



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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Conference leads to Five Nations Alliance

An alliance between like-minded cattle producing countries emerged from the Five Nations Beef Conference, hosted by the Cattle Council of Australia in NSW last week.

The conference, complemented by a tour through central NSW, heightened the comradeship between the countries, which is to be the key to working together on eliminating trade barriers and setting standards for welfare and animal health management.

The alliance members, representing America, Canada, New Zealand, Mexico and Australia confirmed that animal identification, vigilant quarantine approaches and a scientific approach to managing animal welfare issues will boost consumer confidence in the safety of beef products and should provide greater access to global markets.

Chairman of the newly named Five Nations Beef Alliance and Cattle Council of Australia President Bill Bray says that the alliance will strengthen its focus on removing the political and non-scientific barriers that exist to growing export markets for beef producers.

The Five Nations Beef Alliance will investigate participation as a non-government organisation in international policy setting bodies, such as the Doha Round of the WTO negotiations, and will pursue trade reform to boost access in Asia and the European Union.

"The Alliance supports expanded market access via the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, the elimination of export subsidies and substantial reductions in domestic support," Mr Bray says.

"Last week's tour through central NSW and the conference highlighted that each of the nations face common pressures and issues and are like-minded about growing global beef demand."

"Drought, animal welfare and the prevention of exotic diseases are of common concern."

Delegates viewed Australia's NLIS facilities on farm, at a feedlot and a sale yard, and confirmed their intentions to continue working towards implementing technology that would deliver similar outcomes.

"The United States and Canada have both seen first hand how markets can close overnight due to animal health issues and Canada has confirmed that its electronic identification system was instrumental in gaining re-entry to the Japanese market," Mr Bray says.

"The Five Nations Beef Alliance is committed to moving forward with systems that deliver pragmatic and effective tracking and traceability capabilities, and to breaking down global market access barriers for beef."

Ends. Communiqué attached.

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Five Nations Beef Alliance

Overriding Principle

To exceed global consumers' expectation in respect of beef, while eliminating non-scientific and political trade restrictions.

Trade reform

The Five Nations Beef Alliance (the "FNBA") will continue to push for further liberalization as a key priority in the Doha Round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations. The FNBA unequivocally supports expanded market access via the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, the elimination of export subsidies and substantial reductions in domestic support.

The FNBA urges all beef importing countries to ensure that sound science remains the only basis for resolving Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) issues.

The FNBA agreed that when countries conduct their own science based risk assessments, their respective governments implement international (OIE) science-based guidelines related to BSE so that trade in cattle, genetic material, beef and beef products can be conducted without interruptions on non-scientifically based criteria.

Animal Identification

The FNBA supports the ongoing development of animal identification systems that allow for the eradication of animal disease and management of animal health concerns in the beef industry. Each member of the FNBA, along with each beef producing nations around the world, is urged to move forward with systems that deliver pragmatic and effective tracking and tracing capabilities which provides confidence to beef consumers.

Animal Health

Recognising the dangers of the spread of livestock disease for the beef industry, the FNBA urges all governments and quarantine authorities to remain vigilant in preventing the introduction of exotic diseases.

Animal Welfare

The FNBA endorses the ongoing need to maintain animal welfare codes and/or legislation that are science based, outcome focused and that do not impede trade.