

Friday 10 May 2013

EXTENSION FOR COMMENT ON DRAFT WELFARE STANDARDS

The Australian, state and territory governments have extended the consultation period for public comment on the draft Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle and for Sheep.

The extension means the period for comment will now close on Monday 5 August.

The decision was made by the Australian, state and territory ministers of primary industries at a recent meeting and follows industry and stakeholder calls for an extension to the public consultation period.

Animal Health Australia (AHA) is conducting the public consultation on behalf of its members. Dr Mike Bond, AHA Chief Executive Officer, said he was surprised and pleased by the late rush of submissions responding to the draft standards.

“We’ve now received more than 150 substantial submissions, more than 2300 online surveys and many thousands of additional comments by-email,” Dr Bond said.

“I would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have so far taken the time to send us their views.”

Dr Bond said that, judging by the number and detail of submissions received, it is clear that they address significant issues for Australian livestock producers and the broader community.

“As the final standards will be written into law at the end of the development process by the governments that enforce these standards, it is important that everyone in the community has their opportunity for input,” Dr Bond said.

“Therefore, I encourage any producers and interested members of the community who have not yet responded to take this further opportunity to read the draft standards and have their say,” he said.

AHA will start assessing the submissions already received while the consultation period remains open.

The development of the draft standards and guidelines has been a joint government and industry initiative coordinated by Animal Health Australia. Governments, peak livestock bodies representing thousands of producer members and welfare organisations have been involved in the drafting of the documents.

Visit www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au for further details on how to make a submission and to download the relevant documents.

Email cattle submissions to publicconscattle@animalwelfarestandards.net.au Email sheep submissions to publicconssheep@animalwelfarestandards.net.au

ENDS

Media contact: Lisa Borthwick, 02 6203 3942