

CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

19 June 2009

Mr Don Heatley
Chairman
Meat & Livestock Australia
Level 1, 165 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

Dear Mr Heatley

PROPOSAL OF LEVY RESOLUTION

The Cattle Council of Australia (Cattle Council) is writing to MLA for the purposes of article 2.9(d) of MLA's constitution to propose a resolution in relation to amounts to be prescribed under Levy Acts in relation to levies payable by grassfed cattle producers (Producers).

The Cattle Council proposes to make a recommendation to the Minister that, beyond 31 December 2010, the cattle transaction levy and export charge for Producers continue at \$5.00 per head.

Accordingly, we propose that the following resolution be put to a vote of Producers at the 2009 MLA Annual General Meeting:

"That producers endorse the ***cattle transaction levy and export charge*** continuing at \$5.00 per head beyond 31 December 2010."

Yours faithfully



Greg Brown
President



Tim D'Arcy
Vice President

CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

19 June 2009

Mr Don Heatley
Chairman
Meat & Livestock Australia
Level 1, 165 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

Dear Mr Heatley

As a signatory to the red meat industry's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Cattle Council of Australia (Cattle Council) undertakes many roles, including proposing levy motions for member consideration at service company meetings and presenting advice to the Minister.

At a meeting of Cattle Council on 19 May 2009, the issue of the levy recommendations as announced by the Beef Marketing Funding Committee was discussed. Following careful consideration of the final report of the Beef Marketing Funding Committee, Cattle Council carried the following resolution:

"That Cattle Council supports the three recommendations of the Beef Marketing Funding Committee."

Cattle Council is strongly of the view that MLA must remain a relevant, well-funded organisation to assist the Australian beef industry meet its objective of sustained growth, international competitiveness and profitability. Cattle Council believes that the \$1.50 has already delivered significant benefits directly to beef cattle producers.

Accordingly, Cattle Council has written separately to MLA proposing that a resolution be put to a vote of producers at the 2009 MLA Annual General Meeting. This resolution recommends that the cattle transaction and export charge continue at \$5.00 per head beyond 31 December 2010.

Yours faithfully



Greg Brown
President



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Telephone: (02) 9290 3700
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Website: www.feedlots.com.au
A.B.N. 16 009 928 018

AUSTRALIAN LOT FEEDERS' ASSOCIATION

15th June 2009

Don Heatley
Chairman
Meat & Livestock Australia
Level 1
165 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

Don,

Re: Levy Resolution Proposal

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) is writing to MLA as per article 2.9(d) of MLA's constitution, to propose a resolution in relation to amounts prescribed under Levy Acts with respect to Levies payable by grainfed cattle producers.

Specifically, ALFA proposes to make a recommendation to the Minister that, beyond 31 December 2010, the cattle transaction levy and export charge for grainfed cattle producers continue at \$5.00 per head.

Accordingly, we propose that the following resolution be put to a vote of grainfed cattle producers at the 2009 MLA Annual General Meeting:

'That grainfed cattle producers endorse the cattle transaction levy and export charge continuing at \$5.00 per head beyond 31 December 2010'.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Cudmore".

Jim Cudmore
President and Beef Marketing Funding Committee member





REGIONAL MEETING

AGFORCE NORTH

Seagulls Resort - Townsville Mon October 5th - Start meeting - 8am

Welcome dinner on 4th Oct - start 6pm- drinks with finger food – RSVP

AgForce Speakers

- John Cotter President AgForce Qld.
- Robert Walker CEO AgForce Qld.
- Brent Finlay AgForce Sheep & Wool President.

Guest Speakers

- Prof John Brodie – Reef Protection
- Prof Peter Ridd – Reef Protection
- David Thomason – MLA Marketing
- Ray Turton – ILC Business future

Accommodation Options

Seagulls Resort – 74 The Esplanade (Ph 4721 3111/Fax 4721 3133)
(Discount rates with proof of AgForce member ID)

QCWA Units – 134 Dean St. (Ph 4724 4200)

QCWA Units – 116 The Strand (Ph 4771 4718)

Waters Edge – 63 The Strand (Ph 4721 1777 /Fax 4721 1779)
(Discount rates with proof of AgForce member ID)

Shore Drive Motel – 118 The Strand (Ph 4771 6851/Fax 4772 6311)
(Discount rates with proof of AgForce member ID)

For further information & RSVP attendance contact :-
John Hardaker AgForce North: hardakerj@agforceqld.org.au – Ph
048 800 2038 or
Tahna Jackson AgForce North: jacksont@agforceqld.org.au - Ph
0408 786 057

NUMBERS ARE LIMITED SO PLEASE RSVP EARLY





Victorian Farmers Federation

VFF LIVESTOCK



27 July 2009

Peter Hughes
Beef Marketing Funding Committee
Lock Bag 991
North Sydney NSW 2059

Dear Peter

Beef Marketing Levy

At the recent the recent Victorian Farmers Federation Livestock Group Conference the following resolution was moved from the floor;

That the VFF strongly supports the retention of the \$1.50 component of the Beef Marketing Levy

This resolution was carried unanimously, demonstrating from our members for the continuation of the Beef Marketing Levy.

Yours Sincerely

Chris Nixon
President VFF Livestock



MEDIA RELEASE

November 20, 2009



AgForce welcomes investment in cattle future

AgForce Cattle president Grant Maudsley has welcomed the strong vote of support by producers to retain the Cattle industry marketing levy.

Mr Maudsley was among several AgForce representatives who attended the Meat & Livestock Australia in Darwin yesterday where the vote was taken.

"The strong vote result is indicative of the widespread support by cattle producers that we need to put our own resources into programs that build demand and defend the community image of beef," Mr Maudsley said.

"The vote shows that in general the producers of this country agree that we are getting a good return on investment on these marketing dollars.

"A number of well respected AgForce members were members of the Levy Review Committee which looked at the issue and made recommendations, and this vote is an endorsement of the conclusions made by Levy Review Committee - namely that the return on investment for these funds is significant and should continue."

The three recommendations made by the Levy Review Committee were:

1. That the current \$5 per head cattle transaction levy rate be retained.
2. That a minimum return on investment to producers be set at three times the overall marketing levy as the performance yardstick in future reviews.
3. That future reviews of the levy be undertaken as a result of industry need, triggered by the peak councils, and not according to a pre-determined timeframe.

Based on the MLA vote, wide consultation with members across the state and AgForce branch resolutions, AgForce will now write to Federal Minister for Agriculture Tony Burke to request that these recommendations be accepted.

"However, as the AgForce submission to the Levy Review Committee states, there is more that needs to be done," Mr Maudsley said.

"There is a great acceptance by consumers around the world that Australia has the world's safest and most nutritious beef, with the best systems for traceability and food safety.

"Given the challenges ahead we must have strong environmental integrity and communications programs to show the community that the beef we produce is great for the environment as well as being a terrific meal option."

The AgForce submission on the levy also raised critical questions about domestic marketing and promotion of eating quality systems such as MSA.

AgForce will continue working with the cattle industry peak body, the Cattle Council of Australia, to help ensure that the MLA programs are appropriate and well carried out.

"By taking grass-roots producer views from our members through the CCA to MLA, AgForce helps to ensure producers are able to influence the direction of the MLA and other service providers who receive this levy," Mr Maudsley said.

However Mr Maudsley said that it was only through beef producers' participation in farm organisations like AgForce that this direction and influence work effectively.

"There were a small number of producers at the AGM who seem to believe that it is acceptable to denigrate our industry, put down our industry's integrity, and attack our industry systems.

