



## CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Australia must rise to a more competitive Japanese market**

"The re-entry of US and Canadian beef to the Japanese market means that Australia must rise to the challenge if we are to maintain our market share", Cattle Council of Australia President Mr Bill Bray said.

"Australia has enjoyed strong market share in Japan for some time now; currently we supply over 50 per cent of Japan's beef needs," Mr Bray said.

"The United States and Canada have persevered to regain access to the Japanese market. Re-entry was a matter of when, rather than if, and it is with this knowledge that the Australian industry has been preparing for increased competition into our largest beef market.

"Preparing for this increased competition was one of the key drivers in the proposal to increase the Cattle Transaction Levy from \$3.50 to \$5.00. These funds begin to flow from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006, and bolstering marketing programs in Japan is one of the major initiatives planned to utilise these dollars," Mr Bray added.

"Japanese consumer recognition of the 'Aussie Beef' brand remains strong. The next challenge for the Australian industry is to consolidate the gains we have made in the past few years by further capitalising on the delicious, healthy and safe image our beef enjoys in that market."

"It is important to recognise that overall beef consumption in Japan has declined following BSE detections in recent years. While competing for market share, our collective international beef industries must also work together to increase beef demand as a whole," Mr Bray said.

Export volumes to Japan have risen steadily in recent years with Australia exporting 237,000 tonnes in 2002, 279,000 tonnes in 2003 and 393,000 tonnes in 2004. Exports in 2005 are forecast to exceed 2004 levels; however, volumes are projected to decline slightly in 2006.

"It is now up to Australian producers to continue to strive for increased efficiencies on-farm while at the same time our industry pushes harder than ever on our marketing strategies in Japan," Mr Bray concluded.

### **For further information contact:**

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**REPRESENTING AUSTRALIAN CATTLE PRODUCERS SINCE 1979**

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