

# South Australian Cattle Advisory Group

## Meeting Summary

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2006

**NOTE: At the time of distribution, the Minister has not approved the outcomes listed in this document. Any misuse of information by individuals or associations will cause this service to be withdrawn.**

*The meeting commenced at 10:07 am.*

### 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all members and guests to the meeting and introduced Andrew Ogilvie - the new Intensive Cattle Industry representative on the Group. He revealed that A. Ogilvie represents the cattle industry on the South Australian Farmers Federation Livestock Executive Committee, Cattle Industry Development Board and the Cattle Council of Australia, and believes that this association will assist SA CAG's decision-making process.

### 2. Attendance

<i>Andrew Withers (Chair)</i>	<i>Beef Industry Representative (SAFF)</i>
<i>Tom Honner</i>	<i>Beef Industry Representative</i>
<i>Ken Smith</i>	<i>Dairy Industry Representative</i>
<i>Sue Young</i>	<i>Dairy Industry Representative</i>
<i>Andrew Ogilvie</i>	<i>Intensive Cattle Industry Sector</i>
<i>Sharon Oldfield</i>	<i>Pastoral Beef Industry Representative</i>
<i>Neil Buchanan</i>	<i>Ministers Representative (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Trudi Goodwin</i>	<i>Executive Officer, Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>

### Guests:

<i>Elena Petrenas</i>	<i>Manager, Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Jeremy Rogers</i>	<i>Veterinary Consultant (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Jack Van Wijk</i>	<i>Manager, Disease Control, Animal Health (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Trent Scholz</i>	<i>Animal Health Advisor (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Celia Dickason</i>	<i>Veterinary Officer (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Mark Langman</i>	<i>Legislation Advisor, Animal Health (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Peter Nosworthy</i>	<i>Senior Veterinary Consultant (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Robin Vandegraaff</i>	<i>Director, Animal Health (PIRSA)</i>

### 3. Apologies

<i>Gary Spain</i>	<i>Dairy Industry Representative (SADA)</i>
<i>Geoff Neumann</i>	<i>Protect Australia Livestock Campaign consultant (AHA)</i>

### 4. Confirmation of SA Cattle Advisory Group 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes – December 2005

The minutes from the 26<sup>th</sup> SA CAG meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005 were accepted as a true and accurate record subject to identified amendments.

### 5. Matters Arising from the 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes/Actions – 5 December 2005

All action items from the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005 meeting were completed with the exception of:

**(Cattle Industry Fund – Application for Refund)** - Members were advised that the Manager of Disease Surveillance (PIRSA) is on a 12 month sabbatical in Indonesia. Consequently it is unlikely that this particular refund matter has been dealt and no replacement has been appointed to this position as yet.

PIRSAs Animal Health's Legislative Officer confirmed that correspondence was received from a large cattle producer (August 2005) requesting the refund of their Cattle Industry Fund (CIF) contribution for the 2004/2005 period. No refund has been provided to date, and it is thought that the producer is unaware of the consequences of withdrawing their contribution from the CIF. When a request for a refund is received, normally the consequences are discussed with the inquirer and then a one page explanatory note is forwarded (along with a refund form) to confirm the benefits accrued to industry from the use of the Fund.

SA CAG members expressed their disappointment at PIRSA's lack of a timely response to this application letter. Sincere apologies were expressed to SA CAG members.

## **OUTCOME**

**Draft a formal response and arrange a meeting with the producer to discuss the application to withdraw funds from the CIF.**

### **6. SA CAG Correspondence**

The tabled correspondence was noted.

### **7. Business**

#### **7.1 Financial Statement**

As at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006, producer contributions totaling \$119,658 were received by the Cattle Industry Fund (CIF). Total revenue (including interest) was \$364,243, which is \$194,367 below the year to date budget (\$558,610). Of concern is the fact that total revenue received is only 50% of the total annual budget. Reasons for this shortfall include less than expected numbers of JD reactors being culled (ie \$84,881 versus the year to date budget of \$315,610) – this reflects farmers potentially being unwilling to cull high risk offspring, and the volume of NLIS devices purchased during the subsidy period. Based on historical purchase trends it is anticipated that the Fund may only receive \$200,000 in contributions by the end of June 2006.

