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ISSUE 2

The Link

CONNECTING THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY FROM THE FARM TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN

State of origin: managing a cross-border response

Equine Influenza – a decade of freedom

Safeguarding Tassie's oysters

animalhealth AUSTRALIA

Working together for animal health

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Are you involved in grazing livestock production?

The National Farm Biosecurity Reference Manual for Grazing Livestock Production is an important tool for meeting our shared responsibility for biosecurity and improving productivity.

Download a PDF here
https://bit.ly/1pJeXnB

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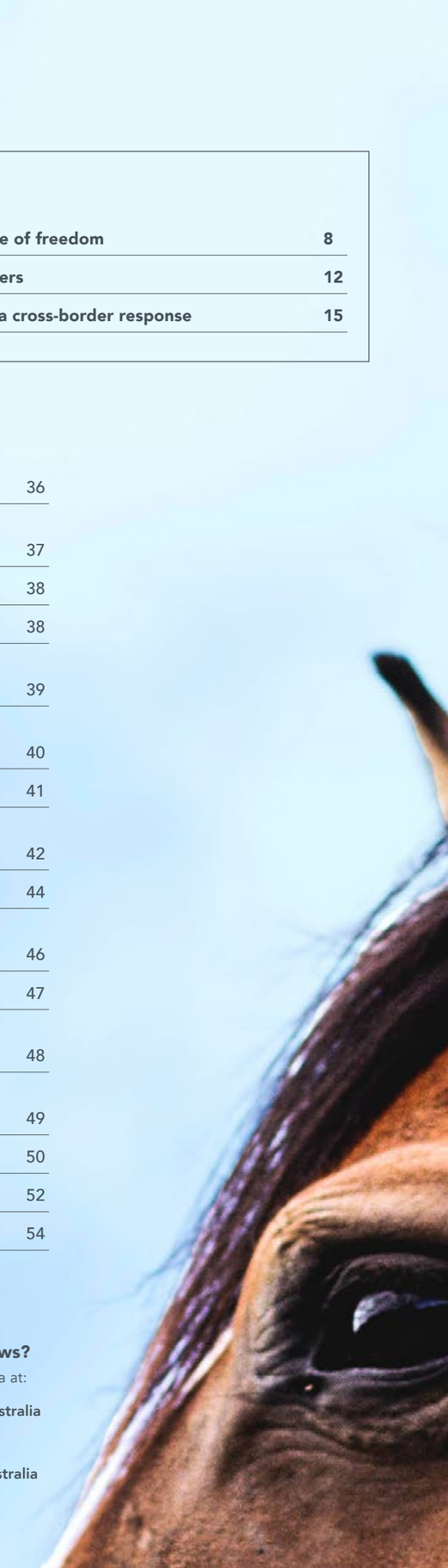


From the CEO

In this edition

Welcome to Issue 2 of *The Link*!

Australia is lucky to be free of many major diseases of livestock and wildlife, due to our strict biosecurity controls and the vigilance of industry and producers. However, we need to be ready to respond to an emergency animal disease (EAD) to minimise the potential impacts on Australia's agricultural industry and our market access, which is why this issue focusses on EAD preparedness and the actions that producers, government and industry organisations are taking to boost our prevention and response capability.

Perhaps the most significant EAD outbreak Australia has responded to was Equine Influenza (EI) in 2007. Our feature article (p8) revisits this response 10 years on from declaring freedom from the disease. This was a significant achievement, with the hard work of thousands of industry and government personnel working across multiple jurisdictions allowing Australia to eradicate the disease – revealing the incredible things we can achieve when everyone in the animal health space works together.

The successful eradication of EI was due in part to the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) and the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN), two important documents which underpin Australia's EAD response preparedness. Find out more about what they mean on p18.

Whilst government and industry organisations play an important role in EAD preparedness, it's also producers, vets and other on the ground staff who are at the frontline of disease detection and take steps on-farm to mitigate disease risks and protect our $63.8 billion agricultural sector. Some of their stories are shared in this magazine, with great insights that we can all learn from.

Don't forget, if there's something you're passionate about that you'd like to submit a piece on or if you would like to advertise your program or product, get in touch with us at *publications@animalhealthaustralia.com.au*.

I hope you enjoy reading *The Link* just as much as we have enjoyed putting it together for you.

Have a safe and happy holiday.

Kathleen Plowman
AHA CEO

About AHA

Animal Health Australia (AHA) is the trusted national coordinator, brokering arrangements for government and industry partnerships and collaborations to strengthen animal health and biosecurity in Australia.

Join the biosecurity conversation in Australia!

The Gold Coast will be abuzz with all things biosecurity on 12-13 June 2019, when government, industry and others unite for the inaugural *Australian Biosecurity Symposium*.

Hosted by AHA, the Invasive Species Council (ISC) and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS), the theme of the Symposium is preventative biosecurity practices and will focus on research and innovation, outside-of-the-box thinking and the exchange of knowledge and ideas across the biosecurity collective – agriculture (plant and animal), pest animals, weeds, wildlife health, aquatics and the environment.

The Symposium will provide the ideal platform for diverse cross-sectoral discussion on biosecurity in Australia, said Kathleen Plowman, AHA CEO.

"This is the first symposium in Australia that will bring together multiple sectors working on biosecurity to collectively discuss innovation and priorities in this area. It will allow participants to develop new concepts, share and test ideas, seek advice, build new partnerships and engage in challenging discussions that stimulate debate and energy," said Ms Plowman.

Andrew Cox, CEO of ISC said a core purpose of the Symposium was to inspire outside-of-the-box thinking.

"The Symposium will focus on new innovations, novel ideas and cutting-edge approaches to biosecurity. We want to hear the best ideas in traditional biosecurity fields, as well as breakthroughs from other fields such as health, disaster management, security and technology," said Mr Cox

Andreas Glanznig, CEO of the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions said the Symposium provides an unprecedented opportunity for interested parties to network and collaborate.

"It will foster connections and stimulate information sharing that will strengthen Australia's animal health and biosecurity system. We encourage anyone interested in biosecurity to come along and be part of this important conversation."

Early bird registration is open until 5pm 29 March 2019.

Abstract submissions are open until 5pm Friday 15 February 2019. All interested parties, including students, are encouraged to make a submission.

A number of sponsorship, exhibition and promotional opportunities are also available. Visit the link below for more information.

www.biosym.com.au

Out and about

Over the past few months, AHA has exhibited at LambEx in WA, the Australian Alpaca Spectacular in Vic, the Murrumbateman Field Days in NSW and Shellfish Futures in Tas. We love having the opportunity to get out there and engage with producers and our farming communities! Meet some of the producers we caught up with at these events.

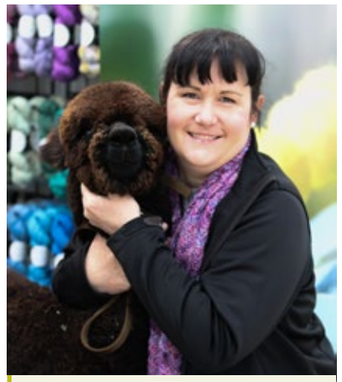
Dan, Bungarley Australian Whites, NSW

"The people are great, it's very easy to work with good people and the animals. The freedom and opportunities to be found as well, it's very exciting."

Betty and Ian, Bundaleer Sheep, WA

"We're both very passionate about sheep breeding, it's a way to leave a legacy in the industry which will endure the test of time."

Colin, Barra Dun Galloway Cattle, NSW



Angela and her alpaca Fifth Avenue, One Tree Hill Alpacas, NSW

"I love their fibre because it makes spectacular yarn and I love getting the alpaca yarn out into the mainstream for everyone to enjoy this amazing product."

Malcolm, Wyona Alpaca Stud, Vic

"I love the animals. We use the fleece for a variety of things from scarves all the way to doonas and everything in between. The characteristics of our animals are quiet and peaceful and they're well handled. They're so loving."

"After 35 years in the public service it was a retirement hobby. I needed a tree change and I found Galloway's to be a great all-rounder."

Shining a light on biosecurity

Animal Health Australia

Helen Jenkins, AHA's Aquatic Biosecurity Liaison Officer for Northern Australia and Jess Rummery, AHA's Biosecurity Extension Manager for Northern Australia attended the NT Food Futures Conference in Darwin in July to raise awareness of biosecurity.

This involved presenting on biosecurity risks and challenges in northern Australia, which featured a glow-in-the-dark activity to highlight the ease of disease spread. The team "infected" an area of the floor with UV powder before the event started. Unknowingly, people "spread" the "disease" on their footwear through the venue, whilst others spread it by shaking hands. During the demonstration attendees were provided with UV torches and the lights were turned off so that people could see just how much the "disease" had spread!

The glow-in-the-dark biosecurity activity showed how easy it is for diseases to spread.

Highlights

Helen Jenkins
AHA's Aquatic Biosecurity Liaison Officer, Northern Australia

"I enjoyed listening to farmers explain the challenges they have to go through to produce a crop, such as a lack of labour. Growing crops in hot conditions like Broome or dealing with buffaloes and crocodiles is also difficult!

North Australia has shown me how resilient these farming groups are and unfortunately the consumer has no idea about the constraints that have had to be overcome for them to eat things like a grape or barramundi."

Jess Rummery
AHA's Biosecurity Extension Manager, Northern Australia

"The best part for me was learning more about other non-livestock agricultural industries and the different approaches they take to similar challenges to what we have in the livestock sector. It was also really great to hear biosecurity being discussed throughout the event."

Equine Influenza – a decade of freedom

Animal Health Australia

This year marks 10 years since Australia declared itself free of Equine Influenza (EI). EI is the most serious EAD outbreak Australia has faced in recent history. The confirmation that the disease had escaped from a quarantine station at Eastern Creek, NSW in 2007 triggered a response operation which would last more than six months and involve thousands of people from industry and government working across multiple jurisdictions to eradicate the disease.

By July 2008, horse operations in Australia were able to return to normal – a significant achievement brought about by the dedication of those involved in the response and the strength of Australia's EAD preparedness arrangements. However, despite this success, there were substantial economic and social impacts as a result of the outbreak, revealing just how quickly an EAD outbreak can affect an industry and how important it is to work together to prevent EAD outbreaks.

What is EI?

EI is an acute, highly contagious, viral disease that causes respiratory disease in horses and other equine species.

It is usually spread by direct contact between horses, by humans carrying the virus on their skin or moving contaminated clothing or equipment, such as saddlery.

How did it start?

On August 24 2007, a veterinarian reported sick horses at Centennial Park in Sydney; this followed reports of clinical signs in imported horses at the Eastern Creek quarantine facility near Sydney. The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) began an investigation and confirmed that the horses at Centennial Park were infected with EI. By the following day there were 80 suspected cases in NSW and reports of the first cases in Qld.

A 72-hour national standstill of horses was implemented and response operations commenced in NSW and Qld, with the objective to eradicate the disease by using the AUSVETPLAN disease strategy as the basis for the response.

The response

The response involved over 2,000 staff in NSW, 1,200 in Qld and 1,500 people from the horse industry. The response was a coordinated national approach, supported by Australia's existing EAD preparedness framework, with operations primarily implemented by the state jurisdictions.