"I urge all producers to ignore this counter-productive behaviour and instead participate in farm organisations and make a positive contribution to the work of MLA."

For comment, contact AgForce Cattle president, Grant Maudsley, on 0429 949 991 or AgForce Cattle policy director Oscar Pearse on 3236 3100.

AgForce media: Rebecca Jennings 0418 733 102 or (07) 3236 3100.

- *AgForce is a farm group advocating on behalf of Queensland beef, sheep and grain producers. AgForce is celebrating the 10-year anniversary since the amalgamation of its predecessor organisations: the United Graziers' Association, the Cattlemen's Union and the Queensland Grain Growers Association in 1999.*

11 November 2009

Mr David Pietsch
General Manager
Communications
Meat & Livestock Australia
Locked Bag 991
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Dear Mr Pietsch

Re: Beef levy Review

Thank you for your correspondence on the 9 November 2009 seeking the NSW Farmers' Association's (the 'Association') position on the Beef Levy Review. At the 2009 NSW Farmers' Association Annual Conference the following motion was passed

That the Association support the current \$5 per head transaction levy be retained

The Association recognises the importance of the \$1.50 levy in providing funds to MLA to continue conducting marketing activities to promote Australian beef at home and abroad. The Association's Cattle Committee have consulted with Members on this issue through Newsletters and updates.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 8251 1885.

Yours sincerely



Claire Hull
Policy Officer – Cattle





NORTHERN TERRITORY CattleneWS

Official newsletter of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA): Vol 11 No 3 - SEPT 2009

NTCA calls finally get traction under Wood-Henderson agreement

NEW LOOK INDUSTRY WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The NT Cattlemen's Association has completed a major revamp of its official website and the result is a vibrant new online address for accessing all the latest information about what's happening in the Territory cattle industry ... and beyond.

"Our new-look website will focus on the industry's people, land and future and a range of industry issues," Executive Director Luke Bowen says. "There is a strong media focus with up-to-date access to all industry-related media releases issued.

"We will have direct links into video and other interactive medium, increasing the NTCA's exposure to new forms of communication. We will have You Tube and Face Book sites so that members and other industry players can be updated quickly on relevant issues as they arise. "There are also links into industry fact sheets and other published information."

To take a look, go to:
www.ntca.org.au

The NT Cattlemen's Association's 2009 budget submission to the NT Government called for a coordinated focus on agriculture and food production. Cattlemen now holds hopes that the recent Government-saving agreement between Independent Nelson MLA Gerry Wood and Chief Minister Paul Henderson, might deliver on its call.

The NTCA submission highlighted a lack of focus, coordination or any form of priority on agriculture. It recommended *'That the NT Government establish a Food Security Group aimed at maximising efficiency of government policy and delivery, departmental cooperation and the establishment of clear NT targets for future production and appropriate mechanisms for development and ongoing extension and support'*.

"The recent agreement between Gerry Wood and Chief Minister Henderson reinforces this long-standing call by the NTCA and we look forward to assisting in the delivery of the outcomes," NTCA Executive Director Luke

Bowen said. "The NTCA has held talks with the government and Gerry Wood and reinforced its position that if we are to get serious about the future of agriculture, we have to go well beyond the primary industries portfolio to the areas of environment, infrastructure, development, planning, education and health.

"We need a concerted effort to get existing and new information together on things like the NT's soil, vegetation and water resources, infrastructure and population in order to start drawing lines on maps.

"We also must dispel the myths peddled by some environmental extremists that we are at risk of destroying the NT's rich values by over clearing and development. The fact is that, given the realities here in the Territory, we are only ever going to see small and strategically selected areas developed for more intensive production, to complement our existing low impact, green and clean pastoral grazing systems."

The Wood-Henderson Agreement on Agriculture

- New emphasis on Northern Territory primary industry as a key industry and driver of regional economic development and employment
 - NT Government, WA Government and Kimberley Development Commission to have an ongoing relationship on matters concerning the development of Ord Irrigation Project, especially regarding areas in the NT. The relationship to be managed by a senior DRDPFR officer
 - Further upgrades of beef, commercial and community roads such as those in the Douglas Daly Region
 - Land Clearing/Native Vegetation - Introduce NVA to provide clearer guidelines for vegetation preservation and land clearing.
- The two politicians have also agreed that local government reform will be referred to the new Parliamentary Council for a report back to the House.



Photo: Andrew Mathieson

Landcare accolades

Douglas-Daly pastoralists Phil and Annette Howie (left) had good reason to look happy after taking out the 2009 NT Landcare Award in the Primary Producer of the Year category. Their winning entry highlighted the success of the cell-grazing system they have set up at Maneroo Station. The producer-backed Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association was another big winner, taking home the Group category award for its Georgina Parkinsonia Project. Both winners will represent the Territory at next year's National Landcare Awards. The Douglas-Daly's Chris and Marie Muldoon (Midway) and Fiona McBean (Bonaibo) were also finalists in the Primary Producer category.

(More Page 5)



A word from our President

I am pleased to be presenting my first column for Cattlenews since coming on board as the new NTCA president earlier this year. Our association continues to deal with an often-complex bag of industry issues in representing the needs of members all over the Territory. Despite our ongoing valuable contribution to the Territory economy, we struggle constantly to convince the powers-that-be, both in the Territory and Canberra, that they should be recognising and responding adequately to the broad-ranging issues we need addressed. Several of our Central Australian members are still struggling to manage in drought conditions affecting their properties, yet the Australian Government has decided to scrap the EC help they were receiving throughout last year. We have appealed unsuccessfully for the assistance to be reinstated, and given the ongoing dry conditions in Central Australia this appears a poorly timed and shortsighted decision by the Federal Government. The recent Territory Parliamentary crisis and Independent Nelson MLA Gerry Wood's decision to keep the Henderson Government in power, may present an opportunity for the primary industry sector, depending

on whether Gerry's agreement with the Chief Minister is respected. Gerry has demanded a much greater priority for the presently neglected agricultural sector and rural land and environment issues, and we wait to see what benefits our industry might glean from this agreement. Health services in the bush remain a key area of concern for members. The Katherine aerial medical service arrangement has been potentially life-threatening since fixed wing night flights were cancelled many months ago ostensibly because of wallabies roaming onto the Tindal airstrip. Exclusion fencing has been erected and culling of wallabies carried out and the RAAF now assess the level of risk as low. The ball is now firmly in the court of the NT Government and the operator Pearl Aviation. In recent days the government has indicated it will proceed with the re-tendering of the Aerial Medical contract and we welcome this. However in the meantime we still have airmed flights into and out of Katherine limited to daylight hours and this is unacceptable. Barkly members have also been meeting and discussing issues with health officials as they continue to lobby for better health services in that remote region.

We have been part of a solid and, so far, successful campaign to keep agriculture excluded from Australian Government's proposed Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme. We lobbied all parliamentarians directly and are pleased that the Bill that will give rise to the scheme was rejected by the Senate. But there's still a long way to go yet. The Bill will be reintroduced in November and we need to keep up the pressure on Members and Senators to make sure we have convinced them that including agriculture in the scheme is unfair and unjustified and will have enormous impacts on food production in this country. Native Title claims over many NT pastoral properties are now in line to be resolved after the decision in the Newcastle Waters case was handed down by the Federal Court. Properties have been placed into clusters and timetables set by the Court for preparation of the various reports required by both the claimants and respondents. NTCA has Federal Government funding available and has retained the services of Darwin legal firm Ward Keller to represent NTCA members throughout the process. I know most members would be aware of

the arrangements and the status of their particular claims, however any queries can be directed to NTCA Executive Director Luke Bowen or Nick Johansen at Ward Keller Darwin. I'm sure I can speak for everyone when I say it will be a relief to get some clarity and certainty regarding Native Title and we can all get on with the job of running our properties and producing beef cattle. The NT Landcare Awards were announced this month and we can be proud that three innovative Douglas-Daly station owners were named as finalists in the Primary Producer of the Year category. Congratulations to Phil and Annette Howie of Maneroo Station who took home the award for their successful cell grazing system and other land-caring initiatives, and to the other two finalists, Bonalbo's Fiona McBean and Midway's Chris and Marie Muldoon. We also applaud the Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association, made up largely of our members, for winning the Group category for their major efforts in noxious weed control and other conservation initiatives. We wish all winners success in the finals in Sydney next year.

