



**SHEEP
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Statement I National Livestock Traceability System Reform

“Sheep Producers Australia (SPA) recognises that Australia’s multi-billion dollar red-meat and livestock industries do have biosecurity threats from diseases such as Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD). FMD has the potential to decimate the Australian livestock sector and result in significant market access disruption if allowed to enter and spread.” Stephen Crisp SPA CEO.

Ongoing detections at Australia’s borders and recent reports demonstrate that these threats cannot be ignored.

“SPA takes these threats extremely seriously and has been deliberately and proactively working on the continual improvement of Australia’s livestock traceability capability. Since 2018 SPA has been working with SAFEMEAT and its members on the development of reform recommendations to the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). As part of that work SPA has accepted the findings of key sheep industry reports as compelling evidence to support national traceability reform for the red meat sector.” Mr Crisp.

Evidence in the NLIS (Sheep & Goats) Traceability Evaluation report has galvanised SPA’s support of the five reform recommendations which have been presented by SAFEMEAT to the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) in March 2020.

These recommendations include;

1. the establishment of a regulatory or statutory entity responsible for managing Australian livestock traceability,
2. investment into a database capable of handling all FMD susceptible livestock species,
3. mandating individual digital/electronic identification of livestock,
4. creating an equitable funding arrangement for both the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the system and,
5. that a consultation Regulatory Impact Statement be conducted to fully assess the impact of these recommendations to provide a fully costed decision paper to AGMIN.

SPA strongly supports recommendation 5 as an appropriate next step, and is looking forward to the assessment of the regulatory impact of the recommendations to ensure the costs are fully understood.

“SPA expects that this work will determine the most appropriate method for implementing the recommendations in consultation with the livestock sector more broadly. We acknowledge the potential cost and logistical challenges associated with the implementation of the proposed reform options for the sheep industry and therefore fully support an extensive and public consultation process. Government must examine what investment is required to facilitate a systemic improvement in biosecurity for the livestock sector.”

“National traceability reform will ensure that livestock traceability can evolve and meet future biosecurity and market access requirements as well as unlock productivity gains throughout the supply chain, securing a strong future for sheep producers both domestically and within our global markets.” Mr Crisp.

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