Total expenditure for the same period was \$562,295, which is only 62% of budgeted year to date expenditure (\$908,551). Savings were seen on expenses incurred by:

- the SA CAG and CIF (\$6,821 compared to \$8,999);
- compensation paid for JD reactors (\$159,567 compared to 523,355);
- the "Trade Risk Management" program (\$21,748 compared to \$36,420);
- the "EBL" project (\$15,346 compared to \$30,027) as the second round of testing is still to occur; and
- the Maree Soil Board paid for the "Pimelea Scoping Study" activities during 2005/2006. An application to carryover the \$20,000 to 2006/2007 has been submitted to SA CAG for consideration.

On the other hand, the NLIS and BJD/Dairy ManaJD programs exceeded their year to date budgets. The NLIS program exceeded its year to date budget by \$35,000 as the total budget was withdrawn from the Fund in March 2006. Increased expenditure by the BJD/Dairy ManaJD program (\$283,814 compared to \$265,000) reflects that several Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) rebates for MAP subsidies are still owed. It is estimated that the Dairy ManaJD program has actually spent \$9,200 less than budgeted.

The closing balance of the Fund as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 was \$2,321,063.

Several members were concerned that basing contributions to the CIF on the sale of NLIS devices was not covering all cattle transactions (eg cattle bought by traders, lot feeders etc), thereby lowering the revenue base to the Fund to cattle breeders only.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Develop a discussion paper outlining future potential contributions to the CIF between the existing system versus the introduction of a transaction levy over the next five years.**

The issue of Fund capital (ie the closing balance after normal operating expenses) was raised. It was reconfirmed that an operating surplus of around \$1.2 million should be maintained in the case of a local disease emergency response.

## 7.2 Cattle Industry Fund - Project Reports

### 7.2.1 Industry Liaison Officer Training Project

The next Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) training workshops, organized by SAFF on behalf of Animal Health Australia (AHA), is scheduled to occur on the 8<sup>th</sup> (Mt Gambier) and 9<sup>th</sup> (Naracoorte) June 2006.

Members were advised that AHA was unprepared to reschedule the ILO training days to either the end of June or more preferably the end of August 2006 (in light of known clashes) because of budgetary constraints. However AHA is committed to holding a further two training days in South Australia during 2006/2007 – the dates and venues to be negotiated with industry. Two tentative locations suggested to AHA were Murray Bridge and Port Augusta.

Subsequent to the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006 SA CAG teleconference, A. Withers conversed with the SA Sheep Advisory Group (SASAG) chair, to confirm their position on this project. He reported that SASAG, like SA CAG, supported the use of industry funds to offset any out of pocket expenses incurred by ILO attendees but were against the provision of any additional incentive payment above the \$120 provided by AHA. Similarly, SASAG also does not approve of the release of a lump sum to SAFF, but rather retrospective payment via an invoice. SAFF has been advised of each Group's financial commitment and a recommendation to this effect has been forwarded to the Minister for consideration.

#### **OUTCOME**

**Forward correspondence to Animal Health Australia (AHA) recommending the need for the national cattle industry to cover the real costs incurred by ILO attendees (eg lost time, mileage and accommodation).**

### 7.2.2 Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD) and Dairy ManaJD Program

J. Rogers (Dairy ManaJD Project Manager) advised that 230 out of the known 384 South Australian herds (or 60%) have enrolled in the Dairy ManaJD program to date. Uptake has been highest in the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Murray region, and slower in the South East. It is believed that this reticence in the South East reflects both differences in regional philosophy as well as the fact that South East vets are under resourced.

In most areas there has been a paradigm shift in farmer perceptions about BJD towards more open discussion and a recognition that steps can be taken to manage and control the disease. However, further work is required to promote compliance and the use of the dairy scores, especially in the South East.

The lack of enrolled producers from the South East in part reflects that a number of dairy producers have enrolled in the region but are still awaiting sample collection. Members agreed to contact dairy farmers in this region to encourage their involvement in the program and to organise "sample collection" dates.