The response included the use of movement controls, biosecurity measures, surveillance and vaccination. A communications campaign was also an important part of the response, to ensure the horse industry and the broader public knew how they could help prevent the spread of the disease.

However, the magnitude of the response meant that those involved faced a number of challenges.

For Dr Ian Roth, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of NSW at the time, the greatest hurdle was the sheer speed in which the virus spread.

"For a while it was moving incredibly rapidly with hundreds of new cases being reported and that's when the pressure really started to mount," said Dr Roth.

For Dr Ron Glanville, CVO of Qld during the response, the diversity of the horse industry was a key challenge.

"There was no single horse industry with a united voice. Instead, there was a diverse range of groups from the two main

26 Aug — **2007** EI was confirmed in NSW and Qld

24 Sep — **2007** number of infected properties reaches its peak

28 Sep — **2007** vaccination against EI begins

9 Dec — **2007** last recorded case in NSW

25 Dec — **2007** last recorded case in Qld

30 Jun — **2008** Australia considers itself EI free

31 Dec — **2008** Australia satisfies World Animal Health Organisation requirements for international recognition as a country free from EI

horse racing codes, to pony clubs to performance and endurance horses, all with varying views and needs. It was difficult to represent such a broad group but it really highlighted the importance of bringing them all into the fold and fostering a partnership approach," said Dr Glanville.

"The key was striking a balance between the most effective strategy from a disease control perspective and minimising the impact on horse owners and industry. This could only be achieved by developing tactics together."

One such tactic was described by Patricia Ellis, a representative of the horse industry during the outbreak - a purple zone set up in NSW, within which horses could move freely but not exit once they had entered.

"As EI occurred at the start of breeding season, it was important for industry to still be able to move stock around for this purpose. The purple zone allowed this to happen. It was a small change, but it allowed the industry to continue to function whilst helping control the spread of EI," said Ms Ellis.

This type of flexibility was important to minimise the impacts of the outbreak on the industry, without hampering the effectiveness of the response, said Dr Samantha Allan, now Executive Manager, Emergency Preparedness and Response at AHA.

Dr Allan was a Veterinary Officer at the time who worked in the response. She helped lead the team responsible for planning the return of harness racing at Bathurst.

"This was the achievement I was most proud of as it provided a real boost to the local horse industry and brought industry and government together in a really positive way. We proved that sound biosecurity worked in preventing the spread of EI," said Dr Allan.

The outcome

The rapid response to the outbreak contained the disease to a relatively limited area of Australia, assisting with the disease's eradication. This was made possible by Australia's strong EAD preparedness framework, developed well in advance of the outbreak, in combination with the cooperation of the horse industry and associated sectors.

The success of this response is unprecedented on a world scale, with most observers being sceptical that Australia would ever achieve freedom from EI.

10,000
infected properties across NSW and Qld

76,000
infected horses

$96m
in direct operating costs

132,000
laboratory test carried out – up to 3,000 tests per day

300
media releases issued

**www.dpi.nsw.gov.au*

Key insights

Dr Ian Roth
Deputy NSW CVO during response

If everyone keeps focussed you can achieve success and that's what we did. You also need really good leadership. I think we have learnt the importance of biosecurity and that we can't take any chances.

Dr Ron Glanville
Qld CVO during response

EI highlighted the importance of knowing who your key stakeholders are and using a partnership approach to decision making, adapting existing plans to suit the circumstances and ensuring multifaceted communications.

Mr Kevin Cooper
Incident Controller in NSW response

EI showed that being adequately prepared can reduce the scale and complexity of an EAD response. It brought biosecurity to the forefront for many, who until that time had done little to address biosecurity risks.

Ms Patricia Ellis
Horse industry representative during response

As a result of EI, we now have state-based legislation which dictates that all horse owners must have a Property Identification Code. However, we need to keep raising awareness of biosecurity to avoid people becoming complacent.

Dr Allison Crook
Chief Inspector of Stock during response

The EI outbreak helped Qld form their new *Biosecurity Act* and helped to shape biosecurity planning in the horse industry. People remember what they went through – they don't ever want to go through it again.

Safeguarding Tassie's oysters

Animal Health Australia

Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) was detected in Tasmania in January 2016.

Since this detection, the Tasmanian government and the local oyster industry have been working together to manage its impact on the industry.

As the name suggests, POMS is caused by a virus which only affects Pacific Oysters. It can result in high mortality rates, causing commercial oyster farms major production and economic losses. The outbreak in 2016 killed more than five million dozen Pacific Oysters costing the industry in excess of $12 million.

John Preston, Coordinator of Oyster Biosecurity at Tasmania's Department of Primary Industries, Water, Parks and Environment (DPIPWE) has been working with oyster growers in Tasmania since mid-2016 to assist them through the initial impacts of the virus and to develop management strategies to help their businesses thrive while living with POMS.

"Strong leadership from Biosecurity Tasmania and the oyster industry's peak body, Oysters Tasmania, combined with very early and generous support from DPIPWE has been critical," said Mr Preston.

Upon confirmation of the POMS outbreak, the Tasmanian government took a number of actions including extensive testing throughout all oyster growing areas to determine the extent of the outbreak. Area classifications were then determined, with a permit system developed to allow movements between areas of similar or lesser risk. This allowed oyster growers to keep operating as normally as possible.

Dealing with POMS has caused oyster growers to see the importance of biosecurity and to come up with innovative ways to address the disease.

"This is the first practical biosecurity response for the majority of Tasmanian oyster growers and as a result, growers have started to recognise biosecurity as an essential component of their everyday business. The industry has also looked into breeding genetically resistant oysters," said Mr Preston.

"A significant component of Biosecurity Tasmania's work has been assisting oyster hatcheries to become independently audited, bio-secure facilities. As a result, these hatcheries are the first to become recognised as such in Australia."

"Oyster growers are incredibly determined and resilient. As an industry, they have adapted to living with POMS and are coming out the other side better positioned to meet future biosecurity challenges that may come their way."

John Preston, Coordinator of Oyster Biosecurity at DPIPWE inspecting oyster samples.

Producer insights

Ian Duthie is the managing director of SeaPerfect, a supplier of Pacific Oysters, Flat Oysters and Mussels, located on the sunny east coast of Tasmania at Little Swanport, adjacent to the aptly named Great Oyster Bay. Ian was operating his oyster farm during the POMS outbreak in 2016. Here, he shares some of his insights on the industry and how POMS impacted his production.

How long have you worked in the industry?

I've been associated with the aquaculture and shellfish industries for 29 years, with roles ranging from research right through to production. I've also been active at the industry representation level as Chairperson of the Tasmanian Oyster Research Council and Tasmanian Shellfish Executive Council, Director of Oysters Tasmania and Oysters Australia.

How did POMS affect you?

The POMS impact on our operation was a little different as we were just commissioning our facilities when POMS was declared in Tasmania.

As a result, POMS impacted our continued development and had a major impact on our access to markets. With Tasmania having a concentration of shellfish hatcheries the future viability was in question.

At SeaPerfect our intention has always been to offer a mix of species to mitigate the risks of only having one product, but other oysters have also been wrapped up in biosecurity regulations.

What are some key insights you've taken away from the outbreak?

Unfortunately, you don't get to pick when these things happen.

We were fortunate in that we had travelled the world extensively and looked critically at the response of industries elsewhere. We had also studied other hatcheries and incorporated the appropriate biosecurity system to enable production. Our plans for SeaPerfect were for a land-based nursery operation, after seeing such systems in France and elsewhere that operated successfully in areas with POMS.

**www.frdc.com.au*

Fast facts*

- **The Tasmanian oyster industry accounts for 37% of Australia's Pacific Oyster production**
- **The industry has an estimated farm-gate value of $25m per year**
- **Pacific Oysters make up 60% of oyster production in Australia**

SeaPerfect Managing Director, Ian Duthie with algae cultures.

The industry took the threat of POMS seriously and had a disease surveillance program in operation prior to the outbreak, as well as the nationally agreed POMS-specific disease strategy in AQUAVETPLAN*. This meant growers that saw unusual mortality were quick to act, and as a result, we had a voluntary movement halt within 24 hours and immediate action of pulling stock out of the water that had just been transferred. It was this that helped mitigate the spread of POMS and saved many areas from also being infected.

The industry had also done its homework and was working collaboratively on a national breeding program and this has been the silver lining as it is yielding good results. Biosecurity and the risk of disease isn't something that stops at your own fence, and in the aquatic environment, fences don't work, so a united and well advised industry is very important from where I stand.

"Biosecurity and the risk of disease isn't something that stops at your own fence..."

In your opinion, do you think the industry is in a better position now to manage any potential future outbreaks?

The industry responded well and mitigated the spread of POMS, but we have a porous border in the aquatic environment and are the little fish compared to other industries such as shipping and recreational boating.

We have an educated industry that are looking out for future disease threats and have good linkages between jurisdictions to manage future outbreaks. However, the financial resources could do with a bit of a refresh before the 'next wave' of disease.

www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au

Have you heard of the Aquatic Deed?

While Australia has longstanding joint industry-government arrangements in place to respond to plant and animal emergency diseases, there's been nothing formally in place for the aquatic sector.

Aquatic and fisheries industries and governments are working together to develop an agreement to prevent aquatic EAD outbreaks and to manage and fund aquatic EAD responses. This agreement is called the Aquatic Deed and a draft for discussion amongst potential signatories is largely complete.

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/aquatic-deed

* Department of Agriculture (2015). AQUAVETPLAN Disease Strategy: Infection with ostreid herpesvirus 1 microvariant (Version [1]). In: Australian Aquatic Veterinary Emergency Plan (AQUAVETPLAN), Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Canberra, ACT.

State of origin: managing a cross-border response

Animal Health Australia

More than 260 people from across Australia, including government and industry representatives, participated in Exercise Border Bridge from 5-9 March 2018.

The exercise was Australia's largest simulated biosecurity response exercise held in the past ten years and aimed to advance Australia's capabilities to respond to a nationally significant cross-border biosecurity emergency, said Dr Sarah Britton, NSW's CVO.

"Taking 18 months to plan, the five day functional exercise allowed each jurisdiction to assess their ability to jointly respond to a biosecurity event that impacts both jurisdictions and to strengthen partnerships with biosecurity stakeholders," said Dr Britton.

The exercise involved a fictional outbreak of Lumpy Skin Disease and a plant pest incursion (Giant African Snail), which impacted on both states simultaneously.

Dr Allison Crook, Qld's CVO was involved in the exercise and came away with some key learnings from the experience.

"The exercise highlighted both the importance of communication and going through planning and functional aspects with industry to ensure they're involved," said Dr Crook.

Dr Samantha Allan, AHA's Executive Manager Emergency Preparedness and Response and a participant in the exercise echoed Dr Crook's thoughts.

"The exercise showed how critical it is to have industry people there from the beginning, as they have valuable information about how industry works and can provide local level contacts which helps get things done on the ground," said Dr Allan.

