

For Immediate Release

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Make stock surveillance your New Year's resolution

With 2015 now here, Animal Health Australia (AHA) is encouraging producers across the country to reduce the potential impacts from diseases, pests and weeds by making it their new year's resolution to undertake regular stock surveillance on their properties.

Duncan Rowland, AHA's Executive Manager of Biosecurity Services said undertaking general stock surveillance is already a core biosecurity practice for a number of producers, but more producers should be undertaking it in 2015 to protect their farm profits and stock trading options.

"The 2013 *Farm Biosecurity Producer Survey* showed that 33 per cent of livestock producers actively conducted routine stock monitoring as a biosecurity practice on their property and we would like to see that increase when we undertake the third biennial survey later this year," he said.

Steps producers can take to improve their chances of early pest or disease detection include:

- Establish an active monitoring program and record the results, even when nothing is found.
- Become familiar with the usual animal and disease symptoms
- Look out for insect pests and weeds found on your property. By knowing what's normally found on your property will increase your chances of discovering something unusual and consult with neighbours on anything suspicious, as it is unlikely that the cause of the problem doesn't stop at a single property's boundaries.
- Know what the high priority biosecurity threats are for your industry. As well as being available from the Farm Biosecurity website (www.farmbioscurity.com.au) this information is available through local veterinarians, industry groups or state/territory departments of primary industries.
- Ensure your farm personnel know how and where to report any unusual diseases, pests or weeds.

Animal Health Australia conducts a number of programs and projects that support a nationally integrated surveillance system that underpins trade and supports the adoption of new and innovative technologies for data generation and information management systems. Information about these programs can be found on the AHA website at www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

A range of information about stock monitoring and disease and pest reporting is easy to access from the Farm Biosecurity website. Farm Biosecurity is conducted by AHA in conjunction with Plant Health Australia to help producers across the country protect their farm businesses and incomes by implementing good on-farm biosecurity practices.

"Any unusual pest or disease symptom should be reported immediately through the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888," Mr Rowland said.

"Finally, it is very important to ensure your farm personnel know how and where to report any unusual diseases, pests or weeds," said Mr Rowland.

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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