#### **OUTCOME**

- **Advise the South East Veterinarians of SA CAG's concerns about the delays in collecting blood samples from dairies enrolled in Dairy ManaJD, and discuss ways to improve the process.**
- **Contact dairy farmers (both those awaiting to be tested and non-enrolled herds) to encourage their involvement and to organise sampling dates.**

#### **BJD Testing in Beef herds**

J. Rogers reported that there has been two new diagnoses of BJD infected beef herds in South Australia.

- A MN2 herd detected two reactors at a MAP progression test. Both were confirmed infected. Tracings and testing of other cattle to another MAP property have been negative - trace forward investigations are ongoing, with owners being notified in writing and then by personal contact.

- A second cross-bred beef herd was diagnosed with BJD as a result of cultures and positive reaction after an “Audit Bovine Scour Package” test. The whole herd has been tested now and tracings to other herds have commenced, with further testing to follow.

### **BJD/Dairy ManaJD Budget – 2006/2007**

The budgeted cost for BJD and Dairy ManaJD activities in 2006/07 was estimated to be around \$600,000. This estimate is net of JD reactor salvage revenue and AHA rebates. It was requested that SA CAG approve a budget of \$700,000 for 2006/2007 due to concerns that there may be a run on the disposal of reactors and high-risk offspring (given that it's the last year of the program) and that there may be difficulties if additional monies are sought from the Fund during the year.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG approves the ongoing funding of the BJD project up to the value of \$700,000 for the 2006/2007 period from the Cattle Industry Fund (CIF). Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**

#### **7.2.3 Bulk Milk Monitoring and the Control of Enzootic Bovine Leucosis (EBL)**

The ‘Bulk milk monitoring and the control of Enzootic Bovine Leucosis (EBL) in SA dairy herds’ project is aimed to:

1. *Continue bulk milk monitoring of all SA dairy herds;*
2. *Continue intensive bulk milk monitoring of SA large dairy herds for EBL; and*
3. *Eliminate any newly detected EBL in SA dairy and beef herds.*

P. Nosworthy advised that Bulk Milk Testing (BMT) for EBL commenced in 1994 with all dairy herds being tested quarterly. Currently herds that supply milk factories in South Australia and Victoria are tested three times annually. In 2005/2006 there were no new detections of EBL. Intensive bulk milk testing of large herds during round 6 (December 2005) had similarly negative results. However during round 7, one tested herd returned a positive result – a complete retest of the herd though has proved to be negative. Of the two South Australian herds where a positive EBL test result was identified during 2004, one herd (where EBL was confirmed) has completed the necessary two clean whole herd tests, thereby achieving a monitored free status. The other herd is subject to ongoing monitoring as it was not possible to confirm EBL.

At the end of April 2006 expenditure for the EBL program from the CIF totaled \$19,962, which included \$19,300 in operating costs and \$662 in travel expenses. There are some outstanding expenses relating to the majority of milk samples for testing now being sourced from ABS Australia. In addition, a significant proportion of the Round 7 Intensive Milk laboratory costs have not been included in the stated expenditure figure.

The EBL project includes a small contingency for unknown investigations in the event that a herd(s) is detected with EBL. J. Van Wijk supports this practice, as it is difficult to predict the occurrence of this disease. For example, since EBL was eradicated in 1999, five detections have occurred.

The budget submitted for 2006/2006 and 2007/2008 includes the 12.5% increase in testing costs being charged by Gribbles.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG supports the EBL project two year budget in principle and recommends the release of upto \$39,300 for the 2006/2007 period from the CIF. Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**

#### **7.2.4 National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) Program**

Full NLIS commenced in South Australia from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005. Whilst some state differences remain in relation to identification requirements and timelines, complete national uniformity should be achieved from 1 July 2007.

All stakeholders are routinely scanning and transferring cattle, however sale yards, processors and agents have all continued to experience hardware, software and database interaction problems resulting in less than full compliance at times.

This has consequently required an ongoing commitment from PIRSA to the provision of technical support and problem solving. Therefore, the NLIS budget for 2006/2007 (\$110,810) is significantly more than previous years, in spite of the fact that Commonwealth funding is being used to offset the SA CAG contribution to NLIS. As per the SA NLIS business plan, all Commonwealth money received is being used to directly offset the agreed 'post implementation' cattle industry contribution of 75% of total program cost. There is a reasonably high level of administration involved with implementation of the business plan. In the case of the producer grants, some 50% of 200 or so grant applications could not be processed due to missing information.

Compliance with tagging by producers and scanning in the sale yards is excellent. Ad-hoc auditing is continuing pending commencement of systematic national auditing protocols and templates.