Justin Toohey, Cattle Council of Australia's Animal Health, Welfare and Biosecurity Advisor, who participated in the exercise as an industry representative, said the exercise was highly worthwhile.

"I could see NSW DPI and Biosecurity Queensland really appreciated industry being there. It was a good opportunity for us to get experience in how a response would operate and what our role would be, as well as to offer some suggestions on what could be improved," said Mr Toohey.

A Joint Exercise Report has been developed, with NSW DPI and Biosecurity Queensland looking at addressing the 12 recommendations included in the report.

Participants of Exercise Border Bridge at the Joint Local Control Centre in Toowoomba.

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

What happens during an EAD outbreak?

Ben Byrne
AHA's
Training
Services Project Manager

As a producer, do you know what your roles and responsibilities are in the event of an EAD outbreak?

AHA's Ben Byrne explains what might happen in an EAD response.

Some of my animals are displaying unusual signs/symptoms. What do I do?

Call your local private or government veterinarian. They will conduct investigations to confirm or rule out the presence of disease.

You can also call the EAD hotline on 1800 675 888 if you've spotted something unusual. Don't worry about how insignificant it may be - small signs may be an early indication that something's wrong and you won't be penalised for calling the hotline if it turns out not to be an emergency.

An EAD outbreak has been confirmed on my property. Now what?

Once a disease has been confirmed on your property, local authority directions may involve the implementation of EAD control measures on your farm (e.g. quarantine, vaccination, etc.) or operational activities such as disease tracing and surveillance. It's important to follow these directions to help minimise the impact and spread of disease.

It's important to note that any producer information collected during a response is confidential. However, be aware that EAD responses generate a lot of publicity and the media do not necessarily play by the same rules.

My industry is dealing with an EAD outbreak but I'm not directly affected. Is there anything I need to do?

Follow the directions of your local authority e.g NSW DPI. They will provide information about the EAD outbreak, what activities are taking place in the response and whether there are any actions you should be taking. Your peak industry body may also be able to provide guidance or information on the response.

Continuing to follow your disease management protocols outlined in your farm biosecurity plan will be your best line of defense against an EAD.

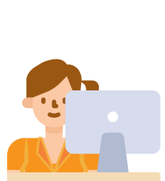
INFORMATION FLOW IN A RESPONSE

PRODUCERS

share information with their industry representative

INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE

feeds producer information into response and provides response information back to producers



RESPONDERS

share information with industry representative

Where do I go for information during an outbreak?

Head to *www.outbreak.gov.au*. Depending on the scale of the outbreak, local, state or national government bodies will also share information on their social media channels.

Your state or territory department of agriculture or primary industries website will have specific information for your local area and your vet may also be able to assist with any queries.

What will my industry be doing during a response?

At a local level your peak industry body representative will be providing operational advice, such as the size of the affected industry, to assist the response. At a state level your industry representative will be providing high level advice to government.

Who is responsible for managing the response?

State/territory governments are responsible for managing outbreaks in their jurisdictions, with support from industry and other agencies.

What if I don't comply with instructions during a response?

It's important to cooperate with your local authorities during a response to help minimise the impacts of the disease. Each state has legislation in place regarding EAD responses, which means if you don't follow instructions, there may be legal ramifications.

"...your farm biosecurity plan will be your best line of defense against an EAD."

Who pays for the response?

The affected jurisdiction is responsible for bearing the cost of the response. However, in instances where the response is decided to be cost-shareable between governments and affected industry, the EADRA will be invoked.

Find out more about the EADRA on p18.

Can I talk to the media?

There are no restrictions in place to stop you from talking to the media. However, it's important that messaging about the outbreak is consistent to prevent the circulation of incorrect/confusing information, which could affect Australia's market access and your individual trade relationships.

In an EAD response, your peak industry body will have a representative in charge of feeding relevant industry information to the responders and also sharing response information back to industry. Working with your industry representative is the best way for you to share information and have your voice heard.

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Want to know more about EADs?

Enrol today in the free EAD Foundation online course. Designed for producers, vets and emergency workers, it can help you understand Australia's EAD preparedness and response arrangements.

For more information visit

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/emergency-animal-disease-training-program

EADRA and AUSVETPLAN: what do they do?

Animal Health Australia

AHA manages the EADRA and AUSVETPLAN, two important elements that underpin Australia's EAD preparedness. But what exactly are they and what purpose do they serve?

The EADRA is a formal, legally binding agreement between AHA, the Australian government, all state and territory governments, and 13 livestock industry signatories ('Parties'). The EADRA was developed to prevent EADs from occurring and to promote rapid and effective responses to EADs which do not normally occur in Australia.

Dr Brendan Pollard, AHA's Senior Manager Emergency Preparedness, has managed the EADRA project at AHA since 2012. Dr Pollard stated that the EADRA provides significant benefits to all Parties to the Agreement, whilst placing a number of responsibilities on those same Parties.

"The EADRA provides all Parties with a role in decision making and certainty of funding," said Dr Pollard.

"However, Parties also have obligations under the EADRA, such as the development of risk mitigation and prevention strategies in order to prevent EADs from occurring."

Dr Brendan Pollard and Dr Belinda Wright are AHA's resident EADRA and AUSVETPLAN experts.

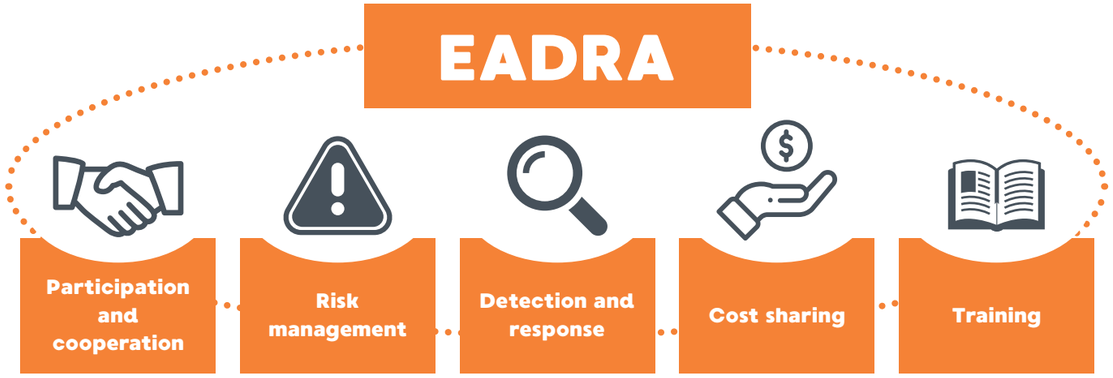
Luckily EAD outbreaks in Australia are rare events and the EADRA has only been activated five times since its inception.

For Dr Pollard, managing the EADRA project is a sometimes challenging but extremely satisfying task.

"The most enjoyable element is working with members of AHA and signatories to the EADRA, who are passionate and committed to achieving EADRA's aims," Dr Pollard said.

For each disease listed in the EADRA, a disease-specific response policy or brief has been developed and agreed upon by governments and relevant industries. Collectively, these manuals and other supporting components make up AUSVETPLAN, and document Australia's nationally agreed approach for the response to an EAD incident in Australia.

AHA manages AUSVETPLAN on behalf of its members, with components developed and reviewed by expert writing groups.



Dr Belinda Wright, AHA's Senior Manager Emergency Response has worked on AUSVETPLAN for the past three years. She explained that AUSVETPLAN is a crucial part of Australia's EAD preparedness framework, as it outlines the nationally-agreed roles, responsibilities, coordination arrangements, policies and procedures for the response to EAD incidents in Australia.

"Having this information agreed to during non-outbreak times helps to ensure that in the event of an EAD outbreak, an efficient, effective and coherent response can be implemented consistently across the country with minimal delay," said Dr Wright.

For Dr Wright, working on AUSVETPLAN has been a rewarding experience.

"I really enjoy working with such a wide range of people with different areas of expertise and different perspectives – I'm always learning," said Dr Wright.

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

AUSVETPLAN insights

Mary Lou Conway, Tasmania's Acting CVO, has worked on AUSVETPLAN for a number of years. Here she shares what she has learnt from the experience.

"I have found working on AUSVETPLAN to be a hugely valuable learning opportunity. The review process provides constant challenges to your pre-conceived ideas. It requires you to appreciate different response contexts as AUSVETPLAN documents must embrace the interaction between diseases, hosts, geography, legislation, industries and community to be useful.

One thing that is sometimes forgotten about AUSVETPLAN is that it is never regarded as perfect. Disease agents do not take holidays to smell the roses. For the nastiest to survive they are dynamic, so the documents informing their management need regular updates and an increasingly flexible format to fit into the modern emergency response environment."

Enhancing Australia's FMD preparedness

Under Australia's response strategy for foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), vaccination is an option that may be explored during a response to FMD, should an outbreak occur.

Australia is free of FMD and the storage of the vaccine is not permitted within our borders. As a result, Australia has arrangements in place for the supply of FMD vaccine from an overseas supplier, for use in the event of an FMD emergency in Australia.

These arrangements were put to the test in Exercise Dragonglass, held in January and February 2018, said Dr Kathy Gibson, AHA's Senior Manager, Special Projects.

"There were two components to Exercise Dragonglass. Part one involved a desk-top evaluation of documentation for the ordering and importation of a hypothetical consignment of FMD vaccine.

Part two was a functional exercise to simulate the supply and importation of a test consignment of (simulated) FMD vaccine from an overseas location, and delivery to one jurisdiction in Australia – in this case, Queensland," said Dr Gibson.

"Following Exercise Dragonglass, the Queensland government conducted Exercise Obsidian to test the arrangements for distribution of the simulated FMD vaccine within Queensland."

Exercises Dragonglass and Obsidian showed the value of collaborative partnerships between all participants in the FMD vaccine supply chain.

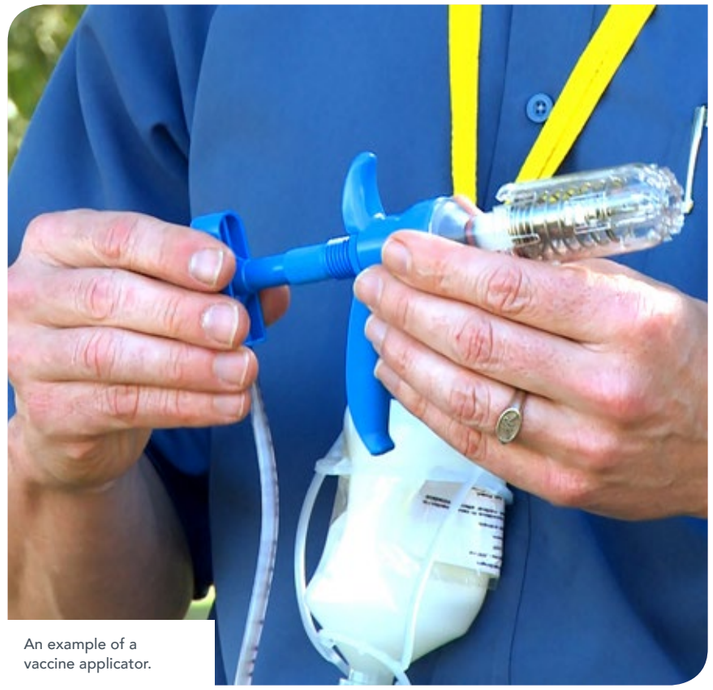
Dr Brendan Pollard
AHA's Senior Manager Emergency Preparedness
Dr Kathy Gibson
AHA's Senior Manager, Special Projects
Dr Francette Geraghty-Dusan
AHA's Veterinary Manager

"...Dragonglass and Obsidian showed the value of collaborative partnerships between all participants..."

