

Northern forum backs BJD campaign

Written by John McVeigh



Brisbane 27 June 2013. A high-level beef industry forum has strongly backed Queensland's stance to maintain its 'Protected Zone' status for bovine Johne's disease (BJD).

The third Northern Australia Beef Industry Roundtable held in Darwin yesterday (26 June 2013) backed a motion of support that Queensland continue its campaign to eradicate the BJD outbreak from a stud herd near Rockhampton late last year.

The Roundtable, which included industry leaders and Agriculture Ministers from Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia, discussed a range of issues with drought, market access to Indonesia and BJD top of the agenda.

Queensland Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister John McVeigh said his counterparts – Northern Territory Minister Willem Westra Van Holthe and Western Australia Minister Ken Baston - along with beef industry representatives, strongly endorsed Queensland's eradication campaign.

"Industry leaders across northern Australia know the importance of keeping their herds BJD-free," Mr McVeigh said.

"In fact the Roundtable discussed the merits of a BJD-free zone stretching right across the top end of Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

"The northern industry has suffered a real caning in recent times from the near wipe-out of the

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Indonesian live trade as a result of the knee-jerk suspension by the Federal government coupled with the failure of the wet season.

“On the trade front, we need to do all we can to re-build live exports and rebuild our relations with Indonesia, while on the home front, northern producers are adamant that industry and governments do all they can to keep their herds free from BJD.”

Mr McVeigh said despite some hiccups, the eradication campaign remained on track with Biosecurity Queensland working closely with the 53 properties still under quarantine for BJD.