Rohan Sullivan
NTCA President

Tony's new NTCA role

Tony Freshwater has now moved into the NTCA office in Alice Springs. Tony is already well known to many of our members through the good work he has been doing over the past few years on boosting employment opportunities and establishing grazing agreements over Aboriginal land. Tony will take over from Ian McLean who resigned earlier this year to return to his family's farming property in Queensland. Tony's main focus will continue to be on industry-related employment issues. We welcome Tony aboard and look forward to working with him in his new full-time role and benefiting from his special skills and experience.



Advertising in Cattlenews

One-third page - \$275.00 (incl GST)
One-quarter page - \$220.00 (incl GST)
One-eighth page - \$120.00 (incl GST)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

KERRY SHARP (Editor)
Phone: 08 8981 4999 / Mobile: 0419 845 714
Email: sharp@octa4.net.au



FARMING FAMILY SURVEY

You are invited to participate in the Farming Family Survey!

There are 3 surveys available, each with a separate focus on the farming families business and home structure and roles, concerns, and coping strategies. There are two website links provided below for you to participate online. Further information is provided on the website.

SURVEY 1 & 2

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/farmingfamilySCS>

SURVEY 3

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/farmingfamilyWHCS>

ALL FARMING TYPES WELCOME!! (GRAZING, HORTICULTURAL, CROPPING ETC)

For further enquiries, or a paper version of the survey, please contact lead researcher Connor McShane:

School of Arts and Social Sciences
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
P: (07) 4781 6022 - M: 0419 714 077
Email: connar.meshane@jcu.edu.au

Lives at risk: Territory bush families demand urgent action on airmed crisis

The Katherine aerial medical service crisis remains a major concern for NT Cattlemen's Association members and other regional health service users. They are frustrated that the situation has continued for so long and have demanded an urgent solution to the stalemate. NTCA President Rohan Sullivan says the aerial medical service arrangement has been potentially life-threatening since fixed wing night flights were cancelled many months ago ostensibly because of wallabies roaming onto the Tindal airstrip. "Exclusion fencing

has been erected and culling of wallabies carried out and the RAAF now assess the level of risk as low," he says. "The ball is now firmly in the court of the Northern Territory Government and the operator, Pearl Aviation. In recent days, the government has indicated it will proceed with the re-tendering of the aerial medical contract and we welcome this. "However, in the meantime, we still have airmed flights into and out of Katherine limited to daylight hours only and this is unacceptable. "Following discussions with

the Defence Department, it is now evident that wallabies are not the main issue and there are deep-seated and fundamental problems with the service which must be fixed urgently." Health Minister Kon Vatskalis has also expressed his concern that the situation remains unresolved. As well, Katherine MLA, Willem Westra Van Holthe, has weighed in on the issue, demanding the Minister put pressure on Defence to cull the remaining wallabies on the airstrip or put other measures in place to resolve the situation as soon as possible.



Scott takes on top pastoral job

Scott Wauchope is the new Director of Pastoral Production with the Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources. He replaces Alister Trier who has become the department's new Director of Resources. Scott has lived in the Territory for more than 30 years and worked closely with industry in rangelands and natural resource management in both arid and semi-arid tropical environments for 17 years. The Roseworthy Agricultural College (SA) graduate started his career with the soil conservation section in Alice Springs and has held a number of management positions in both the Territory and Western Australia. He played a key role in starting up the review of the Northern Territory Pastoral Land Act, while Director of the NT's Pastoral Land Management Branch from July 2000 till April 2005. Scott then moved to WA where he worked with the state's Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA) as District Manager in Kalgoorlie and later Carnarvon. The NTCA welcomes Scott's appointment and looks forward to working with him to build on the good work done by Alister Trier over the past three years.

The future of health services on the Barkly

Fifteen Barkly pastoralists met with health authorities at the Barkly Homestead on 26 August to discuss long-term future plans to manage mainstream health services across the region. The Federal Department of Health and Aging, through the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, has allocated significant funding for health regionalisation and reform, as part of the *Expanding Health Service Delivery Initiative (EHSDI)*.

The initiative also involves AMSANT (Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT) and the NT Government and is linked directly to the *Closing the Gap* policy that aims to improve Indigenous health, education and lifestyle outcomes.

"The Tennant Creek-based Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation wants to become the overall health service provider for the Barkly region in the long term, and this meeting was called to let pastoralists have a say on what we feel about plan," Alexandria Station's Robyn Peatling said.

"The main outcome from the meeting was that the NTCA will now be represented on the EHSDI Steering Committee. This doesn't mean we have agreed to the Anyinginyi proposal but it gives us a say in what happens in the next step of the process towards setting up an appropriate service that meets the health needs of all Barkly residents."

"In the meantime, the federal and Territory health agencies are working together to coordinate services so resources are being used to best advantage and services are not being duplicated."

October Futures Project Workshops

The NTCA will conduct a series of workshops across the Territory in October, to present the latest details on its Futures Project. The NTCA launched the Futures Project in April this year to explore what our industry could look like in 20 years time.



This has been a challenging process so far and has involved a diverse range of industry and other people assisting in developing five possible future scenarios (what-if's). With the aid of Charles Darwin University, these scenarios have been used to construct interactive computer models.

The NTCA is now at the stage of introducing these scenarios to a wider industry group to workshop, and develop strategies to mitigate risks, as well as make the most of future opportunities and set us on the right track for the desired future.

WORKSHOP TIMES AND VENUES

- Wed 7 Oct – Berrimah Research Farm, Darwin
- Thurs 8 Oct – Katherine Research Farm, Katherine
- Mon 12 Oct – DPI office, Tennant Creek
- Tues 13 Oct – AZRI, Alice Springs

PLEASE REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

By contacting the NTCA's Darwin office - Email: office.darwin@ntca.org.au or Ph: (08) 8981 5976.

FOR DETAILS OF THE FUTURES PROJECT - Visit the NTCA website: www.ntca.org.au

TOP END MIMOSA FIELD DAY



Elizabeth Downs Manager Doug Chesson

Top End pastoralists on the front line in the battle against one of Australia's most wanted weeds, *Mimosa Pigra*, shared their war stories at a field day at Elizabeth Downs Station on 3 September.

The impenetrable and highly invasive mimosa is a declared weed of

national significance and regarded as one of the worst in Australia. Its potential to create economic, environmental and cultural impacts is significant. If not controlled, it takes vast tracts of land out of production, cuts off access to waterways and engulfs popular tourist destinations.

together to combat this problem and, as a body, are now moving towards a more coordinated, strategic approach."

The field day marked the first stage in a plan to develop a whole-of-floodplain approach to eradicating mimosa.

"At this point we are concerned about information transfer – getting industry people talking about their own experiences in combating the weed, what has worked for them, what hasn't," Mr Bowen said.