"Exercise Dragonglass demonstrated that we have arrangements in place to ensure timely delivery of the vaccine and maintenance of the correct vaccine storage conditions. The exercise did highlight some minor areas for improvements in processes and procedures, which are currently being addressed," said Dr Gibson.

Exercises such as Dragonglass and Obsidian are just one part of Australia's FMD preparedness activities. International collaboration is another key component, as revealed by the FMD Risk Management Project (2010-2016).

As Australia is free of FMD, there are strict guidelines around allowing disease agents into Australian research institutions, which means that working with other countries on FMD research is crucial to ensuring Australia is prepared for this EAD.



An example of a vaccine applicator.

As Dr Wilna Vosloo, Principal Research Scientist at CSIRO's Australian Animal Health Laboratory explains, the FMD Risk Management Project, supported by industry levies, has set up valuable partnerships with various laboratories around the world.

"We know that an FMD outbreak would have a profound impact on Australia's economy, so we need to be prepared to perform diagnostics and research should it come to our shores. Working with overseas laboratories using the live FMD virus allows us to learn from them and ensure that the diagnostic tests we use in Australia would be able to diagnose FMD if there was an outbreak."

Specific collaboration with laboratories in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands has provided additional value.

"Australia shares a common goal with these countries: all three hold FMD vaccine banks and we want to ensure that our banks have suitable strains to protect against new, emerging strains of the FMD virus. Pooling resources and working together allows us to perform more tests and provide better information on the suitability of our individual vaccine banks," said Dr Vosloo.

Exercise Dragonglass: How it happened

1

The simulated FMD vaccine consignment was packed in the UK.

2

It was transported on a passenger aircraft from London to Sydney via Singapore, arriving in Australia 30 hours later. The packaging and transport conditions maintained the cold chain for the duration of transport.

3

The consignment was repackaged at the Approved Arrangement site in Sydney and transported to Queensland in a temperature controlled 'cocoon', and arrived, cold chain intact twenty hours after packaging.

Livestock industry funds have thus contributed to:

- knowing what FMD viruses are circulating in our region (but outside Australia)
- making sure we have the right type of FMD vaccine in Australia's vaccine bank should we need to use it
- ensuring we are able to make a fast and accurate diagnosis of FMD should we have an outbreak.

The FMD Risk Management Project has since become a part of the FMD Ready Project, which commenced in 2016 and aims to improve surveillance, preparedness and return to trade from EAD incursions, using FMD as a model.

It is supported by Meat & Livestock Australia, through funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural Research & Development for Profit program, and by producer levies from Australian FMD-susceptible livestock (cattle, sheep, goats and pigs) industries and Charles Sturt University (CSU), leveraging significant in-kind support from the research partners.

The research partners for this project are the CSIRO, CSU through the Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, the Bureau of Meteorology and the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, supported by AHA.

www.research.csiro.au/fmd

FMD READY PROJECT

1 **goal**

To strengthen preparedness for an EAD outbreak and facilitate an earlier return to trade for Australia following control of such a disease, using FMD as a model.

21 **researchers**

4 **sub-projects**

Focussed on improving Australia's diagnostic capabilities, strengthening farmer-led surveillance, testing outbreak decision support tools and analysing disease transmission paths.

13 **industry and government project partners**

Up to $50 billion

is how much a large outbreak of FMD could cost Australia over 10 years.

Be zoonosis aware

Jess Rummery
AHA's
Biosecurity Extension
Manager, Northern Australia

Zoonotic diseases pose a real risk to people working in our agricultural industries, which is why it is important to get the message out there as often as possible.

Already this year there have been 403 notifications of Q fever and 135 notifications of leptospirosis in Australia.

"It is likely that these cases are just the tip of the iceberg and that many cases of these diseases in Australia go undiagnosed," said Jess Rummery, AHA's Biosecurity Extension Manager for Northern Australia.

"In 2014, I was unfortunate enough to get leptospirosis – a bacterial disease that can infect many species of animals, including humans. Overnight, I went from healthy to being so sick that I was unable to work or even leave the house.

"My symptoms were so non-specific that it took months before I finally got any answers and since then it has been a very long road to recovery. I have met many others that have had very similar experiences to my own."

In Australia we have a range of these diseases, ranging from mild conditions such as ringworm, through to more serious diseases such as Q fever or Hendra virus, which can be fatal to those who contract it. Through simple prevention strategies, the risks of these diseases can be significantly reduced.

Jess reasons that *"Greater awareness and understanding of zoonotic diseases will help prevent infection, and also aid in a timely and accurate diagnosis when infection does occur,"*

"Overnight, I went from healthy to being so sick that I was unable to work or even leave the house."

Bats are known carriers of zoonotic diseases such as Hendra virus and Bat Lyssavirus.

"I often wonder, if my infection had been picked up earlier, would I have experienced the severity and length of illness that I have struggled with over the past four years?

"If by raising awareness within our agricultural communities we can even prevent one case like mine, I would call that a success. I encourage everyone living or working around livestock, wildlife or other animals to be zoonosis aware and get involved."

Disease in-focus: Q fever

Q fever is an important zoonotic disease for people who work with animals to be aware of. Sheep, goats, and cattle are the main sources of infection for humans, but other animals including cats, dogs and kangaroos can be infected. While the disease is carried in animals, clinical signs are rarely observed, and that's what makes it dangerous for humans.

The bacteria that causes the disease are highly infectious, and survive in air, soil and dust; sometimes for years. It can be carried on items such as clothing, wool, hides, and straw as well as placental tissue and fluids from infected animals. It's also shed in milk, urine, and faeces.

Clinical symptoms of Q fever in humans vary. Acute symptoms of disease are often described as severe flu-like symptoms such as a high fever, muscle and joint pain, severe headache, and fatigue. Duration of illness usually lasts from 1-6 weeks, but in some cases can develop into chronic disease.

Those most at risk are people who work with meat and livestock, including abattoir workers, shearers, producers and vets. A vaccine is available to help protect people at risk against Q fever. Q fever immune status can be checked online on the Q fever Register (*www.qfever.org*).

Q fever risk can also be reduced by:

- wearing personal protective equipment such as eyewear, a mask and gloves, particularly when working in high risk areas such as around birthing fluids
- washing hands and arms in hot soapy water after contact with animals or animal fluids
- where possible, mitigate dusty areas where animals are housed and slaughtered.

If you suspect you, your staff or a family member has Q fever, you should seek advice from your doctor, and be sure to mention you work with animals when getting checked out.

Valuable flock health tool

Animal Health Australia

For Dr Peter Dagg, a sheep producer in Murrumbateman NSW, the national Sheep Health Declaration (SHD) is an invaluable tool that helps him make informed purchasing decisions.

"The main benefits of an SHD is that you can be assured that the sheep you're buying don't have major diseases such as Johne's disease (JD) or ovine brucellosis [OB] and that they don't have pests such as lice, which is really important. It also helps you understand if they've been drenched and are within any withholding periods," said Peter.

"Plus, it's very easy to use SHDs. You can either fill them out online or you can print them out when you're at the saleyards," said Peter.

Dr Peter Dagg uses an SHD to protect his flock's health.

The SHD is the most important disease risk management tool sheep producers have available to them, said Dr Rob Barwell, AHA's Senior Manager, Biosecurity.

"The SHD is a great way for producers to provide information about the health status of their flock. OB can cause considerable economic loss in many flocks, through ram wastage, low lamb-marking percentages and extended lambing periods, so it's important producers have ways to avoid bringing the disease onto their property.

"This is where the SHD can help – it provides information to buyers on whether sheep are from an OB accredited flock, allowing producers to assess the risk before proceeding with the purchase," said Dr Barwell.

Peter has been part of the NSW OB accreditation scheme for the past five years and knows firsthand its importance.

"It's absolutely vital to buy from an OB-free flock, as you know that you're not bringing OB into your flock. This way, your ewes won't become infected and you won't have abortions due to the infection," said Peter.

The SHD is available to download on the Farm Biosecurity website.

www.farmbiosecurity.com.au

Saleyards ramp up biosecurity

Jess Rummery
AHA's Biosecurity Extension Manager, Northern Australia
Rachael O'Brien
AHA's Biosecurity Extension Manager, Qld

AHA has teamed up with representatives from the Australian Livestock Markets Association (ALMA) and the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA) to develop a comprehensive biosecurity plan template for saleyards.

"As the peak body representing saleyards throughout Australia, ALMA is constantly looking for ways to assist our members to improve and grow their businesses," said Ian Lovegrove, ALMA's Northern and Western Field Manager.

"It was with this in mind that we readily seized the opportunity to partner with AHA to develop this saleyard biosecurity plan," said Mr Lovegrove.

The plan adopts a risk management approach so that saleyards can reflect on their current practices, regional risks and the way their business operates to develop a comprehensive plan that accurately addresses their own unique risks.

James Christian from NTCA said the biosecurity plan is a document saleyards can fall back on in the event something goes wrong.

"If you forget in the heat of the moment what it is you should do, or could do, then you can refer back to your biosecurity plan. It is all written down and there should be a very logical and sequential set of steps you can take in order to minimise risks," said Mr Christian.

"It is important that we maintain biosecurity to the best of our ability. We need to work with the rest of industry to make sure things happen – from the farm gate up through the supply chain. We all need to work together to keep Australia clean and safe," said Mr Christian.

The plan will be available to all saleyards in Australia with additional planning resources available for ALMA members.

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au
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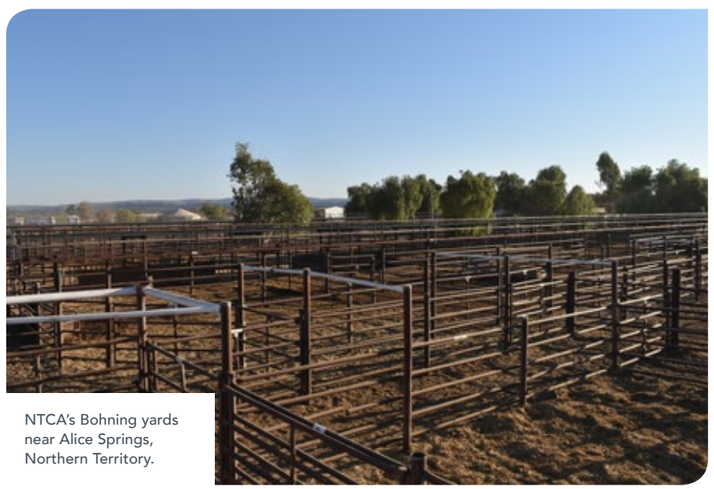


NTCA's Bohning yards near Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

World standard for Australian aquatics

Animal Health Australia

Pacific Reef Fisheries' (PRF) Alva Beach Site located in North Queensland is the first prawn and cobia farm operation in Australia to receive certification from the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), an independent, not-for-profit organisation which sets the highest standard for responsibly farmed seafood in the world.

