

# MEDIA RELEASE



**For Immediate Release**

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## **BJD PROGRAM PASSES 6 MONTH TEST**

Owners of beef herds infected with Bovine Johne's disease (BJD) can feel assured that a practical and successful assistance package is available to them following the six month review of the BJD Financial and Non-Financial Assistance Package.

The assistance package, which commenced on 1 July 2004, is an initiative of the Cattle Council of Australia (CCA), which has worked with Animal Health Australia on a range of initiatives to reduce the social, economic and trade impacts of BJD at the herd, regional and international levels.

According to the Cattle Council of Australia's BJD spokesperson, Nick Keatinge the review focused on assessing the effectiveness of a range of measures adopted in July 2004. These measures included access to non-financial assistance via industry appointed BJD counsellors in order to confidentially assess management and trading options and direct financial assistance for beef producers opting to implement an Enhanced Property Disease Management Plan.

"The review team were very pleased to hear of producer's enthusiasm in participating in the program and were most impressed by the positive feedback received in relation to the BJD Counsellors. Their independent advice and consideration of social effects have served, in many cases, to reduce much of the stigma and trauma associated with the traditionally hard-line scientific approach to BJD infection."

Animal Health Australia's Chief Executive Officer Mr Ralph Hood reaffirmed these observations and commented that the package appeared to be providing workable options for beef producers infected with BJD.

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