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MEDIA RELEASE

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Grass roots = Grassfed beef

Cattle Council is at the tail-end of finalising the Standards that will underpin the marketing of Australian pastured beef, an idea that came straight from the grass roots.

The voluntary Pastured Cattle Assurance System will be two tiered, encompassing elements for a 'pasture finished' and 'life-time pastured' Standard. Both tiers will require cattle to have continuous access to pasture, be MSA graded, have lifetime traceability and not be confined for the purposes of intensive feeding.

Greg Brown, President of Cattle Council of Australia said that substantiating pastured beef in the domestic and international markets through an assurance system was an idea that came directly from beef producers having influence within their State Farming Organisation.

"Beef producers in Queensland saw an opportunity for an assurance system around a pastured beef product in the market, just like what we have with grainfed beef. So, a recommendation to AgForce was put, and AgForce put it forward to Cattle Council for national debate before work began on developing the Pastured Cattle Assurance System," Mr Brown said.

Cattle Council saw benefits to beef producers right across Australia where they could capitalise on niche marketing opportunities through underpinning claims associated with their cattle production methods.

The Pastured Cattle Assurance System has been designed to meet both the US 'grass-fed' beef and 'natural' standard and be eligible for the United States Department of Agriculture verification process.

Cattle Council and its State Farming Organisation member, AgForce, will converse with producers this week on international beef marketing over a three-day field tour (1-3 December) throughout Central Queensland.

Mr Brown said this was an outstanding opportunity for Queensland beef producers to learn further about the Pastured Cattle Assurance System and gain insight into some of the biggest export markets for Australian beef.

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) Regional Managers, Scott Hansen – North America; Aaron Iori – South East Asia/Greater China, and Jim Lim – Korea, will be joining the group to offer informed discussion around market challenges and opportunities for Australian beef as well as providing updates on MLA marketing campaigns.

The field tour will include visits to cattle properties near Roma and Emerald and AgForce members will have the opportunity to discuss state and national beef policy issues, and the overseeing of MLA's marketing levy spend, with Greg Brown and AgForce Cattle President, Grant Maudsley.

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Media contact: Heidi Dennis, Media and Communications Officer
E: media@cattlecouncil.com.au M: 0409 654 015