ASC works with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and food service companies, scientists, conservation groups and consumers to recognise and reward responsible aquaculture through their certification programme, to promote best environmental and social choice when buying seafood and contribute to transforming seafood markets towards sustainability.

ASC certification was a huge accomplishment for the farm, said Wayne Di Bartolo, Systems and Sustainability Manager at PRF.

"Being the first prawn and cobia farm in Australia to achieve the certification gives our company a sense of pride. We feel we are leaders in environmental and social management in our industry," said Mr Di Bartolo.

"The rapidly growing global demand has increased the need to produce sustainable seafood, making it a high priority for us. We at PRF want to ensure that future generations can experience the joy of eating fresh Australian grown seafood whilst maintaining future employment opportunities and preserving the surrounding environment."

"Our business needs to evolve with the world around it; continually improving its practices to become more sustainable, environmental and social."

An aerial view of the PRF Alva Beach farm.

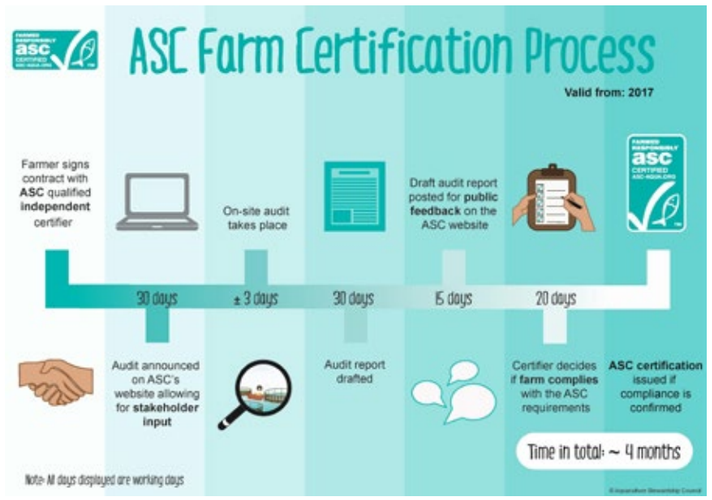
PRF worked with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to obtain ASC accreditation. For the WWF, sustainable food and seafood production is a key priority which sees the organisation work with a range of stakeholders, stated Jo-Anne McCrea, WWF's Australian Fisheries and Seafood Manager.

"The world has 7.6 billion people who currently consume more than 1.7 times what the earth can supply sustainably," said Ms McCrea.

"If we look at the seafood sector in particular, already 31% of global wild fish stocks are over-exploited, which is very worrying when experts predict that global demand for seafood will increase by up to 29% by 2022 alone.

"As such, a key goal for WWF is to help food producers identify and adopt practices that are more sustainable but also more profitable.

"PRF has shown real leadership in responding to the growing demand from Australian families, who want to buy sustainable seafood when shopping or dining out. We hope the PRF's demonstration of best practice will inspire other prawn farmers to follow suit and seek ASC certification," said Ms McCrea.



Mr Di Bartolo recommends all farmers invest in third party sustainability standards.

"These standards are a way for farmers to continually improve their operations to help achieve sustainable products. These standards also help identify equally important environmental and social impacts which may be overlooked during normal operations," said Mr Di Bartolo.

Kristian Mulholland, Environmental Officer at PRF has one piece of advice for other aquaculture facilities who want to become more socially responsible - to be open-minded and accepting of change.

"It's hard work initially, but once the foundation has been set the aim is to continually evolve and improve all actions associated with the business. Every operation should be striving to develop a more sustainable future for its business and the community in which it operates."

"We at PRF have a strong team that accepts change and is willing to move forward to benefit the environment, its community and its production," said Mr Mulholland.

www.pacificreef.com.au

www.worldwildlife.org

www.asc-aqua.org

Tricks of the trade

Animal Health Australia

Shane Thomson is a registered livestock veterinarian who manages his family's farm, 'Shacorrahdalu' just outside Bookham in NSW.

The property has been in the family since 2009 where it started as a commercial Angus cattle breeding herd that has since evolved to ensure long-term profitability. We caught up with Shane to learn more about how he manages his property.

Can you give us an insight into the farm's business practices?

Over 636ha we run an annualised stocking rate of 11.25 dry sheep equivalent/ha and join 450 females annually with the goal of calving down 330 spring females. All of our young stock is retained and grown out until their second spring. This was one of the changes we put in place to improve long-term profitability, as originally we were a winter calving herd. Through these practices we target the feeder steer market between 380-450kg at 12-15 months of age. We also make use of lease country and agistment to facilitate growing out young stock over the autumn/winter period.

Similarly, all heifers are retained and bred through artificial insemination to achieve a tight joining period. This practice has helped us match our livestock requirements with the pasture growth curve and optimise our stocking rates during the pasture growth season. We also have a small scale seed stock herd breeding 30 bulls per annum, which are used in our commercial herd and private sales. In addition to our commercial cattle operations and bull production, we run a contract recipient herd - calving full blood wagyu embryo calves from our commercial angus cows.

As a cattle farmer and livestock veterinarian, what do you think is the most important thing a producer can do to manage on-farm biosecurity?

There's a few key things I would highly recommend:

- set up a thorough plan to manage routine animal health. Most diseases that are costly to livestock enterprises have solid options for management and prevention.
- understand diseases relevant to the local region and identify local industry professionals.
- maintain thorough records of purchases, treatments, livestock movements, etc. This is of the upmost value if traceability for livestock disease control is required.

"It's a very rewarding industry, but can be unsustainable unless the business is adaptable..."

Shane Thomson with his dog Cozmo.

Your property was affected by a severe bushfire in January 2013. How did that affect your production?

The Cobbler Road bush fire of 2013 certainly created a steep learning curve. Within four to six hours of the fire starting 14km away, we had been 98% burnt out, including all of the above ground fodder reserves, but fortunately none of the main sheds or house. It significantly increased our expenses and had a suppressive effect on our income for that year and the year after.

Since recovering from the fires, what are some pasture management processes that you have implemented?

Some key learnings I took away were:

- sell or move a good number of the stock ASAP. Getting stock off the burnt country is very important as they will continue to do damage if left grazing.
- allow pastures to rest to help them to recover from the damage (especially perennial species). We made the decision to keep a large proportion of stock off the place for a longer period of time, which we believe paid dividends in the rejuvenation of our pastures.
- it's important to implement aggressive weed control programs in the post-fire period.

What are some practices you've implemented to help reduce damage from feral pest animals?

Working in conjunction with neighbours in pest animal control is essential, otherwise control attempts can be unrewarding.

Do you have any advice for someone looking to start in the industry?

Do your homework and make a plan before starting. It's a very rewarding industry, but can be unsustainable unless the business is adaptable and constantly looking for opportunities to improve.

The most important aspects of starting up an extensive beef enterprise is identifying the pasture growth curve of the property under management, determining the ideal calving date to match livestock requirements with feed availability and determining what the optimal stocking rate for the property is going to be – then adapt this as you monitor your enterprise's performance. No matter how much experience you have, there is always something to learn and making use of the many industry programs promoting best practice principles is always going to be a valuable exercise.

shacorrahdaluangus

@shacorrahdaluangus

Putting in the hard yards

Animal Health Australia

The South Eastern Livestock Exchange (SELX) located in Yass is the newest and most technologically advanced regional livestock selling centre in NSW.

The 16 hectare, $15 million dollar structure was built over 313 days. Containing 560 dedicated sheep pens, 144 dedicated cattle pens and a further 110 various sheep and cattle pens that can be used for marketing livestock, the facility has the capacity to sell 5,000 cattle and 35,000 sheep on any given sale day. The extensive research that went into planning the facility has ensured a focus on animal safety and wellbeing, environmental sustainability and work health and safety.

Risk Maslin has worked tirelessly to create a world-class facility.

Rick Maslin, SELX Manager has helped bring the vision of a regional livestock selling centre to life. Working in the industry his entire life, Mr Maslin enjoys the highs and lows that come with managing a saleyard of its size.

"I particularly enjoy catching up with people that are associated with livestock and farming industries. For the most part, they are down to earth, determined by nature, show great resilience in the face of adversity and employ a wonderful sense of humour," said Mr Maslin.

"Breeding quality livestock and preparing them for sale is a challenge that I enjoy and now as Saleyard Manager at SELX, I can see the fruits of hard work by the various vendors that present their stock for sale each week. Having the opportunity now to manage a facility that provides a modern, clean and safe environment to market tomorrow's steak, chops or jumper is challenging and enjoyable."

Managing SELX keeps Mr Maslin busy - 12 major agents sell and market livestock through the complex and numerous farmers attend to watch the market action. On average, SELX can see close to 6,500 cattle and 69,000 sheep pass through the site per month.

"Obviously seasonal highs and lows do occur, but approximately 107,000 sheep passed through in and 13,500 cattle in May 2018. The design of the site lends itself to front row viewing of the action and participation for all as the livestock are penned and displayed very well for the panel of buyers and vendors," said Mr Maslin.

"I particularly enjoy catching up with people that are associated with livestock and farming industries."

With such a high level of stock and people movement in and out of the site, biosecurity is something SELX takes very seriously.

"All animals must be accompanied by a National Vendor Declaration and an animal health declaration," said Mr Maslin.

"Yard hygiene is also high on the priority list for us here. Regular washing and sweeping of the sheep yards is an important weekly task, as is the tilling of the soft floor in the cattle yards. There's also a three bay truck wash available 24 hours a day for all trucks who come through."

Animal welfare is another key focus of the saleyard and Mr Maslin works with local veterinarians to ensure good biosecurity and animal welfare is maintained.

"We have a harmonious relationship with our Local Land Services veterinarians. They attend each sale and inspect animals for their suitability for sale and disease risks," said Mr Maslin.

"All livestock must also be 'fit-to-load' and we follow the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Saleyards and Depots," said Mr Maslin.

www.selxnsw.com.au

An auction taking place at the SELX sheep yards.

Insights from the vet profession

Animal Health Australia

Meet Marlena Lopez, a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine student at the University of Melbourne. We caught up with Marlena to chat about her love for the veterinary profession and what advice she'd give other young people looking to enter a veterinary career.

What do you love about working in the veterinary profession?

What I love most about the veterinary profession is the broad impact a single veterinarian can make in this incredibly diverse field. Veterinarians play a significant role in the wellbeing of companion, agricultural, and wildlife animals, but they also have vital roles in public health and food safety. Whatever their specialty, veterinarians are dedicated to maintaining animal health and strengthening the relationships between humans and animals. I have found that the veterinary community in Australia is especially supportive of one another, and I look forward to becoming a part of it.

What inspired you to be a vet?

Pets are invaluable members of the family; however, providing the appropriate level of health care for them becomes a challenge when resources and funding are limited. Coming from a socio-economically disadvantaged household, I personally understand the challenge of providing quality healthcare to your pets.

