



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

02/09

Media Release

03.03.09

Trade into South East Asia bolstered by FTA

Given Australia exports over 65% of production to more than 100 countries, the recently signed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Australia/New Zealand and the ASEAN countries marks a critical step forward for the beef industry.

“This agreement demonstrates a commitment by the Federal Government to providing a platform to support growth in Australia’s international beef trade,” said David Inall, Executive Director of the Cattle Council of Australia.

Cattle Council of Australia has been a strong advocate for liberalising market access for 30 years, playing a key role in facilitating the red meat trade between Australia and overseas countries through on-going development of international trade relations.

Significantly, in the agreement, tariffs on most red meat lines are eliminated or phased down to 0%. Those tariffs already at 0% prior to the FTA are now bound by the recent agreement and will remain in place.

“This is an especially important achievement as countries are therefore unable to bump up tariffs, reassuring investment confidence in these markets,” said Mr Inall.

In 2008, Australia’s beef and livestock trade with the 10 member countries was worth \$722 million to the Australian beef industry. This market represents 4% of Australia’s total beef exports and 69% of total livestock exports.

“The Australian beef industry will benefit from this FTA where potential new market opportunities are created, current business expanded and a formal foundation is laid for ongoing consultation between Australia and the ASEAN countries.

“In addition to the liberalisation secured in ASEAN, the current focus for the Australian beef industry, through Cattle Council and industry stakeholders, is undertaking an ongoing advocacy program in order to extol the benefits of concluding FTAs with both Japan and Korea.

“These two markets are important customers for Australian beef and even closer trade relations would be extremely beneficial in times of global economic uncertainty,” concluded Mr Inall.

For further information please contact:

*Heidi Dennis
Media and Communications Officer,
Ph. 02 6273 3688 or 04 0409 654 015*