

15 January 2015

ANIMAL HEALTH AUSTRALIA TO CONDUCT BJD REVIEW

Animal Health Australia (AHA) is organising a one-day forum in Sydney next month as part of a national review of bovine Johne's disease (BJD) it is conducting on behalf of the National BJD Steering Committee.

The review will provide industry, government and affected communities the opportunity to have direct input into how Australia is going to manage BJD into the future. A major outcome of the process will be a revised National BJD Strategic Plan, which is expected to be prepared and ready for implementation by January next year.

"With this outcome in mind AHA has organised an independent facilitator who will help us work with those involved, including a cross-section of the relevant industries, affected producers and individuals and businesses right through the supply chain that are impacted, to develop a thorough and consultative review process," said Kathleen Plowman, CEO of AHA.

The National BJD Strategic Plan is a cooperative program involving Australian livestock industries, government and the veterinary profession that helps the beef and dairy industries reduce the spread and impact of bovine Johne's disease in Australia.

It's key goals are to help minimise the contamination of farms and farm products, support the protection of non-infected herds while minimising disruption to trade and to help reduce the social, economic and trade impact of BJD at herd, regional and national levels. Animal Health Australia manages the program on behalf of the key stakeholders.

Ms Plowman said in addition to the national forum event to be held in Sydney on 16 February at the Rydges Sydney Airport Hotel, the review process includes multiple rounds of calls for submissions from anyone involved or affected by BJD.

"A range of topics have been identified for discussion at the national forum, including diagnostics, trade implications, an explanation of the various strains of BJD, vaccination and the economics involved in the various control measures," she said. The event will also feature an open facilitated general forum.

People who wish to attend should register with AHA by 30 January by emailing their interest to bjdreview@animalhealthaustralia.com.au. Brief submissions will also be accepted ahead of the forum and can be emailed to the same address.

More information on the review is available on the AHA website www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

AHA is a not-for-profit member-funded company which works to protect and improve animal health within Australia. It does this through its partnerships with industries and governments, which help keep Australia disease free, builds the sustainability of our livestock industries and promotes the humane use of animals for food, companionship, recreation and sport.

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