Having pets in our household enhanced my childhood; however, my family struggled with costs of vet bills and lacked the education on how to best care for our pets. I decided to pursue a career in veterinary medicine so that I can educate pet owners and empower them with the knowledge on how to best look after their beloved pets, meanwhile providing veterinary care to help their animal companions.

Do you have any insights from being a young woman in the veterinary profession?

As a young woman entering the vet profession, I feel that I will be part of it during a moment of meaningful change in terms of gender equality. In decades past, veterinary medicine in Australia was largely a male dominated profession. However, this demographic has recently changed with women now assuming the majority of the population of students and veterinarians.

In the AVA Veterinary Workforce Surveys from 2012-2016, women made up more than 60% of the respondents. Although the majority of veterinary roles are held by women, pay disparities in comparison to their male counterparts are still prevalent.

I hope the gender pay gap will close over time as the growing population of women in the industry extend into more senior roles.

What is your biggest challenge working in the veterinary profession?

Vet school itself has been an incredibly challenging experience.

However, what I have learned is that my performance on a few exams does not represent the type of veterinarian that I will be. I know the material, and I know that I will be a compassionate and well educated veterinarian. I have learned that I can't gain my confidence from my university marks as I used to, but instead by recognising how much I have learned and grown as a student and as an individual.

What advice would you give other young people looking to become a vet?

Many people love animals, but the road to becoming a vet is not easy and you need to have a genuine passion for both science and animals to get through. In my opinion, the best thing a young person looking to enter the industry can do to prepare for university and veterinary school would be to take science classes (especially biology) to see if you like the material, and shadow veterinarians to see if they enjoy the daily responsibilities of the job.

What are you looking forward to working on in the next 12 months?

I recently founded Veterinary Adventures Pty Ltd. After starting vet school, I started an Instagram blog through which I realised that social media provides veterinarians with a unique platform to connect with and educate pet owners like never before, so I established a company to provide goods and services to pets and their owners. I am also working on a clothing line for animal lovers that I hope will be up and running by next year.

I am also looking forward to spending more time in animal hospitals and developing my practical skills as I'll be starting my clinical placements next year.

"Many people love animals, but do not realise that they need to have a passion for science as well..."

@veterinary_adventures

Totally wild

Animal Health Australia

On 21 June 2018, the draft Guidelines for an Emergency Wildlife Disease emergency response (the Guidelines) were put to the test in Exercise Drop Bear.

Funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, the exercise was planned by Wildlife Health Australia (WHA), AHA and Kevin Cooper, one of Australia's most experienced emergency biosecurity response managers. The aim of the exercise was to ensure the Guidelines, which are based on the AUSVETPLAN summary document and management manuals, were fit-for-purpose.

Rupert Woods, WHA's CEO feels the exercise was an important step forward for Australia's wildlife.

WHA's CEO, Rupert Woods has spoken of the importance of being prepared for an outbreak of disease in Australia's native wildlife.

"Development of the Guidelines is the next step in the journey to introducing the wildlife community to our arrangements for managing EADs," said Dr Woods.

"WHA's greatest strength is the ability to engage a large and varied group of stakeholders that may not normally interact with government, but nonetheless have valuable information about wildlife."

"The development of the Guidelines will help these stakeholders to understand the system, their place in it and identify where they may be able to assist authorities in future."

Participant Scott Carver, Chair-Elect of the Wildlife Disease Association Australasia said exercises such as this are important to bring everyone together on the same page.

"Historically, wildlife have played a minor role in environmental biosecurity. The people who work in wildlife don't necessarily have clear practices and strategies set in place for emergencies, so bringing everyone together in a structured way is a great way to gain mutual understanding," said Dr Carver.

Dr Woods identified there were more similarities than differences between native wildlife and domestic livestock when working within an EAD response framework.

"The structures and processes we have in place for livestock will work just as well for our native wildlife. We need to work towards normalizing our approach to these animals."

"As stakeholders in Australia's future, we all have a role to play in our biosecurity. The wildlife community has a lot to contribute, it just needs to know how."

www.wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au

Attendees from across the Australian animal health system participating in a workshop discussion.

Poultry preparedness project underway

Agrifutures Australia has commissioned a project, in conjunction with Australian Eggs and with the support of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia, to address disposal of infected material in the event of an EAD outbreak in the poultry industry.

Disposal of infected material is a core component of the process of recovery from an EAD, helping to ensure that the spread of disease is minimised. Although rapid disposal is of primary importance, it must be undertaken in a way that does not adversely affect the environment or the community.

One of the objectives of the project will be to develop tools and resources for processors and farmers to develop individual operational plans for disposal of carcasses, materials, equipment, products and by-products, said Rod Jenner, Principal Investigator for the project.

"This will provide farmers with the ability to fulfil their on-farm biosecurity obligations. The tools that will be developed will be suitable across both chicken meat and egg industries and be suitable for all types of enterprises.

Workshops and training programs will also be developed to assist producers in using these tools," said Mr Jenner.

"We'll also generate a list of safe disposal sites in major poultry-producing regions and develop information packs for local councils, renderers, transport companies and other stakeholders."

Herd about biosecurity?

Cathy Packham
Publicity Officer, The Dairy Goat Society of Australia Ltd

Unfortunately there can be diseases in goats that people are unaware of. These diseases include JD and caprine arthritis encephalitis (CAE) to name a couple.

When buying dairy goats for the first time or adding to existing stock it is recommended that buyers always check the health status of the dairy goat herd with the seller. You should ask the seller if the animals have been vaccinated and wormed and if so, with what medications and the dates for future reference.

The best way to obtain this information is by requesting a national Goat Health Declaration from the buyer. We recommend you always buy from a registered breeder that has their animals tested and can show you the results for their herd.

It's a good biosecurity practice to have an isolation/quarantine paddock for newly introduced animals to be kept in until you are sure they are healthy and ready to join your existing animals. Prevention is far better than trying to cure, especially as CAE and JD are incurable - it is stressful, expensive and heartbreaking when dealing with sick animals.

www.dairygoats.org.au

Gathering on Route 66

Duncan Worsfold
Chair, Australian 3D Task Group

Depopulation, disposal and decontamination are activities that we hope to never undertake in response to an EAD incident.

However, being prepared for these '3D' activities is crucial to Australia's ability to respond effectively and efficiently should they be required.

To boost our knowledge in this area, five Australians from New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia attended the sixth International Symposium on Animal Mortality Management in Amarillo, Texas on 4-7 June 2018.

The Symposium is a triennial event providing a unique opportunity to talk to subject matter experts on the latest research, technologies and educational programs relating to 3D activities for EADs and natural disasters.

The four day program included a tour of key agricultural sites, technical presentations, practical field demonstrations and a discussion-based exercise.

Embrace audits, producers urged

Integrity Systems Company
A wholly owned subsidiary of Meat & Livestock Australia

Red meat producers should embrace auditing under Australia's enhanced Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program, according to one grazier who has already experienced the process.

Andrew Browning runs about 3,000 Merino ewes on 1,700 hectares in the NSW Riverina. Mr Browning was notified several months ago that his property had been chosen at random to undergo one of approximately 2,000 LPA audits conducted nationally by AUS-MEAT on behalf of the Integrity Systems Company each year.

LPA requires that producers comply with seven elements covering animal welfare, biosecurity, property risk assessment, administering safe and responsible animal treatments, feeding livestock safely, preparing animals for dispatch, and recording livestock transactions and movements.

As part of their commitment to the program, all LPA-accredited producers must also agree to take part in auditing as required.

"I was quite stressed initially as I'd never been audited before and didn't know what to expect," Mr Browning said. *"I also didn't read the audit information kit that came with the notification until I was prompted by the auditor when he rang to organise his visit. Once I did read that I found it very helpful."*

As is customary, Mr Browning was contacted in the first instance by letter. *"It gave me a three month window when the audit was to occur,"* he said. *"Towards the end of that window the auditor rang to give me a date. He also prompted me to read the info kit, and then he rang again about a week out to confirm.*

"The auditor arrived when arranged and we went into the house and did all the paperwork. He then inspected some areas around the yards and sheds."

Mr Browning said although he had at first been apprehensive, the auditor's professional and pleasant manner put him at ease. *"He was good to work with and, overall, the audit went well."*

Mr Browning said he encouraged all producers to embrace auditing as a positive core component of LPA that offered scope for learning.

"It helped as a general refresher regarding livestock treatment, handling, welfare and transport. I also found out a couple of things about introduced livestock quarantine and empty-out, and about record-keeping," said Mr Browning.

Merino farmer Andrew Browning from the Riverina region in NSW.

www.mla.com.au/integrity

Queensland districts unite to build EAD preparedness

Biosecurity Queensland

In 2016, Biosecurity Queensland established the Preparedness Response Project to build networks with disaster management groups that will increase the state's capacity to respond to biosecurity emergencies.

Under Qld's disaster management plan, the state is divided into local government areas, supported by District Disaster Management Groups (DDMG). These DDMGs provide whole-of-government planning and coordination capacity to support local governments in disaster operations and disaster management.

Biosecurity Queensland officers are engaging with these groups in Qld to enhance the state's preparedness for a biosecurity incident, said Dr Allison Crook, Qld's CVO.

"The DDMGs have broad networks, and by working with them to plan for biosecurity emergencies, we can extend our network to reach local grassroots community organisations and businesses too," said Dr Crook.

The Qld Government has also invested in a $2.5 million Biosecurity Preparedness Program to reduce the risk of FMD establishing in Qld and to enhance Qld's preparedness for an FMD incident.

As part of this project, FMD has been chosen as the case study for a series of workshops and presentations to the DDMGs.

"FMD is the single biggest threat to Queensland's livestock industries. As such, our planning for the management of FMD has been incredibly thorough and extensive."

Dr Crook also said that Biosecurity Queensland officers provided first-hand accounts based on their own participation in the response to the devastating FMD outbreak in the United Kingdom in 2001.

"The benefit of having people who are able to draw on their own experiences in dealing with FMD is invaluable in running these workshops with the DDMGs," said Dr Crook.

Allison Crook, CVO, Qld

The presentations made to the DDMGs include a number of key considerations for resourcing (human and equipment), the welfare of the community and response personnel and community recovery following an incident

"As we continue this process we are also finding that the input and feedback from the DDMGs serves to increase our own preparedness and readiness as well," said Dr Crook.

www.daf.qld.gov.au

Valuable time across the ditch

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Australia is lucky to have its own skilled resources ready to respond to an EAD. But a widespread and highly contagious EAD can run for a number of months, if not years. With this comes a significant demand on human and material resources.

A lack of resources could jeopardise the success of a response, and Australia is not alone in recognising this potential risk. This is why Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States have come together under the International Animal Health Emergency Reserve (IAHER) network, said Dr Mark Schipp, Australia's CVO.

"The agreement allows for personnel, including, veterinarians, epidemiologists, and laboratory scientists, to be deployed between the signature countries," said Dr Schipp.

In late 2016 the IAHER and its supporting operations manual was tested in Exercise Athena.