Members discussed that producers/allied industries need to ensure that all NLIS information is both entered and correct (ie sale or agistment) in order to maintain efficient traceability. T. Woonton responded that as per the Stock Journal advertisement (tabled), MLA has recently upgraded the interface to the database to simplify the process, which is now more user friendly.

Clarification was sought on how much longer would CIF funds be required to support the NLIS project. T. Woonton responded that the technical support should be reduced within 1-2 years but ongoing compliance auditing will be required, dependent on problems/issues identified. He went on to say that nationally, it is anticipated that jurisdictions will audit NLIS compliance against agreed to templates quarterly.

N. Buchanan advised that South Australia's inspection and external audits are designed to prove the absence of disease (TSEs for example), unlike some countries experiencing a lack of buyer confidence due to the lack of an effective surveillance system. J. Van Wijk reinforced this comment citing an overview about national traceability presented at a recent deer conference. In this presentation it was emphasized Australia has a unique traceability system, incorporating minimum standards and the latest in technology (ie scanners on trucks and unloading ramps etc that simplify the process) compared to systems in other countries.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG supports the release of up to \$110,810 for the NLIS program in 2006/2007 from the CIF. Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**

### **7.2.5 Pimelea Project**

T. Scholz provided a report on the Pimelea project and information relating to the disease. He advised that Pimelea poisoning has also been referred to as the Maree Disease in South Australia and St George's Disease in Queensland after the areas where it was first observed. It was first recorded in Queensland in 1938 and in South Australia in the 1950s. Pimelea species have been documented to cause poisoning in cattle in South Australia, northeast New South Wales, southwest Queensland and the southern sector of the Northern Territory. The species affecting grazing cattle are:

- *Pimelea simplex* (most relevant to South Australia, also known as Desert Rice Flower)
- *Pimelea trichostachya*
- *Pimelea elongata*

The best growing conditions for Pimelea tend to be good autumn/winter rainfall followed by a dry summer. Poisoning in cattle occurs when ingested, resulting in severe diarrhea, oedema of the jaw and brisket, general build up of fluid and reduced cardiac output. Cattle that are severely affected usually die within 3-14 days; cattle that do recover may take many months to do so. Currently the only strategies for management revolve around moving the cattle off paddocks with high levels of Pimelea and providing supplementary feeding if possible. It is believed that the plant is still toxic to cattle for approximately two years after it has dried off.

T. Scholz explained that the Pimelea project is aimed at producing a "strategic plan" (in consultation with stakeholders) that outlines future direction in research priorities. Delays in the production of the Pimelea book have meant that the strategic plan is also been behind schedule.

He confirmed that no CIF monies have been drawn for the project to date. The Maree Soil Board has funded the activities of the Pimelea Working Group (which commenced in January 2005 and consists of three pastoralists and one PIRSA representative) to date as it saw this as a major issue for the area. With the abolition of the Soil Boards, an approach will be made to the replacing SAAL NRM Board for ongoing financial assistance also.

T. Scholz clarified that the Pimelea Working Group was seeking the rolling over of the \$20,000 approved for the 2005/2006 period plus an additional \$4,500 for three SA participants to attend the upcoming tri-State (ie SA, Queensland and NSW) Pimelea meeting in September 2006 and \$5,000 for the printing and distribution of the 'Pimelea poisoning of Cattle' publication.

Clarification was sought whether the Pimelea Working Group had approached Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) or any other funding body for financial assistance. T. Scholz responded stating that the Working Group was looking at the problem from a South Australian perspective, hence their approach to the SA CAG – once priorities were confirmed, the MLA may be approached to assist with any identified R&D.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG approves the rolling over of the \$20,000 for the Pimelea Project in 2006/2007 and an additional \$4,500 to cover SA representation at the upcoming tri-State meeting later in 2006.**

- **Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**
- **Advise the Pimelea project applicant, that SA CAG recommends that supportive funding should also be sourced from MLA (particularly for R&D activities) and the SAAL NRM board for the printing and distribution of the Pimelea book.**

### **7.2.6 Trade Risk Management Program**

The release of up to \$42,500 from the CIF is sought by M. McManus (PIRSA) to fund the 'Trade Risk Management Program', which is designed to:

- maintain continued access for SA cattle to HGP Free Markets (non-EU) by implementing requirements of the National Hormonal Growth Promotant (HGP) Control System; and
- reduce the incidence of unacceptable antibiotic residues in domestic and export markets by implementing the new National Antibacterial Residue Minimization (NARM) Program including a targeted extension program.