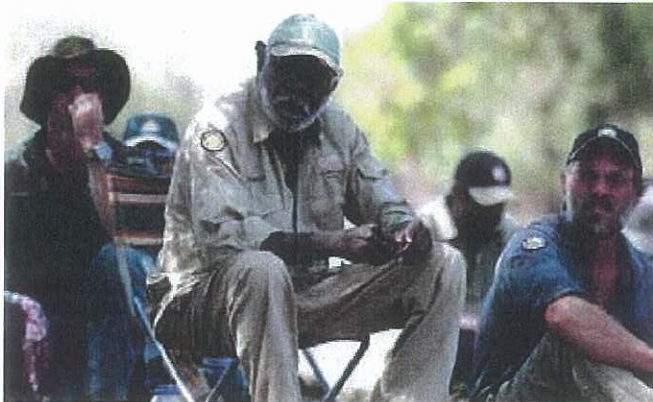
"What we would like to see after this is a financial commitment from both the NT and Australian Governments to take this work to the next level. While Caring for Country has agreed to fund a small control area in the Daly Basin, landowners are disappointed that a proposal to control the mimosa menace over a larger area has not yet gained federal program support."

Presentations included:

- A national overview (National Mimosa Coordinator Kay Bailey)
- The good and the bad of fire management of mimosa (Sue Whatley of Bushfires NT)
- Feral animal impacts on mimosa (Sally Heaton, DNRETA)
- Using un-manned aerial vehicles as a property management tool (Sky View Solutions).

More information on Mimosa Pigra can be found at:

<http://www.weeds.gov.au/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/m-pigra.pdf>



Albert Myoung (centre) - Senior ranger, Malak Malak

Indigenous communities are affected when the prickly weed blocks entry to cultural areas and food gathering sites.

"Mimosa is everyone's problem," NTCA

Executive Director Luke Bowen told participants.

"Unchecked, it would quickly blanket the entire wetlands of northern Australia, shutting down primary production, tourism and recreational fishing as it spreads. Our members recognise that everyone needs to work



John Armstrong (Kath), Ben Beumer (DPI) & Paul Blore (Batchelor)

Being in the Grass Business

Pastoralists are invited to a field day at the Old Man Plains Research Station on Friday 2 October. The full-day program will cover the theme 'Being in the Grass Business', and include presentations on topics such as:

- 101 ways to Graze - Countless grazing options
- Variability – What can we expect?
- Rainfall – What does this mean for grass growth?
- Buffel in the Mt Riddock story
- Grazing decisions driven by the condition of the country
- An extended rest grazing system in central Australia (Narwietooma)
- Dining out with cattle – how much do they really eat?
- Heifer performance strategies in central Australia
- Producer insight into Heifer Fertility (Teiyon Station)

The day will conclude at 3.30pm with christening of the new Mulga Dam Facility and an optional tour to see the No.1 Dam/Droughtmaster Herd and look-out

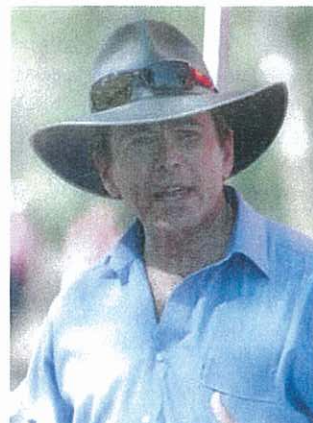
If you have any queries about the field day

Please contact Sally Leigo Ph: 08 8951 8144

or Email: sally.leigo@nt.gov.au



Above: Kay Bailey (Nat Mimosa Coordinator). Below: Luke Bowen (NTCA)



Howie's sustainable farming systems protect Maneroo for the future

Douglas-Daly cattle producers Phil and Annette Howie have implemented an impressive range of land-protecting farming measures since buying Maneroo Station. Their award-winning techniques include rotational cell-grazing to rest pastures, and no-till hay production to reduce erosion and soil moisture loss so that the plants thrive in healthier soils.

The 5200 ha Maneroo, bordering the Daly River, presently runs 800 cows and 1000 steers, heifers and younger stock. The cattle are rotated to new pastures every 60 days.

"The biggest advantage from the measures we've implemented is the improvement in our pastures," Phil says. "We've been able to lift our carrying capacity because the pasture root system is so much stronger, which has led to healthier plants.

If you continue graze your stock in the same paddocks, the pastures don't get a chance to rest and rejuvenate.

"The benefits for our cattle operation are that our stock can graze on fresh pastures in the dry, and that we can increase our stocking rates in the wet."

The Howies were convinced to start cell-grazing after attending a Grazing for Profit workshop in Katherine and follow-up sessions dealing with applied grazing.

The Howies travel to Queensland regularly to meet with fellow farmers, hear from expert presenters, and debate everything from reducing overheads to carbon grazing, as part of their involvement with Executive Link.

Maneroo is owned by the family company, P & A Howie and Sons. Son Chris shares his time between Maneroo and wife Amanda Herrod's family's Katherine Brahman stud. Second son Gavin is a mechanic and daughter Geraldine is married to a WA farmer.



BLCA Parkinsonia Project a winner

The Barkly Landcare Association (BLCA) took out this year's Landcare Group award for its Georgina Parkinsonia eradication project. The award recognised the strategic catchment-wide approach of this pastoralist-based group, to eradicate a 'Weed of National Significance' that threatened world heritage-listed Lake Eyre. Working with project partners in 2008, BLCA and pastoralists surveyed and treated the 2500 km of watercourse in the Georgina catchment. As a result the parkinsonia population has changed significantly with a reduction in its productivity estimated to be in the tens of millions of seeds. If left unmanaged, Parkinsonia could potentially take over large areas of the Georgina catchment, reducing the quality of pasture and production values, while threatening key native vegetation communities and Lake Eyre.

PHOTOS: Above: BLCA - Connecting experts and land managers.

Top right: Treating Parkinsonia in the Georgina catchment



NT winners applauded

The NTCA has congratulated Phil and Annette Howie and the Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association on their success in this year's Landcare awards. President Rohan Sullivan described the Howies as great ambassadors for innovative natural resource management. "Phil and Annette Howie are people we, as an industry, turn to as leaders in environmental management of cattle and pasture," he said.

Executive Director Luke Bowen said of the BLCA's win: "This is a great example of how working together in a strategic, coordinated approach is the most effective way to stop these invasive weeds in their tracks." They also applauded the Douglas-Daly's Chris and Marie Muldoon (Midway) and Fiona McBean (Bonolbo) who were named as finalists in the Primary Producer category.



Northern Territory Government

www.nt.gov.au

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT, THE ARTS AND SPORT

Gamba Grass

Draft Management Plan for comment

The Northern Territory Government has recently released the draft Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass (*Andropogon gayanus*) and is encouraging all land holders and land users to provide feedback.

The draft Plan has been developed with extensive stakeholder consultation and forms part of a strategic approach to gamba grass management in the Northern Territory.

You can provide your feedback on the draft Plan by:

- Completing the online feedback form; or
- Sending a written submission to the Weed Management Branch, Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport, PO Box 496 Palmerston NT 0831. Fax: 08 8999 4445 or Email: weedinfo.nretas@nt.gov.au

For more information and to get a copy of the draft Plan visit www.nt.gov.au/gamba or call 08 8999 4567.

Public comment closes Friday 2 October 2009.

fresh ideas | real results

NTCA welcomes new Minister

NTCA President Rohan Sullivan has welcomed Minister Karl Hampton to the Environment portfolio. He said members looked forward to working with Karl on a range of sensitive and important issues facing the pastoral sector and the future of sensible development in the NT.