However, nothing provides more hands-on experience than the real thing. In July 2017, New Zealand detected Mycoplasma bovis in cattle on the South Island. This bacterium can cause a range of serious conditions in cattle – including mastitis that doesn't respond to treatment and pneumonia.

New Zealand is working hard to eradicate the bacterium, and in August 2017, approached Dr Schipp to seek assistance through the IAHER.

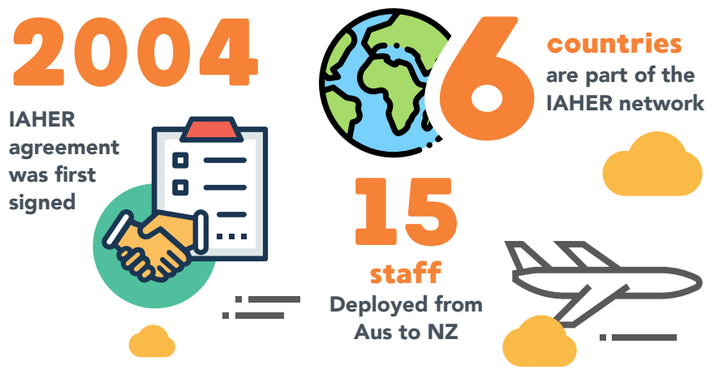
Dr Ian Harradine, veterinary officer at the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, was one of 15 personnel deployed to New Zealand for three weeks, where he helped the response team deal with the outbreak near Wellington.

Ian said that the experience was truly worthwhile.

"For me personally, it was a highly rewarding and satisfying professional experience, allowing me to fully use my epidemiological skills," Ian said.

"It was a real pleasure working with our New Zealand colleagues and I would recommend anyone with veterinary or epidemiological skills to sign up for the IAHER".

IAHERdeployment@agriculture.gov.au



Biosecurity through the eyes of an alpaca

Fiona Vanderbeek
previous AAA Director*

Imagine this. It's March 2001 on a sheep dairy farm in southern England. A mob of lambs is sent to the local saleyard; one lamb does not sell and is returned to the farm.

The next day, an outbreak of FMD is declared, with the disease first detected in an animal at an abattoir which collected animals from that same saleyard. Every animal that passed through the saleyards on that day was traced and destroyed, along with every other susceptible animal on the properties they went to.

Because that one lamb was returned to the property, this farmer lost every animal he possessed – 500 sheep, nine goats, five cows and a pregnant llama - even though a veterinary inspection showed no sign of disease. He then had to sit up all night guarding the pile of carcases before they could be burned the next day, to ensure that foxes did not prey on any potentially infected carcase.

This farmer lost everything – his sole source of income, the years of genetic improvement in his flock, and also some family pets, such as the llama.

The 2001 FMD outbreak in the United Kingdom was not over until the end of September, by which time 6.5 million animals had been destroyed.

This is the harsh reality of what could happen if an EAD that affects alpacas hits us here in Australia. This is the very worst type of incident that can occur - a far more common scenario which could impact your farm is Barber's pole.

An example of this is an alpaca breeder in southern NSW who buys a group of animals from a farm in an area known for its high rainfall and issues with high worm burdens and drench resistance. On arrival, the animals are immediately quarantined and faecal samples are taken.

On testing the samples many are found to have high egg counts, with one young animal being found to be thin, anaemic and with a worm count of 3,500 eggs per gram. A count so high the vet was amazed she was still alive, and most likely indicating a heavy burden of Barber's pole worm. The animals were drenched with Zolvix, and kept in concrete floored pens on straw bedding, for a further 10 days.

"Biosecurity is about the protection of livestock at a farm or regional level…"

When a repeated faecal test indicated an egg count of zero the animals were put on grass, but even at this time were kept in a separate quarantine paddock.

Only after a second clear count a month later were the animals integrated with the main herd. Not only did the most heavily burdened animal make a full recovery, but the property maintained a status free of Barber's pole.

Both scenarios, though at opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of size and impact, are examples of why biosecurity does matter – to every one of us, whether we own alpacas purely for pleasure, or are commercial scale farmers. Biosecurity is about the protection of livestock at a farm or regional level, as well as the management of risk at a national level to protect Australia's ability to trade internationally.

All of us, whether we own two or two hundred alpacas, has an obligation to play our part to protect our own animals and the national herd.

AAA's biosecurity programs

The alpaca industry had for many years been operating two biosecurity programs – AlpacaMAP and Q-Alpaca. However, in recent years participation in both programs has been declining.

With the introduction of new farm biosecurity models the time is right for the AAA to overhaul alpaca biosecurity. However, the alpaca industry has some specific challenges to address in the re-design of our biosecurity program.

The end result needs to be a program that is meaningful but also not unduly arduous in its requirements. Writing a farm biosecurity plan is easy. Ensuring it is acted on daily, not filed in a drawer is the hard part.

* Previously published in AAA magazine

Tassie tackles farm biosecurity

Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association

The scale of, and response to, an EAD is largely dependent on farmers. Early detection of a disease relies on farmers knowing what to look for and who to contact if they suspect a serious disease. Farmers are also vital in preventing the spread of animal diseases.

To help protect Tasmanian farmers and communities from the spread of animal diseases the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) has embarked on a four-year project on farm biosecurity.

Funded by the Tasmanian government, the Farm Biosecurity Engagement Project's overarching message is, *'Prepare and Plan to Protect your Future'*. The TFGA will work closely with Biosecurity Tasmania to raise awareness of the importance of farm biosecurity, limiting the spread of disease and what to do when a serious disease is suspected on farm.

TFGA Farm Biosecurity Officer Mandy Bowling described the project as providing farmers with the tools and resources to implement farm biosecurity on their farm.

"The aim of the project is to help farmers prepare for possible disease incursions and have a biosecurity plan in place. The long-term goal is for farmers across Tasmania to be proactive and continue to maintain farm biosecurity practices to protect their farms from disease," said Ms Bowling.

Mandy Bowling, TGFA's Farm Biosecurity Officer

Communication will be through multiple avenues, from online and social media through to face-to-face workshops with farmers. Other groups will also be involved in the project, including local and state government and industry groups, to improve farm biosecurity at all levels.

Another goal of the project is to help others understand the role they have to play in farm biosecurity, including regular on-farm visitors, such as agents, contractors and utility workers.

"It's not just up to farmers to understand farm biosecurity. It's the responsibility of anyone coming onto a farm to respect farm biosecurity and help prevent the spread of disease," said Ms Bowling

A second component of the project is to gain a better understanding of what is being produced, and where, on Tasmanian farms.

"Understanding locations of farms is an important aspect in managing an EAD outbreak in Tasmania. Being able to inform all farmers of an outbreak or risk to their farm is a vital factor in reducing the spread and impact of animal diseases," said Ms Bowling.

"It's not just up to farmers to understand farm biosecurity. It's the responsibility of anyone coming onto a farm..."

"The hope is that at the completion of the Farm Biosecurity Engagement Project, Tasmanian farmers will understand the importance of farm biosecurity and implement biosecurity practices on their farm. The aim is to ensure that farmers will be equipped with the knowledge and resources to protect their farms and communities from the spread of any EAD that could enter the state."

www.tfga.com.au

mandy.bowling@tfga.com.au

Where there's a wool, there's a way

Australian Wool Innovation

An EAD outbreak affecting sheep in Australia would cause a significant sustained interruption to the trade of wool on the global market.

During an outbreak, if wool is identified as potentially contaminated with an infectious agent, it will be traced and movement restrictions applied.

The wool export trade would cease overnight and remain shut indefinitely, or at least until Australia is considered free of the disease, said Bridget Peachey, Australian Wool Innovation's (AWI) Program Manager for Sheep Health and Welfare.

"As 95% of Australian wool is exported this would have a devastating effect on the industry. Fortunately the industry is aware that preparation and planning for an EAD outbreak is essential in mitigating the effects on business along the wool supply chain. This is why AWI and other industry bodies, through the Federation of Australian Wool Organisations has developed the Australian Wool Industry EAD Preparedness Research, Development and Extension Strategy 2016/17-2018/19 *which specifically addresses the supply chain from farm to market and outlines industry goals in the event of an EAD,"* said Ms Peachey.

"These goals include mitigating interruption to exports of Australian wool to the world's markets, and minimising reputational damage to the Australian industry, to achieve the most rapid return possible to normal business for woolgrowers, customers and others along the wool supply chain."

www.wool.com/biosecurity

bridget.peachey@wool.com

Reinventing the wheels

Animal Health Australia

***There is no finish line* isn't just a catchy 90's Nike slogan. It's also the title of Harness Racing Australia's (HRA) new initiative which promotes the many and varied opportunities available to Standardbreds in their life away from the race track.**

As part of this program, HRA launched a re-training project in May 2018, with their Equine Health and Welfare Manager, Kathleen Mullan using her extensive equestrian knowledge and expertise to take off-the-track Standardbreds and re-educate them to a saddle career.

"We want to dispel many of the myths surrounding re-education, as well as develop valuable training tools for the many riders who are retraining their own Standardbreds," said Ms Mullan.

"We also hope to challenge common misconceptions regarding the Standardbred as a breed and share strategies for overcoming these perceived challenges."

As horse lovers, the harness industry has always been extremely active in caring for their Standardbreds beyond the racetrack. With a high percentage of small and hobby type properties, many participants breed horses that they raise, train, race and care for their entire lives.

"Many horses become part of the extended family and most racing stables will be able to fondly show you a retiree or three that is living out their days in a pastured paddock," said Ms Mullan.

HRA have selected the grand campaigner, Savesomtimetodream as the hero of this project. Always a crowd favourite, he is a veteran of 113 starts, earning over $220,000 in prize money before retiring at 10 years of age.

Since returning to the paddock to enjoy a life of leisure, he is an ideal candidate to demonstrate the transition from seasoned racing warrior to show horse.

"Savesomtimetodream's journey will be documented for the public to follow in a series of training videos available on HRA's welfare website, Facebook and Instagram, so be sure to keep your eye out," said Ms Mullan.

www.thereisnofinishline.com.au

HRAthereisnofinishline

@harness_racing_australia

HRA Equine Health and Welfare Coordinator Kathleen Mullan with Savesomtimetodream

Levy supports a stronger Australian biosecurity system

Animal Health Australia

Australia's $63 billion agricultural industry, its $38 billion inbound tourism sector and its $6 trillion in environmental assets will be further protected due to the introduction of a new biosecurity levy on imports by sea.

Announced as part of the Australian Government's 2018-19 Budget, the Biosecurity Imports Levy will commence on 1 July 2019 and impose a new charge on all containerised and non-containerised cargo imported to Australia by sea, with the exception of military equipment. The Levy is estimated to raise $325 million over its first three years to support a stronger and more streamlined biosecurity system.

The levy follows the 2017 independent review into Australia's biosecurity system, Priorities for Australia's biosecurity system.

"Biosecurity risks are changing due to increased import volumes and pathways becoming faster and more complex," said Lyn O'Connell, Deputy Secretary, Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

"Much of the material of concern to the national biosecurity system, including of environmental concern, arrives via vessels and containers, either in the contents of the container or on the external surfaces of the container itself. Introducing a levy on containers and non-containerised imports will contribute towards greater efforts to manage these risks."