A key expectation of consumers listed in the Beef Industry Strategy – Directions for South Australia 2005-2015 is that "*consumers are demanding that beef is safe to consume*". The strategy identifies the critical challenges for South Australia in addressing this expectation including:

- market transparency and feedback through the chain; and
- adoption of national and state product integrity programs.

A number of South Australian export markets (eg the US and Saudi Arabia) have a safety preference for consuming HGP free beef, which is expensive (PIRSA does not have the resources to cover the cost). This proposal enables South Australia to implement the National HGP Control System (non-EU) and produce a beef product considered "safe to consume" for these premium paying export markets.

The South Australian Dairy Industry Strategic Plan for 2010 places major emphasis on the facilitation of strong growth in milk production in the State's dairy regions. One of the by-products from the industry is the production of bobby calves, which provides a small but valued contribution to the domestic and export meat industry.

Members recognised that this project provides an ongoing opportunity to protect and enhance South Australia's clean and green image while also maintaining food safety by minimizing residues in the cattle industry.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG approves the release of up to \$42,500 from the CIF for the continuation of the Trade Risk Management Program in 2006/2007. Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**

### **7.2.7 Selective Kikuyu Control in Temperate Perennial Pastures Project**

The 'Selective Kikuyu Control in Temperate Perennial Pastures' project is designed to:

- provide farmers with additional management tools to control kikuyu – an increasingly important weed across the Hills and Fleurieu region;
- improve winter productivity of dryland perennial pastures infested with kikuyu weed; and
- improve the retention of perennial grass pastures on beef and dairy farms, for improved environmental impacts.

Concern was raised that extensive information on Kikuyu control and R&D can be readily sourced from NSW and/or Western Australia. Members unanimously agreed that South Australia should avoid duplication in R&D in this area with industry funds.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG members do not support the use of CIF monies for the 'Selective Kikuyu Control in Temperate Perennial Pastures' Project.**

### **7.2.8 South Australia Cattle Assessment School**

The Angus Society of Australia (SA State Committee) submitted an application for funding for the 2006/2007 SA Cattle Assessment School. This activity is designed to provide young and aspiring cattle industry people with information about cattle selection and carcass evaluation. Previous funds supplied by the CIF have been used to defray the cost of the course so as to maximize participation.

After a brief discussion on the merits of the project, members unanimously agreed to support this project for the 2006/2007 financial period.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG approves the release of up to \$5,500 for the ongoing funding of the SA Cattle Assessment School project for the 2005/2007 period. Forward correspondence to the Minister recommending the release of CIF funds.**

### **7.2.9 Nutrient Management and Environmental Impact under Centre Pivot Irrigation, Meningie, South Australia**

The 'Nutrient Management and Environmental Impact under Centre Pivot Irrigation' project seeks access to \$10,700 from the CIF during 2006/2007. The key aim of this project is to implement production systems that balance environmental responsibilities and end user requirements, which includes the following:

- determine nutrient and water flows and efficiencies on a dairy and beef farm in the Lower Lakes district of South Australia which is under centre pivot irrigation;
- ascertain environmental impacts of the current farming system, particularly with respect to ground water quality; and
- develop practical management strategies to get best use of water and nutrient resources at the research property.

Concern was raised that there have been similar projects to this already undertaken across different livestock sectors. After further discussion, members did not support the project, as there is \$1.9 billion of national funds available for water usage projects and their impact on the environment.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG members do not support the provision of CIF funds for the 'Nutrient management and environmental impact under centre pivot irrigation, Meningie' project.**

### **7.2.10 Developing Dynamic Dairy Leaders**

The 'Developing Dynamic Dairy Leaders' project is designed to deliver workshops to young dairy business people across the dairying regions of South Australia.

The aims of the workshop program are to improve leadership skills, renew enthusiasm and retention rates and equip participants with the skills to make a positive contribution and influence the future direction of the South Australian dairy industry.