NTCA Executive Director Luke Bowen has met with Mr Hampton and provided a comprehensive brief on issues including the pastoral lands act, land development guidelines, living rivers, feral animal and weed challenges and the need for the Minister to get out and meet with industry as soon as possible.

NT cattlemen continue lobbying on carbon bill

The NT Cattlemen's Association has played a major role in successfully lobbying federal parliamentarians to vote down proposed legislation that would introduce Australia's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. Members have argued that the cattle sector would be one of the hardest hit if agriculture is not removed from the proposed scheme. They are now bracing themselves for the potential reintroduction of a modified version of the bill into the House of Representatives.

They are calling on the Opposition to come up with a workable, sensible scheme that does not jeopardise the

livelihood of cattle producers or world food security.

In the lead-up to the August debate in Canberra, the NTCA targeted all MPs and Senators to make sure they knew the facts before voting on any legislation.

"The facts are simple. Australia and New Zealand are the only countries still considering including agriculture in their emissions trading schemes,"

NTCA president Rohan Sullivan said. "The rest of the world has not gone down this track because they know the Kyoto accounting principles are flawed and, most importantly, food production is far too important to jeopardise."

"If our elected representatives are doing their job and keeping up to date with what is being said on this issue around the world they could not, in good conscience, pass this flawed legislation. It would have too great an impact on our ability to produce food for both Australians and our trading partners overseas."

He stressed the NT cattle industry was one of the cleanest and greenest, rain-fed, natural food production systems in the world, supplying more than 550,000 head to domestic and overseas markets each year.

"Kyoto does not allow for carbon to be sequestered in any way other than by planting trees. Most

of our production land is in a natural state and does not allow for wide-scale forestry projects.

"It is now accepted that significant levels of carbon are sequestered naturally through our soils and pastures in a natural carbon cycle, yet the government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme – because it is aligned with Kyoto – makes no allowance for this.

"What most people don't realise is that it has been because of a recent 40% reduction in Australia's agricultural emissions that we have been able to achieve our international emissions reduction targets to date, while other industry sectors, such as power generation, have continued to increase. Agriculture is the solution, not the problem. If we get it right, agriculture has a big role to play in reducing world greenhouse gasses."

Mr Bowen says the NTCA is also calling for increased R&D into measurement and accounting of carbon storage and capture in the rangelands. "Soils, pastures and vegetation are known to be the greatest means by which to capture and lock up carbon and need to be focussed on. There must also be a major increase in this research across the Australian arid zone which, so far, has been largely ignored."

NT women's capacity-building workshops planned for October

The NTCA is supporting a series of 'Women's Capacity' workshops throughout the Territory in October. The workshops are funded federally through the Australia's Farming Future initiative and are built on the theme, 'A Woman's Capacity - throwing out the challenge'. They are designed to stimulate participants and focus on developing their knowledge, capacity and confidence in areas including:

- Their own personal growth (personal resourcefulness, decision-making and work/life balance)
- Attainment of core skills in communications for leadership, which improves participants' ability to influence
- Negotiation and conflict skills (dealing with difficult people).

The workshops will introduce what is known as the 'two pillars' framework which works on areas of both "capacity and capability".

LOCATIONS AND DATES

- 12 October - Douglas-Daly
- 13th October - Top Springs Roadhouse
- 14th October - Katherine
- 16th October - Daly Waters
- 19th October - Tennant Creek
- 21st October - Alice Springs
- 22nd October - Kulgera Roadhouse

PRESENTER

The workshops will be delivered by Jill Rigney of The Right Mind International Pty Ltd (TRM). Jill is a dynamic international speaker specialising in areas of capacity-building for business and industry with a specific connection to the pastoral industry.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Sally Leigo (DRDPIFR) - Phone: 08 8951 8144
Trudi Oxley (DRDPIFR) - Phone: 08 8973 9763
Jo Shearn (NTCA) - Phone: 08 8981 5976

Drought support scrapped for Central Australian stations

The NT Cattlemen's Association has been fighting for justice in the wake of the Federal Agriculture Minister Tony Burke's decision to discontinue Exceptional Circumstances (EC) support for drought-affected cattle station in Central Australia. Executive Director Luke Bowen said a comprehensive, detailed and well-planned appeal, including a reduced area for support, was lodged by industry in conjunction with the Northern Territory Government and with support from Primary Industry Minister Kon Vatskalis.

"Regrettably for our affected cattle station owners, that appeal was unsuccessful and there is no avenue for a second appeal," he said.

"This is extremely disappointing and we are now considering what other avenues might be available to us to try and get this unfair decision reversed.

"We have argued for a broader policy to be put in place to allow better scope for farmers to access other support including drought preparedness through greater access to training and extension.

"This decision fails to recognise the seasonal cycles in Central Australia and aspects like the time needed to re-establish a financial base.

"Minister Burke has failed to appreciate that one shower of rain in the region doesn't get rid of the drought pain for our pastoralists."

Keeping the levy alive

An independent, levy payer committee has completed a review of all aspects of the current Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) beef marketing levy. As a result of its findings, the committee has recommended unanimously that the \$5.00 levy be retained at its current level. The NTCA Executive supports this recommendation and wants to see the \$1.50 marketing levy retained. It encourages all members to have their say in relation to the review outcomes.

"We believe the levy is essential at a time when there is increasing pressure on the industry from overseas competitors, as well as environmental and animal welfare pressures," NTCA President Rohan Sukllivan says. MLA members should have recently received their levy notices by mail with details on how to participate in the Beef Levy Review 2009. It is important to complete and return these notices by 6 October to receive full voting entitlements for 2009-10, including voting entitlements for the MLA annual general meeting in Darwin on 19 November 2009. Register to vote by calling 1800 675 717 or for more information visit: www.mla.com.au/beeflevyreview

Members who would like to discuss the levy review further should contact the NTCA Executive Director Luke Bowen Phone: 08 8981 5976 or Mobile: 0427 815 990

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS WORKSHOPS

The NTCA has organised a series of workshops in October to explain the new national Pastoral Award which comes into effect on 1 January 2010.

The workshops will help producers understand how this new award will affect pastoral and agricultural employers, and will also explore the opportunity to establish enterprise agreements in order to best suit your operational requirements.

Presenters include Denita Wawn from the NFF and Dan Houlihan from First IR, a private company specialising in the establishment of enterprise agreements. It is important that at least one person from your property/organisation attends one of these meetings in order for you to be sure that you are up to date with the changes.

The NTCA has negotiated a reduced rate from First IR for association members so you might wish to engage them to draw up and lodge an enterprise agreement with the Industrial Relations Commission. A number of pastoral companies already have agreements in place. You are welcome to contact First IR prior to the workshops.

WORKSHOP TIMES AND VENUES

- Wed 7 Oct – Berrimah Research Farm, Darwin
- Thurs 8 Oct – Katherine Research Farm, Katherine
- Mon 12 Oct – DPI office, Tennant Creek
- Tues 13 Oct – AZRI, Alice Springs

To register your interest contact the NTCA's Darwin office – Email: office.darwin@ntca.org.au or Phone: 08 8981 5976.

All NTCA members will receive a letter from MLA in the next week or so, inviting you to attend its AGM in Darwin on 19 November and urging you to vote in favour of retaining the \$1.50 levy. The NTCA supports the levy's retention.

Are you levy ready?

"Make sure you secure your voting entitlements in the beef levy review 2009.