CEO of the Invasive Species Council, Andrew Cox said the introduction of the Levy was a significant step in protecting the status of Australia's biosecurity future.

"The Levy is well designed, as it's based on the number of imported shipping containers. As the risk grows with an increasing number of imports, so does the Levy," said Mr Cox.

"Creating a long-term funding source through this levy will help to deliver on the biosecurity review recommendations to address the 'most underfunded' areas in the biosecurity system such as environmental biosecurity, surveillance, research and innovation and awareness raising. This will ultimately strengthen Australia's biosecurity safety net," added Mr Cox.

www.agriculture.gov.au

Abattoirs at the frontline of EAD detection

Sarah Britton
NSW CVO,
Biosecurity and Food Safety
NSW DPI

Every day thousands of animals pass through Australia's abattoirs and knackeries. This means these facilities may be amongst the first to detect an EAD outbreak.

The NSW DPI has joined forces with the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and the National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council to build the capacity of abattoir and knackery workers to identify risks and report them early.

"The 2001 UK FMD outbreak was first detected in an Essex abattoir. Abattoir and knackery workers are on the frontline of efforts to protect our livestock industry from the threat of EADs," said Dr Nicole Schembri, NSW DPI's Peri-Urban Program Coordinator.

As part of the program, NSW DPI staff have been travelling to abattoirs and knackeries across NSW to understand their current state of biosecurity preparedness.

"By increasing awareness and making training more accessible we're hoping that abattoir and knackery workers can recognise the signs of EADs and will report when suspicious symptoms are detected," she said.

Posters, magnets and contact cards provide a visual EAD reminder in the lunch rooms and common areas at these facilities, helping workers remember what to report and who to report it to should they spot something unusual.

As part of the project, NSW DPI has created a webpage housing training tools. It contains materials developed by government and industry organisations including the NSW DPI, AHA, Australian Meat Processor Corporation, Biosecurity Queensland and Meat & Livestock Australia.

"The site provides a centralised resource for workers to quickly and conveniently upskill themselves in disease recognition and reporting," said Dr Schembri.

"Through this program we hope to enhance biosecurity outcomes in NSW and continue the work of protecting our environment, economy and community from the threat of EAD," said Dr Schembri.

The program was delivered with funding from the Australian Government's Stronger Biosecurity and Quarantine Initiative.

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Meet our members

AHA works in partnership with our members and other stakeholders to keep Australia free of new and emerging diseases and to improve animal health, strengthen biosecurity, enhance market access and foster the resilience and integrity of the Australian animal health system.

Each edition we'll introduce you to one of our 34 member organisations so you can learn a bit more about the great work they do for Australian agriculture. This issue we caught up with the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and their President, Paula Parker.

The AVA is Australia's only collective voice for vets. They are experienced advocates and active leaders on all issues of animal health and welfare. For nearly 100 years they've represented vets in every corner of Australia.

Driven by science, respect and a collective strength, they connect a nationwide family of members every day, allowing them to share ideas, knowledge and success.

By supporting vets, AVA also support their local communities, making a positive and enduring difference daily.

www.ava.com.au

"For nearly 100 years they've represented vets in every corner of Australia."

Spotlight
Paula Parker

We had a chat with AVA's President, Paula Parker about her experiences and highlights from working in the industry.

Being the organisation's youngest president in 100 years is quite an achievement. How did you feel when the official announcement was made?

A combination of relieved and excited. This is a time of enormous change in our profession and our organisation, and embracing that change is the key to our ongoing leadership in animal health and welfare.

As the AVA approaches its centenary in 2021 and my generation of leaders takes a more visible role, we need to continue to honour the heritage of our profession and our organisation while at the same time ensuring that Australia's world leadership in animal health and welfare is maintained well into the next century.

What inspired you to work in the veterinary field?

My family has a background in medicine and the armed services. The value of service to the community was instilled in me at a very young age. I can't remember ever wanting to be anything else besides a veterinarian. I can remember bounding up to the front of the class all curls and pink cheeks to announce to my classmates on the first day of primary school that 'My name is Paula and I am going to be a vet'.

Our members inspire me daily. I was fortunate when I first graduated to work in a fantastic mixed practice in Gippsland. The veterinarians I worked with were part of the fabric of the community. In my position in the AVA, I am continually humbled by the contributions that our members make to their communities in both veterinary and non-veterinary capacities. Animal health and agriculture are the glue that binds rural communities together. That and AFL.

Do you have any career highlights?

Being elected the President of AVA by our board is the highlight of my career to date. I think everyone has moments that they remember as career defining. I remember attending an outbreak of nitrate poisoning in a dairy herd when I first moved to Gippsland. Responding to the outbreak was sheer adrenaline. The most satisfying part was seeing our team of vets work with the farmers and their team to investigate the outbreak and put in place a range of animal health and herd management practices that set them up for impressive performance the following season.

What is your vision for the organisation moving forward?

The vision for our organisation and our members is to be the health and welfare leaders of Australia's animal industries.

Leadership for the AVA is also about the daily actions of all of our members. If every farmer has a partnership with their vet where they create and evolve biosecurity and herd management plans that add value and deliver best farming practices we will be a long way to achieving our vision.

"Animal health and agriculture are the glue that binds rural communities together. That and AFL."

Leadership Profile

Animal Health Australia

Trevor Drew, AAHL's Director

With over 30 years' experience working in preparedness and laboratory response to exotic disease incursions, Dr Trevor Drew has been appointed the new Director of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL). We caught up with Dr Drew to find out more about his experiences and vision for AAHL.

What roles have you worked in and what do you love about the industry?

I have spent my career to date working as a scientist in government. I have primarily worked for the UK Agriculture Ministry, along with a number of secondments in Africa and Asia working on foreign aid projects. I have also been a Disease Reference Expert for the World Organisation for Animal Health.

I get a great deal of personal satisfaction in helping farmers and producers to raise healthy, productive livestock and in making a difference to the welfare of animals.

What has been a career highlight?

I think my greatest career highlight was working in Ethiopia, with the task of improving the quality control of rinderpest vaccine production. Despite difficult working conditions, I developed all the tests for adventitious virus screening for the successful pan-African eradication campaign and these were later used in the global eradication of that disease – only the second disease to be eradicated in the history of mankind. I feel very proud to have played a small part in this huge achievement on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the many vets, animal health workers and farmers who worked on the campaign.

Having an Order of the British Empire personally conferred on me by the Queen in 2015, for services to animal health and welfare, was also a huge honour.

Why is EAD preparedness so important?

Apart from the profound effects of EADs on an individual nation's food supply and exports, they also present an increasing threat to global food production, which in turn, threatens food security, particularly in countries where subsistence farming is the norm.

It's very important to know what existing and emerging threats are out there, what level of risk they may pose to Australian agriculture and fisheries, which pathways they might be introduced and how we might mitigate those risks in the first place.

"I get a great deal of personal satisfaction in helping farmers and producers to raise healthy, productive livestock and in making a difference to the welfare of animals."

What are some challenges you've faced in your role and do you have any key insights?

The UK is rather unique in comprising four different countries and, for the moment at least, being part of a wider European Union. This presents a formidable challenge in harmonising diagnosis of EADs, so that surveillance is effective and detection is rapid and accurate, wherever an outbreak may occur.

From many years of first-hand experience, I have distilled out one very simple rule in EAD response – you have to move faster than the pathogen. This means you need to have the right teams and technology in place and well-rehearsed plans. Prompt detection therefore requires active engagement with producers and private veterinarians and compliance with rules concerning animal ID and recording movements.

Trevor with Dr Nguyen Van Long, epidemiologist at Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development, Vietnam.

What are you looking forward to in your new role as AAHL director?

My top priority is to work with AAHL's scientists to rebuild the identity and international status of the institute. I'm keen to learn more about the wider activities of CSIRO, to identify opportunities for engaging in more diverse science in partnership.

I'm also looking forward to better understanding the needs of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and industry in regards to surveillance and research to see how we might better mitigate against disease threats and reduce costs through "smarter" surveillance.

What advice do you have for others looking to progress in the industry?

I suppose I can only really answer that by reflecting on experiences in my own career. I would say don't specialise too early, go and work in different laboratories and if you really want to understand a role, don't just read the job description - work alongside someone for a day. I'd also advise to not just watch videos of exotic diseases – go and see them in places where they are endemic. And maintain a healthy work-life balance!

Dr Drew's top tips for leadership

1. **Provide a clear vision**
2. **Apply your authority humbly and wisely**
3. **Support staff in professional development**
4. **Ensure staff receive credit for their achievements**
5. **Be courageous and adventurous**

In the know

One Biosecurity helping farmers protect livestock

South Australia's beef cattle, dairy and sheep producers can now better manage, their on-farm biosecurity practices, with the launch of One Biosecurity.

Biosecurity SA Executive Director Will Zacharin said there is a growing demand for information about on-farm biosecurity practices, at all levels of the livestock chain.

"This program will help meet that demand and increase transparency in livestock trading within SA, while at the same time managing the most common biosecurity risks," said Mr Zacharin.

pir.sa.gov.au/onebiosecurity

ALFA launches new Grain Fed Finished Standard

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association new Grain Fed Finished Standard was introduced on 1 September 2018.

The minimum standard outlines a number of requirements for feedlot cattle.

www.feedlots.com.au

Biosecurity and horse health: a shared responsibility

People who own or work with horses all play a role in ensuring good biosecurity outcomes for horses.

NSW DPI has developed materials about horse health management, with information on movement and transportation into NSW, welfare and training opportunities.

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au *www.lls.nsw.gov.au*

Want to keep up-to-date with the latest animal health and farm biosecurity news?

Visit **www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/subscribe** and subscribe to our newsletters - AHA Express, AHA Aquatic Update and Farm Biosecurity News.

NSW GOVERNMENT | Department of Primary Industries

Do **NOT** feed swill to your pigs

SWILL FEEDING IS ILLEGAL IN AUSTRALIA

This means that it is illegal to feed food waste containing meat or other mammalian by-products to pigs.

Swill may contain serious exotic diseases that could devastate our livestock industries and stop our meat products being exported. For more information, visit **www.dpi.nsw.gov.au**

EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE WATCH HOTLINE
1800 675 888

HOW DOES SWILL FEEDING CAUSE DISEASE IN PIGS?

The biosecurity collective

2019 Australian Biosecurity Symposium

A forum for the biosecurity collective

12–13 June 2019
Gold Coast

Come be a part of the inaugural *Australian Biosecurity Symposium* – hosted by Animal Health Australia, the Invasive Species Council and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions.

Registration and abstract submissions are open now.

Sponsorship and exhibition opportunities open in December 2018.

Focussing on:

- preventative biosecurity practices
- innovations and outside-of-the-box thinking
- the exchange of knowledge and ideas from different sectors, including agriculture (animals and plants), pest animals, weeds, wildlife, aquatics and the environment.

For more information visit www.biosym.com.au

animalhealth AUSTRALIA

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CENTRE FOR INVASIVE SPECIES SOLUTIONS