

For Immediate Release

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**NATIONAL BIOSECURITY FORUM: LEADERS PLAN AUSTRALIA'S
FUTURE BIOSECURITY SYSTEM**

Animal health leaders from all over Australia are in Canberra today for Animal Health Australia's National Biosecurity Forum.

The forum brings together government and industry stakeholders to discuss options for the future management and funding of biosecurity in Australia.

CEO of Animal Health Australia, Dr Mike Bond, acknowledged the strengths of Australia's present biosecurity system, and the need to work collaboratively to maintain them.

"There is already work being driven in this area by government and other stakeholders. We are seeking to complement these efforts and ensure that we minimise the risks of an exotic disease emergency, and of course, are prepared to deal with such an event.

"We are focusing on animal biosecurity in the first instance but it is likely that the outcomes will be broadly applicable to other sectors, which are facing similar challenges.

"We expect that it may take some time to realise our goals. But we hope that the end result will be a fresh approach to managing our national biosecurity needs.

"What is important is that we are all here today. We understand the challenges facing our biosecurity sector and we are interested in finding solutions," he said.

Topics for discussion include principles of the national biosecurity system, resourcing, roles and responsibilities, and alternative business models.

The National Biosecurity Forum is co-sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Representatives of the state and territory governments, major livestock industries and other stakeholders are attending.

A communiqué will be released at the conclusion of the forum.

Animal Health Australia is an innovative partnership involving the Australian Government, state and territory governments, major livestock industries and other stakeholders. We work with our members and stakeholders to strengthen Australian's national animal health system and maximise confidence in the safety and quality of Australia's livestock products in domestic and overseas markets.

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