

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Providing every opportunity for the livestock sector to succeed**

Between drought, fires and the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become clear that 2020 will be a year we will not readily forget.

Along with the reality of our changing climate, the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown health and biosecurity into the global spotlight at a time when Australia's livestock industries are grappling with their own disease threats, rapidly shifting consumer expectations, and the complexities of operating in international markets.

Against this backdrop of increasing threats, Animal Health Australia (AHA) is launching a new five-year *Strategic Plan*, focusing on assisting our members and partners to build resilience, seize opportunities and tackle shared challenges.

AHA's CEO, Ms Kathleen Plowman, believes the new Strategic Plan outlines what AHA and our members see as key steps to creating a national biosecurity system that provides every opportunity for Australian agriculture to succeed at home and overseas.

"Our work to ensure that national arrangements and systems support a rapid response to exotic animal disease outbreaks has never been more important," Ms Plowman explained.

"Our high health status relies on our animal health and biosecurity system 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."

"The world around us is changing and these changes bring about challenges and opportunities that are too big to address alone - a united, multisectoral approach is needed now more than ever."

AHA's *Strategic Plan 2020-2025* makes use of AHA's whole-of-system perspective to evaluate performance, prioritise effort and guide investment, with a goal to deepen understanding and improve biosecurity resilience and capacity.

"The issues we are facing now and into the future go beyond the traditional boundaries determined by state borders and individual production systems," said Ms Plowman.

"As the trusted and independent national animal health body in Australia, AHA is well positioned to help industries, governments and the community meet the increasingly complex challenges which we all face."

As both a broadacre grains and intensive pork producer, AHA's Chair, Ms Sharon Starick, understands the importance of protecting Australia's established reputation as a premium supplier of agricultural produce.

"The health of our livestock is central to that reputation and it is up to everyone involved in this sector, from the breeder to the processor and at every level of government, to play a part and work together in securing our health status," Ms Starick said.

"AHA will facilitate this by placing grass-roots livestock producers and their supply chains front and centre of our thinking, ensuring solutions are sustainable and impactful over the long term."

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"At its core this *Strategic Plan* is all about AHA building upon our cross-sectoral connections, leveraging our collective knowledge and resources, and working to meet the needs of our industries and our communities," Ms Starick explained.

The *Strategic Plan 2020-2025* can be found at [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/strategic-priorities/](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/strategic-priorities/)

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### **About Animal Health Australia**

Animal Health Australia is the trusted and independent national animal health body in Australia, bringing together government and industry to deliver animal health and biosecurity.

With our members we scan the horizon for threats and opportunities, advocate for and drive solutions and take a whole-of-sector approach to ensure the long-term success of Australia's animal health and biosecurity system.