

For Immediate Release

Cattle Health Statements critical for NSW beef producers

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Ongoing dry conditions in large sections of New South Wales are forcing some local producers to agist their herds, with some being moved to pasture in Victoria.

Because of this movement, NSW beef cattle producers are reminded that their cattle will need a completed national Cattle Health Statement (CHS) before leaving for and when returning from agistment in Victoria. The CHS includes the *Beef Only* certification, which confirms the beef cattle have not been grazed or in close contact with dairy cattle.

Cattle Council Australia Chief Executive Officer, Jed Matz, said that any cattle sent to Victoria without a completed CHS will be at risk of needing additional testing for bovine Johne's disease (BJD) before returning to NSW. Any producer who chooses to return their stock without certification could face steep penalties under NSW legislation.

"The requirements are a result of Victoria's classification as a BJD 'Management Area', whilst NSW is a 'Beef Protected Area'. A 'Beef Protected Area' status requires strict management of cattle being imported from a 'Beef Management Area'. Some NSW cattle producers maybe unaware of the differing status between the two states which is why we are reminding them of these requirements," said Mr Matz.

The call by Mr Matz for cattle producers to use a CHS was echoed by Animal Health Australia's (AHA) Manager Endemic Diseases, Dr Lorna Citer.

"The statements are the best risk assessment tool when trading cattle whether it be locally, interstate or for overseas export. Aside from the obvious fact that they are a vital weapon in fending off endemic diseases, they are also critical in helping achieve the best price for cattle," said Dr Citer.

To download a National Cattle Health Statement, cattle producers should visit www.farmbiosecurity.com.au and follow the links to 'Declarations and Statements'. More information on moving cattle interstate can be found on the AHA website at www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au (follow the link to the 'Disease Movement Requirements for Stock' page).

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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