

MEDIA RELEASE

24 March 2020

Opportunities and Challenges Facing Australian Livestock Industries

A key theme of the recent 2020 ABARES Outlook conference was the practical steps we'd need to take as an industry to reach the goal of lifting the value of Australian agricultural production to \$100 billion over the next decade.

Biosecurity throughout the supply chain plays a major role in achieving and protecting agricultural production, as was emphasized at ABARES by Queensland cattle producer and 2019 Farm Biosecurity Producer of the Year, Melinee Leather.

"Our reputation for producing safe, quality food commands a premium for Australian produce at home and overseas; this is ultimately underpinned by our disease-free status," said Ms Leather.

"That status relies on our animal health and biosecurity system – from Border Force all the way through to individual farmers – being prepared to not only respond to threats of pests and diseases but to be proactive, innovate and make improvements to protect our industries and ecosystems."

Rapid and transformative changes in the way livestock farmers do business and the way consumers select products – driven by increasing demand, advances in technology, ecological considerations and climate variability – calls for a long-term, holistic approach to animal health and biosecurity policy in order to safeguard our investment in our herds and flocks and our adoption of new technologies.

Central to the industry's success in this changing landscape will be addressing issues of protection against the risk of emerging diseases, and assurance of food safety, product integrity, provenance and traceability.

With these issues front of mind, Animal Health Australia (AHA) commissioned Spiegare Pty Ltd to report on the *Megatrends, Opportunities and Challenges Facing Australian Livestock Industries*.

The Spiegare report provides insights into global megatrends and explores four possible mega-shock scenarios that could impact the future productivity and profitability of our livestock sectors over the next 10 years, through the lenses of animal health and biosecurity.

Through the analysis of these future scenarios, Australian livestock industries now have a new outlook on current and future challenges as well as the opportunities they present.

"The *Megatrends* report highlights how biosecurity, animal health and the health of our ecosystems are closely intertwined and critically important to Australia's future," said AHA CEO, Kathleen Plowman.

"When we think about these key trends and scenarios and their potential effects on both production systems and markets, we must ask ourselves what can be done to mitigate the risks to our industries.

"We aim for this report to be a catalyst for animal and crop industries to discuss key issues, develop new strategies, identify transformative opportunities, and translate these to sustainable success for the industry into the future."

Ms Plowman believes that sustained cooperative and collaborative efforts will be needed to ensure that our livestock industries remain competitive and retain their social license to operate.

"It's unlikely any one sector – across livestock, cropping and aquaculture – will be able to do this alone," she concluded.

MEDIA RELEASE

Ms Leather agreed, adding that the key trends that are outlined in the *Megatrends* report as impacting on the Australian livestock sector once again reinforce the need for collaboration amongst industry, government, researchers and community.

“The livestock sector will need to strive for a high level of scientific expertise and innovation to ensure that new and more efficient solutions to biosecurity threats and animal health can be developed and applied as needed,” she said.

View the full report at www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/megatrends

- ENDS -

Media enquiries: Jackie Poyser, Executive Manager Communications and Training
0410 994 410 | jpoyser@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

About Animal Health Australia

Animal Health Australia works in partnership with our members and other stakeholders to keep Australia free of new and emerging diseases and to improve animal health, enhance market access and foster resilience and integrity of the Australian animal health system.