

# Strategic Plan

2010-2015

*'Working together for animal health'*



## Animal Health Australia

Animal Health Australia is a not for profit company established by the Australian Government, state and territory governments and major national livestock industries.

It was incorporated under Australian Corporations Law and has an independently selected, skills-based board of directors.

With a focus on national animal health and welfare issues, the company facilitates sustainable partnerships between

members and provides leadership in securing outcomes that position Australia as a world leader in terms of its animal health status and services.

Animal Health Australia has 31 members spread across five membership categories:

## Animal Health Australia Members

### Australian Government

- Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

### States and territories

- State of New South Wales
- State of Queensland
- State of South Australia
- State of Tasmania
- State of Victoria
- State of Western Australia
- Australian Capital Territory
- Northern Territory

### Livestock industries

- Australian Alpaca Association Limited
- Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc
- Australian Dairy Farmers' Limited
- Australian Duck Meat Association Inc
- Australian Egg Corporation Limited
- Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

- Australian Horse Industry Council
- Australian Lot Feeders' Association Inc
- Australian Pork Limited
- Australian Racing Board
- Cattle Council of Australia Inc
- Equestrian Australia Limited
- Goat Industry Council of Australia
- Harness Racing Australia
- Sheepmeat Council of Australia Inc
- WoolProducers Australia

### Service providers

- Australian Veterinary Association
- Council of Veterinary Deans of Australia and New Zealand
- CSIRO - Australian Animal Health Laboratory

### Associate members

- Australian Livestock Export Corporation (LiveCorp)
- Dairy Australia Limited
- National Aquaculture Council Inc



## Introduction

Animal Health Australia (AHA) is the national coordinating body for animal health in Australia.

Since its establishment in 1996, AHA has achieved a strong track record in delivering many worthwhile outcomes for our members and stakeholders – ‘making a difference’. The company has grown in size and stature, and is now recognised as an important contributor to the improvement of animal health<sup>1</sup> in Australia.

Recent years have seen a significant change in AHA's business environment, with the impact of the global financial crisis and consequential pressure on budgets affecting government and industry members alike. Within government agencies in particular, there has been increased competition for public funds and a further rationalisation in the delivery of government services.

Australia's livestock industries are heavily reliant on both export and domestic markets and are placed at significant risk by the increasing volumes of international passengers and goods. Effective biosecurity measures are therefore needed across the quarantine continuum. Meanwhile, the expectations of international and Australian customers with respect to the health and welfare of our livestock will continue to become more demanding.

During the next five years, a major challenge for AHA and its stakeholders will be to secure adequate investment in animal health and biosecurity across all jurisdictions and industries. It will also be important to ensure that appropriate national governance arrangements can provide the essential leadership and management of animal health activities. AHA is in a unique position to assist our members in meeting these challenges.

This plan represents a fundamental evaluation of AHA's strategic priorities in light of the above challenges and how we will need to operate in the future. It reflects the company's firm commitment to our members and stakeholders.

This plan will be the foundation for the annual AHA business plans and the reference ‘blueprint’ for animal health for the next three to five years.



**Dr Roly Nieper AM**  
**CHAIRMAN**

<sup>1</sup> Animal health and welfare are inextricably linked, and AHA has accepted a specific role in relation to livestock welfare. Throughout this strategy, ‘animal health’ is taken to include welfare.

## Mission

AHA's mission is to facilitate and improve Australia's animal health policy and practice in partnership with the livestock industries, governments and other relevant stakeholders in order to maintain a robust animal health system.

## Values

The following values underpin and reflect the way we work with our stakeholders:

- Leadership – shaping and influencing national policy.
- Impartiality – providing credible advice and guidance.
- Integrity and professionalism – acting ethically and maintaining high professional standards.
- Passion – working with pride, enthusiasm and dedication.
- Innovation and creativity – seeking better solutions, based on sound science and evidence-based approaches.
- Flexibility and responsiveness – working collaboratively to deliver worthwhile outcomes.



## Strategic priorities

AHA has identified eight strategic priorities<sup>2</sup> for the next five years:

- Improve the national coordination and management of animal health.
- Secure adequate sustainable resources for national animal health.
- Strengthen emergency animal disease preparedness and response.
- Maintain and increase market access through effective partnerships for livestock welfare and production, and disease policy development and implementation.
- Improve disease surveillance nationally, to meet current and future needs.
- Explore new opportunities for the national animal health system and AHA.
- Identify and implement improved AHA business systems.
- Strengthen AHA communications capability.

<sup>2</sup> Not listed in order of priority.

## Strategic priorities



### Improve the national coordination and management of animal health

Trading partners, markets and stakeholders expect animal health issues to be managed and coordinated in a consistent and efficient manner across jurisdictions and industries. AHA has a key responsibility to maximise the usefulness of partnerships and consultative mechanisms to improve animal health outcomes.

