

20 March 2008

Dear Member

RE: New market based assurance approach to Bovine Johne's Disease

On behalf of the NSW Farmers' Association Cattle and Dairy Committees we would like to draw your attention to the new market based assurance approach to Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD) that starts on 31 March 2008. All beef and dairy producers need to be aware of the changes.

To give you some background into the new approach to BJD, the following is a short history of events up to this stage. The "National Approach to Bovine Johne's Disease in Australia" was endorsed in June 2003. The NSW Minister for Primary Industries Hon Ian Macdonald called a BJD Summit in March 2004. The Summit included representatives from a range of industry stakeholders including the NSW Farmers' Association, Stock and Station Agents, the Saleyards Operators Association, Australian Beef Association, Rural Lands Protection Boards, SafeFood New South Wales, the Australian Association of Cattle Veterinarians, and the Department of Primary Industries. The aim of the Summit was to consult with industry and to reach broad agreement on the future direction of BJD management in New South Wales.

The Summit endorsed the national goals and defined a set of goals for NSW including the long term goal of eradicating BJD from the NSW herd. A Summit Executive Committee with representatives from a number of participating organisations was established to progress the actions of the Summit towards achieving these goals. Further Summits were held in March 2006 and March 2007. The 2007 Summit approved the new approach for the control of BJD in NSW. The attached documents have been designed to assist you with understanding the new approach. We encourage you to become familiar with this information as it outlines a number of changes that will occur at saleyards and in the selling of cattle. The Association's Cattle and Dairy Committees have kept our Executive Council fully briefed on the development of these changes.

For beef producers who only ever purchase cattle from pure beef herds there will be little change. However those who buy cattle from dairy holdings will now have to take greater responsibility for protecting their herds from BJD. Remember the higher the score, the lower the risk of introducing BJD. CattleMAP Herds MN1, MN2 and MN3 have the highest Dairy BJD Assurance Score (8,9 and 10) and are the lowest risk. A beef producer will retain their *Beef Only* Status if they buy dairy cattle with a Score of 8 or above.

There are many documents and people able to assist you with understanding this information. For further detailed information please refer to the NSW Department of Primary Industries website <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/health/specific/cattle/bjd> or contact the Association's Member Service Centre on phone 1300 794 000.

Yours sincerely



Richard Chamen
Cattle Committee Chair



Adrian Drury
Dairy Committee Chair