



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

MR 17/06

13 July 2006

The unAustralian Beef Association – hang your head in shame ...

Comments from the Australian Beef Association (ABA), which have found their way into international media, have the potential to undermine the confidence of Australia's key trading partners.

Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) Acting President, Mike Norton, said that such comments misrepresent the facts behind Australia's National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) and threaten the future of the entire meat industry.

"Suggestions that NLIS is not working or relevant are both irresponsible and untrue," Mr Norton said.

"The facts are that NLIS is becoming more robust day by day, and currently leads the world in individual animal traceability systems. The rest of the world envies our system.

"Furthermore, CCA welcomes the audit into NLIS as announced by the Federal Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Peter McGauran MP.

"ABA has never produced written information to support their negative claims, despite repeated requests to do so.

"Allegations of an 11 million head phantom herd are simply incorrect, and demonstrate a lack of understanding of how the database works, and the suggestion that the tail tag system is the way of the future only serves to prove how out of touch ABA has become."

Mr Norton has called for ABA to make a positive contribution to the cattle industry as Australian producers undertake significant change to secure their future.

"The implementation of NLIS has been a massive undertaking by the cattle industry and the period of adjustment required for any new technology should not be misrepresented as anything else," Mr Norton said.

"NLIS is still relatively young, works to expectations and will continue to develop and improve."

NLIS supercedes the tail-tag/paper system, thereby allowing Australian cattle to be quickly traced and isolated in the event of a problem.

Since 1999 Australian states have had different implementation timetables. NSW and Queensland mandated NLIS just 12 months ago.

"Traceability is essential for protecting the industry and supporting access to the \$11 billion beef industry," Mr Norton said.

REPRESENTING AUSTRALIAN CATTLE PRODUCERS SINCE 1979

Cattle Council of Australia Incorporated (A2929)

PO Box E10 KINGSTON ACT 2604 Ph: 02 6273 3688 Fax: 02 6273 2397

E-mail: cca@cattlecouncil.com.au Web: www.cattlecouncil.com.au



"A brief look at what occurred in North America with the Japanese market provides ample evidence of what can go wrong if cattle cannot be traced quickly and accurately.

"The Australian beef industry proudly delivers our customers a suite of assurances, both here and abroad, that certifies the safety of Australian beef.

"NLIS is the glue that 'seals the envelope' on this package that delivers real returns back to beef producers each and every day," Mr Norton concluded.

Further information:

Mike Norton, Acting President, Cattle Council of Australia,
08 9727 2066 or 0427 183 439

David Inall, Executive Director, Cattle Council of Australia,
02 6273 3688 or 0418 165 340

Sally Brown, Pegasus Communications, 03 9329 5169

To advise of additional or alternative email addresses for CCA media releases or to unsubscribe, please email sally@pegasuscomms.com.au