

For Immediate Release

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FARMERS CONTRIBUTE TO INTERNATIONAL JOHNE'S DISEASE CONFERENCE

Farmers recounted their experiences 'on the ground' and lessons learned in managing Johne's disease at the 11th International Colloquium on Paratuberculosis in Sydney which wrapped up on Friday.

While the program featured many new developments in research, it catered for more than just the scientists.

Colloquium sponsor Animal Health Australia hosted an industry forum to facilitate sharing of practical experiences from producers and field veterinarians who had faced the many challenges posed by this persistent, insidious disease.

Chief Executive Officer of Animal Health Australia, Dr Mike Bond, said a diverse range of people had a legitimate interest in Johne's disease management programs.

"There are practical implications for any disease control strategy and sometimes these can negatively affect the very people they aim to help," said Dr Bond.

"The session was an important opportunity to consider 'on the ground' lessons of Johne's disease management in conjunction with scientific research.

"We have a far greater chance of success with collaborative programs, where research and policy development is complemented by an understanding of what is practical and feasible," he said.

New South Wales livestock producer, Mr Nick Keatinge, who attended the forum, agreed.

"The presentations we heard at the forum demonstrated the profound impact of Johne's disease on individual producers," he said.

The forum also provided an opportunity to share successes.

"One presentation was from a community group in New South Wales that came together specifically to manage the disease in their area during the 1990s," said Dr Bond.

"They did it very successfully and recently won a national biosecurity award in recognition of their ongoing efforts.

Animal Health Australia has developed a long-standing reputation of facilitating government and industry collaboration on important animal health issues. The company coordinates the National Johne's Disease Control Program on behalf of its industry and government members.

***Animal Health Australia** is a not-for-profit public company established by the Australian Government, state and territory governments and major national livestock industry organisations. It works with its 32 member organisations to ensure that Australia's national animal health system delivers competitive advantage and market access for Australia's livestock industries, and minimises risks to human health associated with livestock and their products.*

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

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