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New Blueprint to guide livestock export R&D

The research, development and extension (RD&E) priorities for Australia's livestock export sector are outlined in the newly released RD&E Blueprint for the Livestock Export Program (LEP).

The Blueprint sets out priorities to guide future decision-making, describes how to submit ideas on research areas, and provides greater visibility on governance structures around RD&E for the industry.

The Blueprint outlines five goals, with supporting priorities for each:

1. Greater transparency and oversight of animal health and welfare in the supply chain.
2. Understanding and addressing animal health and welfare risks in the supply chain.
3. Improving the uptake, adoption and commercialisation of better animal health and welfare practices and tools.
4. Improving supply chain efficiency and regulatory performance.
5. Supporting better market access conditions for Australian producers and exporters.

LiveCorp CEO Sam Brown said the Blueprint provides both industry and potential research partners with clarity about the program and the process.

"We carried out extensive consultation with producer groups and exporters, to ensure we understood the strategic areas they wanted the LEP research to focus on. Researchers, animal welfare groups and the regulator also had an opportunity to provide input," Mr Brown said.

"The LEP dedicates around 75% of its research budget to animal welfare-related projects, and we know the work we're doing has to reflect community and government as well as industry expectations.

"The Blueprint outlines how groups can submit ideas on research areas and projects, and the decision-making process. It's important to have visibility for everyone on how they can be involved and the governance structures in place."

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) General Manager – Research, Development & Adoption, Michael Crowley, said livestock exports are an important and valuable market for Australia's red meat industry.

"MLA invests producer levies alongside those collected from exporters through the LEP into animal welfare, supply chain efficiency and market access.

"The Blueprint is an important document for the whole red meat and livestock supply chain to understand the RD&E priorities and processes, including livestock producers," Mr Crowley said.

"It outlines the important place that producers – together with exporters and other supply chain stakeholders – have in recommending research priorities that the RD&E Program will then develop into project proposals."

The Blueprint also sets out the importance of governance structures to the RD&E program. Producer and exporter representatives form part of the Livestock Export Research and Development Advisory Committee

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(LERDAC), providing critical industry input. The purpose of LERDAC is to provide strategic research advice and to represent industry priorities and community expectations.

The Blueprint will be reviewed periodically through consultation with stakeholders to ensure it continues to capture the strategic issues that need to be addressed through research.

The LEP is a formal joint venture between LiveCorp and MLA which seeks to enhance the productivity, sustainability and competitiveness of the livestock export industry and support an industry culture of continuous innovation, improvement and growth. The LEP includes three in-market programs as well as the RD&E program.

To view the RD&E Blueprint for the LEP RD&E Program please visit www.livecorp.com.au.

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