Have your say in the future marketing investment of your levies by exercising your vote at Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Darwin on November 19. The current cattle transaction levy is \$5 per head. Your vote will count on whether the \$1.50 marketing component is retained.

The Cattle Council is responsible for making recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture on the distribution of the cattle transaction levy income. Any levy money used for marketing, or any other purpose, must be carefully assessed in terms of the benefits derived by cattle beef producers and their sustained profitability. This monitoring role is the task of the Cattle Council.

Following discussions and debate with our members, Cattle Council's policy is that we support the retention of the \$1.50 as a result of MLA marketing programs delivering return on investment. An

independent report from the Beef Marketing Funding Committee found that the additional \$1.50 has delivered five times the investment back to producers.

Cattle producing members of MLA will already have received information on the voting process. Notice forms need to be returned to MLA by 6 October to have the opportunity to vote on the proposal through the 2009 MLA AGM.

Act now, secure your right to vote and have your say!"

Greg Brown
President

Cattle Council of Australia

Who should vote: Cattle producing members of Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA)

On what? Vote on retaining the \$1.50 marketing component of the cattle transaction levy

Where: MLA Annual General Meeting, Holiday Inn Esplanade, Darwin

When: 19 November from 2.00pm (NT Time)

NOTE: The Cattle Council of Australia AGM will be held at the Crowne Plaza in Darwin over 17 and 18 November



Australian cattle - mainstay of a vital rural industry that current levies can help to keep abreast of increasing market, environmental and welfare challenges

20 years for St Phillips Day School

Akubras were part of the college uniform in the early days - but not now! St Phillips College day school in Alice Springs will celebrate its 20th anniversary 23-24 October. All past students, parents and staff are invited to attend and can contact the college or go to its website to register their interest in taking part. Celebrations will include the official opening of the new Bruce Reid Sports Centre, school tours and a Birthday Roast Dinner. St Philip's opened as a boarding hostel in 1965, to enable outback children to attend school in Alice Springs. It became a Day and Boarding school in 1989. Headmaster for the past 22 years, Chris Tudor AM, continues to



manage the school's development and has been recognized nationally for his services to education.

Details of the events are on the college's website: www.stphilips.ntedu.au or call 89 504577.

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AEC's new polling option to streamline voting for cattlemen on the move

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has specially targeted Territory cattle station people in a new approach to voting in various elections.

In an explanatory flyer released recently, the AEC says it understands how hard it can be for cattlemen on the move to vote in their constituency when federal, territory and shire elections are held.

"To make it easier, you can now enrol and vote as a General Postal Voter (GPV)," the commission says.

"GPVs have traditionally been people who are enrolled at addresses which are not located near polling places. We thought this criteria could also apply to you. Please note: This is distinct from a Postal Vote Application (PVA), which is a one-off postal vote and applies to a particular election only, i.e. you are on holidays and will not be near a polling place for a specified election."

To be eligible to become a General Postal Voter, you must already be enrolled to vote. Enrol-to-vote forms can be downloaded from the AEC website at: www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Update_enrolment.htm.

Enrolling as a GPV is straightforward. You just need to go to AEC website and download an application form and complete it. If you have moved since the last election, please make sure you update your details.

Please note: After you have completed your 'enrol-to-vote' form and GPV form (and signed and dated both), please post them free of charge to:

Australian Electoral Commission
Reply Paid 21
Darwin NT 0801

Voting is even easier, as you will automatically be sent ballot papers for each election and you just need to fill these out and send them back.

Various other services are provided by the AEC to make voting easy and convenient for those who cannot vote at a polling place on election day.

For example, Early Voting Centres will be available in regional centres throughout the Northern Territory. These are designed to help people (who know in advance that they won't be able to make it to polling places) to vote prior to election day.

Their locations will be widely advertised in all regional newspapers, and the Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA) will be provided with a voting schedule and timetable.

Mobile voting services are provided for people in many hospitals and nursing homes nationally, as well as in locations in remote areas of Australia. The AEC will also provide the NTCA with their timetables and schedules.

For more information about these services or about your enrolling and voting rights and responsibilities:

Please call us on 13 23 26, or visit www.aec.gov.au.

To complete the GPV application form go to:
www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Special_Category/General_postal_voters.htm

NTCA calls for open & accountable Pastoral Lease Valuations

The NT Cattlemen's Association has vowed to maintain the pressure to make sure that the process and outcomes of this year's Pastoral Lease Valuations are 'transparent, professional, detailed and able to stand up to scrutiny'. The valuations are conducted every three years.

The association says its members have unanimously described the last round of valuations in 2006 as a debacle of the highest order.

"Many NTCA members by now will have received notification from the Valuer General's office of the impending new round of Pastoral Lease Valuations," Executive Director Luke Bowen says.

"While this may not involve a visit to all properties, the revaluation will impact all leaseholders as it reassesses the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) that is used as the base for pastoral lease rentals and now shire rates, effective July 2010.

"We certainly do not expect a repeat and have maintained the pressure to ensure that the 2009 valuations effort is carried out in an acceptable manner."

Anyone wanting clarification about the upcoming valuations round is urged to contact Luke Bowen on Phone: 08 8981 5976 or Mobile: 0427 815 990

Still time to nominate for 2009 Rural Women's Award

It's not too late to nominate for the 2009 RIRDC Rural Women's Award. The award celebrates rural women and their contributions to primary industries. It gives them the chance to discover their strengths and build their capacity to contribute to primary industries and rural Australia. It also opens up a positive and powerful network of liked-minded women across the country who are passionate about primary industries and rural Australia. Application forms are available from RIRDC (02) 6271 4100, State Departments of Agriculture, Primary Industries and Resource Development and from ABC Radio Regional Stations. You can download the Application Brochure and Entry Form in pdf format.

● Applications close on 15 October 2009

THE PASTORAL LEASE VALUATIONS EXPLAINED

Background

The pastoral lease valuations are conducted every three years by the Northern Territory Valuer-General on behalf of the Australian Valuation Office (AVO) and in accordance with the *Valuation of Land Act 2007*. The 2009 valuations will come into force on 1 July 2010.

The purpose of the valuation is to establish the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) of the land. Because the government leases the unimproved land to the pastoral lessee, the UCV represents the governments interest in the land. Therefore the pastoral rental is paid based on the UCV, at a rate determined by the Minister.

The UCV is used as the basis for the pastoral lease rental and since the establishment of shires it is to be used as the basis for rating of pastoral leases by shires. Currently the shire rates are based on 0.06% of the UCV.

In 1992, the pastoral estate was assessed in order to establish, for the first time the UCV for all pastoral leases. This assessment involved agreement with landowners on the sustainable 10 year average carrying capacity for each property and unless a land subdivision or excision has taken place this carrying capacity remains the same for all leases.

These carrying capacities will be used for the 2009 valuation. The revaluation in 2006 was not conducted properly and the 2009 process may involve a return to baseline 2003 data as part of the process.

Revaluation

Since 1992 a triennial reassessment of the UCV has taken place usually involving an analysis of sales over the previous 3 years, market issues and any projected prevailing market conditions likely over the coming 3 years.

Basic Methodology

UCV = Carrying capacity (CC) X market factor of properties sold per beast area (BAV) less the value of livestock, plant and equipment and fixed improvements (at their market or depreciated value).

BAV (beast area value) is the dollar value of a property based on the rated carrying capacity (less plant equipment and livestock).

Process

The revaluation process will involve assessment of a number of recent sales, of both whole and partial interests, and property visits to assess specific sale circumstances, infrastructure and improvements and land condition in order to establish an equitable comparative analysis of values.

The valuer will discuss the method and rationale for the valuations and resolve issues as raised.