Concern was raised that Dairy Australia offers a national rural leadership program and it was thought that SAFF might also have a similar program available. Members unanimously agreed to not support the project at this time, however it was asked that the project lay on the table pending a better understanding of the progress of the SA Dairy Strategic Plan.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG members do not support the 'Developing Dynamic Dairy Leaders' project.**

#### **7.2.11 Trial of 'Senepol' Cattle for Genetic Advancement of Beef Cattle in the far North of South Australia**

The release of up to \$15,000 from the CIF is sought to trial "Senepol" cattle in the far north of South Australia to determine whether this breed will lift production of beef herds in the region.

After consideration, members did not support the concept of funding a private producer to purchase a herd of 'Senepol' cattle to evaluate the resilience of the breed in harsh conditions.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG members do not support the release of CIF monies for the 'Trial of 'Senepol' Cattle for Genetic Advancement of Beef Cattle in the far North of South Australia' project.**

#### **OUTCOME**

- **Forward correspondence to the unsuccessful project applicants advising of the status of their applications.**
- **Forward correspondence to the successful project applicants advising of the status of their applications.**

#### **7.3 Proposed Changes to the Dairy Score**

The Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) compensation for the destocking of BJD infected beef only herds are due to cease in June 2007. Members agreed that producers should be made aware that financial assistance would cease in 2007. Testing is detecting a small number of crossbred herds infected with BJD – normally these herds are ineligible for CCA compensation. However, in South Australia, CCA assistance is available (assessed on a case-by-case basis) if they agree to restock from score 7 and higher score herds.

Members discussed that the dairy score system should be extended to include crossbred cattle and traceability of the score through life for dairy cross females. If implemented, the program would require a farmer extension campaign. It was thought that this matter would be discussed at the BJD Committee meeting scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006, with any recommendations being forwarded to SA CAG in writing for consideration.

J. Van Wijk reported that Victoria is conducting environmental faecal sampling – two herds with 5% infection were used. In these examples younger cattle were included in the sample in order to accelerate the reduction of the disease risk. It was postulated that this test could potentially replace the 50 head biennial check test. He went on to say that this method maybe more economical than individual faecal or Elisa testing, and recommends that further investigation should commence on this technique.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Investigate how South Australia might participate in trialing the environmental BJD effluent test.**

The national dairy industry is attempting to confirm the cut-off date for dairy scores (currently set at June 2008) and what will happen to non-assessed (NA) herds. South Australia's position is that NA herds should be downgraded to a zero (0) score (in order to encourage participation in BJD control) while Victoria believes that they should be assigned a score of three (3). No decision on this issue has been reached nationally yet.

Animal Health Committee (AHC) has signed off on the 10 point dairy score. Currently this score is recorded on section 9 of the NVD when dairy cattle are sold. The SA CAG members agreed that it would be simpler for farmers to answer the question "Is the herd BJD tested YES / NO" than remember to complete section 9 of the NVD.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Amend the NVD by including a Yes/No box to enable farmers to indicate whether they conduct BJD testing on their property.**

#### **7.4 Market Safety Issue – Lead Affected Cattle Update**

N. Buchanan reported that the Minister's office contacted the lead affected property owner. Subsequently the owner has accepted an offer from SA CAG for the slaughter and burial of 103 cattle and 34 lead affected cattle from his property. Disposal of the cattle occurred approximately two weeks ago – the Snowtown abattoir was used to slaughter the cattle which were then buried at the Blyth dump. The cost to CIF for this exercise was around \$9,000 - \$10,000. Eight cows were too weak to muster and transport, so it was agreed to humanely dispose and bury them. Members considered it important to confirm that this latter action occurred in order to both minimize any further draw against the Fund and the possibility of any lead affected meat entering the human food chain.

N. Buchanan went on to advise that rumen content, muscle and offal samples were tested for lead. Testing identified less than 10 parts per million (ppm) in muscle and 11 ppm in one of the four kidneys tested. The maximum level permissible for meat for human consumption is 5 ppm.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Confirm that the unmustered lead affected cattle were disposed of and advise SA CAG of the outcome.**

#### **7.5 Health Certificate for the Introduction of Cattle into SA (Form 1)**

P. Nosworthy advised that since auditing in sale yards commenced to confirm compliance with NLIS requirements, it has been identified that a significant number of young cattle have been entering the State without the necessary Form 1 Health Certificate. The issue of whether this requirement should be exempted for short-term backgrounding cattle (which are of a low disease risk) and maintained for breeding stock was discussed. J. Van Wijk confirmed that a Form 1 Health Certificate is only required for cattle sourced from Victoria and Tasmania. Cattle from BJD protected zones, Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland and most of NSW are exempt from this requirement.

