hon. Minister for Agriculture, Joe Ludwig, to discuss the beef industry in depth.

The smorgasbord of beef bacon, twice smoked corned beef, rissoles and MSA scotch fillet set the scene for some beefy conversations.

Environmental management, food safety, animal health and welfare, biosecurity, carbon tax, rebuilding after flood damage and livestock exports were just some of the discussions that took place.

Greg Brown, Queensland beef producer and Cattle Council President, brought several issues into the spotlight that required careful consideration and action by the Government:

- Improved market access, including progress of the Korean and Japan Free Trade Agreements with Australia.
- Continued funding into RD&E, where RD&E would drive productivity and underpin competitiveness in export markets.
- Continued assistance for flood recovery and infrastructure rebuilding.

Mr Brown also made it clear that while agricultural emissions have been excluded from a price on carbon, Cattle Council holds great concerns that a price on carbon will still increase input costs such as fuel, electricity and fertiliser. If Agriculture is not protected from these increased costs it will make Australian beef more expensive for domestic consumers and reduce our international competitiveness.

Minister Ludwig thanked Cattle Council and guests. In his speech he recognised the magnitude of the industry and its contribution to the Australian economy and rural and regional Australia.

The smell of Australian beef cooking on the barbeque attracted a colorful crowd to include MP Advisors, their relevant staff and the media.

Queensland beef producers and AgForce representatives that sit on Cattle Council were grateful for the opportunity to build a greater understanding among Government of the challenges and opportunities the Australian beef industry faces.

Cattle Councillors in attendance from Queensland were Grant Maudsley, "Napla Downs", Mitchell, Justin MacDonnell, "Towrie", Injune, Howard Smith, "Mt Paanorama" Rolleston, Bim Struss, "Havelock", Mitchell, Melinee Leather, "Ellimatta", Boolboonda and Ian Harsant, from "Oaklea" Harrisville.