The finalised UCVs will be provided to the Northern Territory Government for rating purposes.

The relevant minister will decide on the percentage (%) applied to the UCV and payable by leaseholders.

NTCA gearing up for its latest submission on roads funding

The NTCA has begun work on its latest formal submission to the NT Government to win funding for future rural roads and infrastructure programs.

The association is seeking feedback from members on particular roadway hotspots and infrastructure that need attention within their regions.

The submission will be presented to the NT Government in October for future budget funding consideration.



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Email: admin.darwin@htw.com.au

Website: www.htw.com.au

Future leaders the focus for NTCA'S 2010 conference

Planning is well underway for the NTCA's 26th Annual General Meeting and conference, to be held in Darwin on 25-26 March 2010.

Following in the wake of last year's successful and thought-provoking futurist theme, the 2010 event will focus on the cattle industry's future leaders both within Australia and within the ranks of our international trading partners.

"The objective will be to gain national and international exposure to the NT Industry and the NTCA as a progressive and responsible partner in the development of Australia," NTCA Executive Director Luke Bowen says.

"The NTCA has always endeavored to challenge and expand thinking and at the association's conference in 2009, in keeping with the futures theme, explored a number of key drivers that are likely to guide the industry

forward to the next 20-30 years. The year 2010 is significant in that it is half way to the next decade. After exploring the possible futures issues in 2009, the question now is who will take us there? Who will be the leaders of our industry, where will they come from, and who will be the leaders in those countries that we will be trading with? What are the qualities and attributes that our future leaders will need in order to operate in a changing world?

"We are gearing up for a scintillating conference agenda that will draw young and future leaders to Darwin from around Australia, Indonesia and other important places to address the conference on issues that will both reinforce and challenge our industry in the next two to three decades. They will discuss the importance of building strong people-to-people links for the future."

Farmers past and present celebrate new hall opening

Past and present locals and other special guests gathered for a special cocktail party on 22 August to toast the official opening of their new community hall at Fleming. NT Administrator Tom Pauling did the honours in officially naming the facility the Douglas Daly Community Hall.

The hall project was coordinated by the Douglas Daly Community Development Association Incorporated (TDDCDAI), established in 2001 by stakeholders of the vibrant mixed farming community to ensure strategic and sustainable development of the area.

"One TDDCDAI initiative is to raise funds to further develop the hall and site," President Marie Muldoon says. "Considerable improvements to the community hall and grounds have been made over the years due to industrious locals volunteering their time and services, and the generous sponsorship from supporting companies and individuals. It was time to celebrate achievements and milestones by naming the hall



District pioneer Pam Rixon (Right) with CJ Whap, Jo Phelps

at an official opening. TDDCDAI founder and past farmer Robert Bright said he wouldn't have missed this night for anything. "I have very fond memories of my time in the Douglas-Daly and it's exciting to see the progress made since Linda and I left." Eileen Doyle, who farmed in the district with husband bill for 15 years, delighted fellow guests with her reminiscing. Eileen was famous in the district for her entertaining speeches at local functions.



Sarah Measey, Brian Measey, Rosemary Whatley, Peter Whatley & Jinx Smith

NTCA 25th anniversary memorabilia still selling

Guests at this year's NTCA Gala Dinner in Alice Springs enjoyed the screening of our special DVD celebrating the association's 25 years of service to the Northern Territory cattle industry.

Terry Underwood spent many long hours researching, composing and editing content in putting the DVD together. The end result is an informative and entertaining look back on how the NTCA and industry has evolved over the past 25 years.

Due to popular demand, we have had copies of the DVD reproduced and they are now available to buy through the NTCA.

■ The DVD costs \$30 (including postage) and is a must-have for members or anyone else interested in the history of the NT cattle industry.

■ We also have available a stock of 25-year commemorative ties and NTCA ladies scarves (left) available for purchase at \$40 each.

TO ORDER OR FOR MORE DETAILS:

Contact NTCA Office Manager Jo Shearn

Phone: 08 8981 5976 / Fax: 08 8981 9527

Email: office@ntca.org.au

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ML-B.109
AO-G.738

RG:AB:ab

11th November 2009

Mr Greg Brown
President
Cattle Council of Australia
NFF House
14-16 Brisbane Avenue
Barton ACT 2600

Dear Greg

PGA POSITION ON CATTLE TRANSACTION LEVY

I write to you to outline the PGA's position on the proposal to alter the current flat rate levy.

I ask that Cattle Council recommend to MLA that the cattle transaction levy be rendered on an ad valorem or multi-tiered basis instead of the current flat rate of \$5 per head.

Since the introduction of the current system in the early 1990s the cattle industry in WA has undergone significant change and transformation in both the areas of production and target markets. This has led to an increasing volume of production of low priced cattle being produced off rangelands that were previously the domain of the sheep industry now being sold at prices much below the average Australian price (\$650-700 as per MLA figures). Many of these cattle are sold to a fattener or third party before eventual export.

It is our belief that a new system would more accurately reflect the benefits attained by those producers of lower price cattle and as such mean the levy is applied on a more equitable basis across cattle producers.

The following gives some further background on our position:

Nature of the WA Beef Industry

It is fair to try and give you an understanding on the attitude of our pastoralists in regards to the flat rate levy. As you would be aware, most of our beef producer members supply the live export market of Indonesia. This is certainly a challenging, exciting and growing industry yet after servicing this market for many years a lot of people feel that the millions invested in the industry has not paid dividends to improve their bottom line.

Our producers have also had to cope with the demands of increased input costs and inflexible government policies that have restricted the potential to maximise production efficiency. Whilst addressing these issues is the job of PGA in consultation with members, many producers believe that these increased input costs should be

overcome with more productive marketing and resultant increased prices paid for their cattle as a result of the work of MLA.

This poses a challenge for MLA to promote the benefits of the levy in the face of claims from the Levy Review Committee that the \$1.50 levy "has provided a return of between three and eight times the investment", this is very difficult thing to prove to our members who have not seen their prices change in the last ten years.

Having said this, there is an understanding (which was reaffirmed by visits from MLA to regional PGA meetings in the Kimberley and Gascoyne) that the continuation of the \$1.9 million marketing levy investment in the live export industry is absolutely critical in maintaining market share and to help promote the importance of the industry both domestically and in our Indonesian markets.

Without the work of MLA in Indonesia the Indonesian market would be much more at risk to competition from other cattle producing nations and the result in many cases would create a deteriorating standard of animal welfare in the live export industry. Hence domestic and consumer perceptions of live export would be negatively affected which in turn would affect the other live export industries so heavily relied upon in Western Australia.

How ad valorem works

I would like to point out that the following provides an example only however we are aware that MLA have many tools at its disposal (including industry projections) which would allow the organisation to look at a required levy yield for marketing of Australian beef and hence a rate of return can be applied to yield this figure.

If a beast is sold at a low price an ad valorem levy will yield a lower levy payment, correspondingly the higher prices cattle will yield a higher levy. Perhaps it could be set so that \$600 or \$700 per animal yields \$5, as is the current flat levy; and there would obviously need to be a capped dollar payment to allow for stud animals etc. Alternatively the industry may wish to have a tiered levy system which sets out both the minimum and maximum price boundaries by which one levy can be applied and could include two, three or more different levy amounts across all cattle prices.

Whatever the case be I do not believe that an animal that currently sells for \$200 and has all the costs of the breeder involved and pays \$5 per head should be on a similar basis to an animal that is sold for \$500 with basically the same relevant breeder costs.

