



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Environmental Partnership: Another win for beef producers

The Cattle Council of Australia is supporting Meat and Livestock Australia's development of an Environmental Management System (EMS) which will occur thanks to new government funding announced today.

The Federal Government has supported this National Heritage Trust funded Pathways to Industry project. "CCA is particularly grateful for the opportunity presented to the cattle industry in this third round of funding. Senator Colbeck has announced more than \$387,000 to ensure that MLA will deliver a worthwhile program for producers and for the environment," said CCA President Bill Bray.

Cattle Council's strategic direction for industry recognises that environmental considerations can be successfully integrated within core business activities. The beef industry has invested significant resources into the provision of research and extension services to cattle producers. Cattle Council envisages the red meat EMS as a central way for industry to expand the use of these tools and to find further commercial incentives to encourage even better resource management by producers.

"CCA has also led the way in working with other broadacre industries, particularly the grain industries, so that mixed pastoral-cropping producers can use the same EMS system. We want to end the duplication of record keeping so that farmers have a single management system across their entire property – nobody wants more paperwork!"

"Cattle Council and the MLA have highlighted the wider beef industry's commitment to appropriate natural resource management and use. Cattle Council supports and looks forward to industry bodies and leaders working to demonstrate the substantial benefits gained by incorporating EMS into livestock production enterprises." Mr Bray concluded.

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Background: Industry's EMS

1. An EMS is essentially a management tool that allows producers to better manage their natural resources, and to demonstrate this progress. EMS is a wide term used to describe a range of management systems and levels of accreditation, but the MLA proposal will be a voluntary incentive system which will set the benchmark for the pastoral industry.
2. An EMS is relevant to all beef producers because it is a practical way for producers to demonstrate sound environmental management, and show a genuine desire for improved resource management tools. Product differentiation based on environmental attributes is an effective way to let market forces provide incentives for those producers who choose to be most proactive in on-farm environmental management. It allows a discerning public to 'vote with their wallets'.
3. CCA has pushed for the development of a voluntary environmental module, associated with LPA 2 / QA Programs, to ensure that producer groups can take the initiative and determine management priorities effectively.
4. The MLA's EMS Project will create a system that enables red meat producers to prioritize environmental issues and use a systems based approach to manage their natural resource. Cattle Council knows that Australia's beef producers are already making tremendous contributions to environmental management, and believes that the new EMS systems will finally allow producers to demonstrate their environmental credentials, and have these recognized.
5. Beef production is carried out over nearly 48% of Australia's landmass, or more than 60% of farm establishments, so clearly tangible national outcomes will be realized by the provision of an EMS for this major group of land-users.
6. Industry groups believe that by encouraging producers to work pro-actively on a voluntary basis, instead of penalizing with unworkable, punitive regulations, the Federal government is doing more to gain real results for the environment than state attempts to legislate land controls.