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CONSULTATION CLOSING ON CATTLE AND SHEEP WELFARE STANDARDS

The consultation period for the draft Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle and for Sheep is rapidly drawing to a close. It will finish on Monday 6 May.

The development of the standards and guidelines has been a joint government and industry initiative coordinated by Animal Health Australia (AHA). Governments, peak councils and welfare organisations have been involved in the drafting of the documents.

AHA's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Mike Bond, said the consultation was an important opportunity for livestock producers and the wider community to have a say on significant welfare issues relating to cattle and sheep.

"At the end of the development process, the standards will be incorporated into legislation and become the legal requirements for livestock welfare, enforced by all the states and territories of Australia," Dr Bond said. "I encourage all producers and interested members of the community to have their say."

"While it is important to note that the welfare standards will eventually become law, the guidelines, however, are recommended practices to achieve desirable animal welfare outcomes."

The welfare standards cover the full range of on-farm cattle and sheep management practices where welfare is a consideration, such as castration, dehorning and tail docking.

However live exports, saleyards, abattoirs and domestic transport are not included in these standards and are covered by separate arrangements.

AHA is seeking views on how the draft welfare standards will help protect the welfare of cattle and sheep. Visit www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au for further details and to download the relevant documents.

Email cattle submissions to publicconscattle@animalwelfarestandards.net.au

Email sheep submissions to publicconssheep@animalwelfarestandards.net.au

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