Other factors which have influenced our decision

It has been stated that an ad valorem levy is too difficult to implement in the beef industry. However other agricultural R and D bodies for the Grain Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and the wool industry (Australian Wool Innovation) operate on an ad valorem levy structure and this is seen as a far more equitable means of raising R and D and marketing funds. The GRDC applies a 0.99% levy on grain growers according to the returns they receive and AWI currently has an ad valorem levy of 2%.

It is also important for Cattle Council to understand that it has been shown that if producers are given more flexibility in the levy options they have to vote on, the more

receptive they will be to maintaining a levy. It would then be the role of MLA and industry to then apply a levy rate, which would yield funds from cattle producers to continue investing in the important R and D and marketing activities that MLA perform.

It is important that you have the knowledge that whilst PGA Executive in line with its normal policy and practice does not conclusively support levy systems, they did facilitate in the distribution of MLA information and voting procedures. PGA did not specify how to vote but encouraged producers to make their own decision and vote accordingly.

As the peak body representing cattle producers in Australia, I would hope that you and the Cattle Council understand the delicate nature of this issue in Western Australia as the \$1.50 levy was not strongly supported in this State at the last levy vote in 2006. As an industry representative body Cattle Council must understand the attitudes of Western Australian beef producers and be willing to accommodate a rational debate on this issue in an appropriate forum.

I hope this has given you adequate food for thought before next week's AGM in Darwin. I look forward to further discussion on progressing the equitable ad valorem levy structure when I meet with you in Darwin at the AGM.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Gillam
President
Pastoralists and Graziers Association





ABN: 75 266 051 838

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Facsimile: (08) 8211 7303

Level 1 / 67 South Terrace,
Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal Address: PO Box 6014
Halifax Street, SA 5000

Email: info@saff.com.au
Website: www.saff.com.au

16 November 2009

David Pietsch
General Manager
Communications
Meat Livestock Australia (MLA)
Locked Bag 991
North Sydney NSW 2059
dpietsch@mla.com.au

To MLA,

SAFF Letter of Support - \$1.50 Marketing Component of the National Cattle Transaction Levy

The South Australian Farmers Federation (SAFF) supports the retention of the \$1.50 marketing component of the national cattle transaction levy.

On behalf of the SAFF Livestock Industry Committee,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laucke', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Luke Laucke

B. Ag. Sc.

Executive Officer – Livestock/Intensive Industries

Email: llaucke@saff.com.au

Direct: (08) 8100 8712

Business: (08) 8410 7233 Facsimile: (08) 8211 7303

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WAFarmers is the largest and most representative rural lobby group in Western Australia.

With more than 4,000 members, WAFarmers represents the collective opinion of Western Australia's primary producers to help ensure a viable long term local future for agriculture.

Media Release

Friday, November 20, 2009

OUTCOMES OF MLA AGM POSITIVE: WAFARMERS

The Western Australian Farmers Federation (Inc.) (WAFarmers) welcomes the outcomes of the Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) annual general meeting (AGM), noting that the industry will benefit from the decisions made by growers nationally.

72.5 per cent of MLA members voted to maintain the cattle transaction levy at its current rate of \$5 per head.

WAFarmers President Mike Norton said that such a strong vote in favour of retaining the current levy indicates that Australian beef producers are willing to invest in the future of their industry.

"The \$5 beef levy will enable MLA to continue to invest in marketing activities for Australia's beef and livestock, which will help maintain high levels of consumer expenditure on Australian meat in both the domestic and international markets."

"The Australian meat and livestock industries need to be well positioned to take advantage of the growing populations and strong economies in Asia. The continuance of the levy will assist with this."

The MLA AGM also saw Peter Trefort re-elected as MLA Board Director for the third time, while Iain Mars and Dr Greg Harper were also appointed to the Board.

"WAFarmers congratulates Mr Trefort on his re-election to the Board and welcome the two new members to the MLA Board. Their combined expertise is certain to make a difference to the industry."

"This is a positive step forward for the Australian beef industry," Mr Norton concluded.

ENDS

For further information contact:

Tara Kelly

Marketing and Communications Officer

(08) 9486 2100

0428 840 960





THE MARK OF QUALITY

To the valued clients and customers of Teys Bros,

I wanted to bring to your attention the upcoming beef marketing levy vote. As part of the independent levy payer committee, I have been involved in a very vigorous and thorough review of what the additional marketing levy has achieved for the beef industry. As a result of this review, the committee unanimously recommended retaining the levy at the current level of \$5 per head - I strongly encourage you to read the committee's recommendations and make sure you vote. MLA members will have received a summary of the report in their levy packs and a full copy of the report is available online at www.mla.com.au/beeflevyreview or by calling MLA on 1800 675 717.

I urge all cattle levy payers to get the information and participate in the vote. Registration deadlines are coming up soon so don't leave it too late to have your say!

Regards

Brad Teys
Chief Executive Officer

AN IMPORTANT DECISION FOR ALL BEEF PRODUCERS

Your \$5
Your Beef
Your Vote

All beef producers need to make a very important decision about the beef marketing levy.

An independent levy payer committee has undertaken a review of all aspects of the marketing levy and what it delivers to producers and the industry. They concluded that the additional \$1.50 marketing levy has returned about five times the value of investments through a range of programs in Australia and around the world.

They unanimously recommended retaining the levy at the current level of \$5 per head. Now it is time to have your say. Read the Committee's report and make sure you participate in the Beef Levy Review 2009.



Peter Hughes - Committee Chair, Producer QLD

"The marketing levy has helped us achieve goals in Japan and Korea and is essential to defend those gains in the face of fierce competition from the return of the US to these markets."

Peter Hughes, Beef Marketing Funding Committee Chair, said the recommendations of the 14-person independent Committee were unanimous.

"It was a very robust and comprehensive process," he said.

The Committee's key findings were:

- The additional (\$1.50/head) marketing levy has delivered five times the investment back to producers.
- The major impacts on livestock prices since 2006 have been high exchange rates and high grain prices until late 2008, and more recently credit restrictions on global trade and the collapse in demand for co-products. Without these impacts, livestock prices would continue to be at or near record levels.
- The Australian beef industry faces critical challenges, such as mounting attacks on our environmental integrity and increased competition in our major markets; as well as valuable opportunities, such as our world leading systems in product quality, safety and industry integrity, which stand us in good stead to grow existing markets and capture new markets.
- The industry must continue to invest in a broad range of programs to consolidate its position in beef markets and address the challenges and opportunities that lie before it.
- The \$5 levy is a modest but appropriate investment in the future of the industry.



Jen Munro - Producer, North-Western NSW and Beef Marketing Funding Committee member

"We've fought hard to expand our markets in Australia and overseas. The \$5 levy is a relatively small investment in keeping them. Have your vote - don't leave it to others to decide the future of your beef marketing."



Brad Teys, CEO Teys Bros Pty Ltd and Beef Marketing Funding Committee member

"There's plenty of challenges ahead. Throw away lines about the environment get stuck in people's heads and they think beef must be bad for them and the planet - they need to know the whole story and that's part of what this additional marketing money addresses."

A full copy of the Beef Marketing Funding Committee findings, recommendations and related reports are available online at:

www.mla.com.au/beeflevyreview or call MLA on 1800 675 717

Levy payers who are **non-members of MLA** can also vote but must register by **18 September** by calling MLA on 1800 675 717 then selecting option 1 or visiting www.mla.com.au/beeflevyreview

MLA Members need to **return your levies notice by 6 October**.

Beef Marketing Funding Committee



BEEF LEVY REVIEW 2009 - It's your \$5, have your say.