N. Buchanan suggested that if the Form 1 were retained, PIRSA would need to roll out an extension program to increase producer awareness and compliance. He argued that given the form is not being used consistently and in the absence of any increase in disease levels (eg JD) being observed in beef herds, it supports the removal of the Form 1 Health Certificate.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG supports leaving further discussion about the removal of the Form 1 Health Certificate on the table until a national audit system for BJD zones has been approved by BJD TAG.**

#### **7.6 SA CAG Industry Vacancies**

Members were reminded that the term of office of four positions on SA CAG (the beef pastoral representative, a beef industry representative, one SA Dairyfarmers' Association representative and the SA Farmers Federation (beef) representative) is due to expire on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006. Applications were due by close of business Friday 26 May 2006.

#### **8. Other Business**

##### **8.1 South Australian Outbreak of Botulism Update**

N. Buchanan provided information on botulism and an update on the recent outbreak in South Australia. Apparently the affected operation had a bout of botulism (not typed but thought to be Type C or D) during 2003.

Consequently the herd has been vaccinated with the Pfizer Type C & D vaccine twice annually as a preventative measure – tests have demonstrated high antibody levels for type C and D in the herd. Recently in 2006, after feeding lucerne/rye grass based silage made on the property, 70 cows succumbed to botulism poisoning. It has been postulated that the type B botulism toxin identified (which can be produced in rotting vegetative matter) may have been the causative agent as the pH of the lucerne silage was only 5.6 (compared to the necessary pH of 4.5 to neutralize *Clostridium botulinum*). N. Buchanan then went on to cite the brewers' grain case in Holland, where botulism originated from cow faeces that were excreted onto pasture, and then made into lucerne silage. Subsequently, two years later the botulism organism was detected in the cattle as it had similarities to the South Australian incident.

To date, Pfizer has paid for all laboratory testing concerned with this case. No commercial Type B botulism vaccine for ruminants exists. Queensland Department of Primary Industries has produced limited quantities of Type B vaccine for horses, which Animal Health is trying to access to undertake protection studies.

## **8.2 Proposed BJD Risk Based Model**

Future funding for Dairy ManaJD was raised. N. Buchanan believes that before this issue is discussed, it would be prudent to develop a model that could predict the spread of BJD under different scenarios, including how it could impact on the beef industry given that there are insufficient score 7 and higher score herds to meet the need for crossbred cattle in the South Australia. He went on to describe the 'Bio-economic Modeling of Future Control Options for OJD in South Australia', produced by Evan Sergeant (AusVet Animal Health Services). The OJD model considered six scenarios (divided between the mainland SA and KI) ranging from deregulation to providing a 100% vaccine subsidy for KI, and national abattoir surveillance.

A sensitivity analysis is incorporated within the model, along with the evaluation of disease losses, compared with regulation costs. The cost of developing the OJD model was around \$25,000 which was covered by the Sheep Industry Fund.

Members unanimously agreed to support the concept of adapting the 'OJD Bio-economic Model' to consider the impact of BJD control in South Australia. They requested that PIRSA investigate the cost of modifying the Model, and once this has occurred, to liaise with the BJD Committee to assist in the development of the BJD model specifications.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**SA CAG supports the BJD committee receiving information about the scope and cost of the proposed BJD model.**

## **8.3 Continuation of the BJD Committee**

J. Rogers sought advice from members about the continuation of the BJD Committee. He felt that there were still too many technical issues that needed to be resolved, particularly while the post June 2007 program is being developed, for this activity to be absorbed by SA CAG. A. Withers supported this. J. Van Wijk suggested that the dairy industry, in consultation with SA CAG, needs to revisit who participates on this sub-committee.

## **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2006** from 10:00am – 3:00pm in the Seminar Room, Level 1, Primary Industries and Resources SA, 33 Flemington St, Glenside.

*The meeting closed at 4:00 pm*