- As far as practicable, ensure AHA priorities are reflected in decisions of national committees.
- Conversely, ensure decisions of national committees are reflected as AHA priorities.
- Use AHA membership forums to seek consensus and agreed actions for specific issues.
- Increase AHA member engagement in national animal health approval and consultative processes.
- Support AHA members and stakeholders in promoting an agreed national biosecurity framework.

### Secure adequate sustainable resources for national animal health

Australia's international and domestic markets depend on our excellent animal health status – which in turn depends on stakeholder commitment to biosecurity, surveillance and emergency preparedness. Sustaining and strengthening these elements requires an objective assessment of the benefits of planned and adequate investment in animal health and the significant risks resulting from under-investment.

- Identify appropriate decision-making processes to quantify and prioritise national animal health activities.
- Identify and prioritise the animal health threats to Australia's livestock industries and to the community.
- Identify solutions to the threats identified and how, and by whom, these threats are most effectively addressed.
- Prepare appropriate cost-benefit and other analyses to quantify the benefits of proposed solutions.
- Negotiate long-term, shared national and AHA funding agreements.
- Develop a national approach to the provision of animal health diagnostic services.



## Strategic priorities



### Strengthen emergency animal disease preparedness and response

Emergency animal disease (EAD) preparedness is a key element in the continuous improvement of Australia's livestock biosecurity systems to provide assurance that the effects of an EAD event on trade and the community are minimised.

- Maintain the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement as the primary reference document for EAD preparedness and response arrangements.
- Ensure relevance, currency and improved useability of AUSVETPLAN manuals.
- Use a project management approach to use members' expertise more effectively in reviewing AUSVETPLAN manuals.
- Apply outcomes of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Risk Management Project to foot-and-mouth disease response policy.
- Expand the cadre of skilled EAD response personnel.

### Maintain and increase market access through effective partnerships for livestock welfare and production, and disease policy development and implementation

Effective management of animal welfare and supporting health programs to maximise livestock production efficiencies is vital to sustained domestic and international markets for Australia's livestock and their products. AHA's membership base provides the potential for effective collaboration between governments and industry.

- Secure funding and commitments to complete Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines in accordance with the agreed business process.
- Work towards national agreement on the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, industries, the animal welfare community and AHA in animal welfare.
- Progress a cooperative national policy, and regulatory and communication strategies to improve livestock production through better management of endemic disease.



## Strategic priorities

### Improve disease surveillance nationally, to meet current and future needs

Effective disease surveillance and information directly and indirectly supports domestic and international markets for Australia's livestock industries, and underpins early detection of emergency and emerging animal diseases. Market and community expectations for accurate intelligence about our animal health status are likely to increase. Threats from emerging animal diseases to animal and human health are also increasing.

- Identify and work towards filling gaps in national disease surveillance information.
- Work with members and stakeholders to continually improve the national animal health information system.
- Support Animal Health Committee in the development and implementation of national surveillance policy.
- Respond to members' needs for general and targeted national surveillance programs.

### Explore new opportunities for AHA to improve Australia's animal health system

AHA is uniquely placed to improve the animal health system and the influence of all contributors to animal health management in Australia. The scope of its activities needs to be based on sound business assessments.

- Identify, assess and obtain agreement for new business opportunities.
- Clarify AHA's service delivery role.

### Identify and implement improved AHA business systems

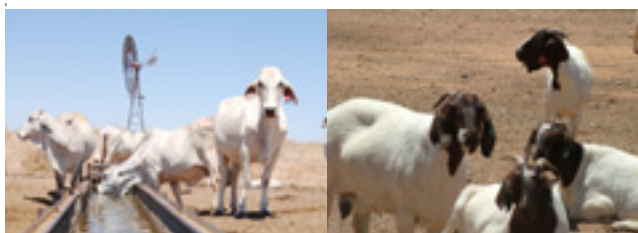
AHA has progressively streamlined its business systems and needs to continue to enhance accountability and efficiency to benefit all its members.

- Develop criteria for assessing and prioritising proposals for new projects (or any significant expansion of the scope of existing projects).
- Apply risk and economic analyses to AHA programs.
- Train key staff in applying business analysis to program planning and reporting.
- Gain agreement on longer term funding commitments, based on project business plans.
- Maximise effective use of information technology in AHA's business operations.

### Strengthen AHA communications capability

Effective communication is essential to maximise the efforts of all contributors to animal health management in Australia and for AHA in particular.

- Implement and improve an agreed communications strategy.
- Develop and implement an effective member relationship strategy.
- Incorporate communications objectives across all AHA programs and projects.





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