



9 May 2024

Joint Statement of Priorities from U.S. and Australian Cattle Producers

As global leaders in cattle and beef production, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and Cattle Australia encourage the Government of the United States and the Government of Australia to continue working together to combat devastating foreign animal diseases, to promote sustainable global trade that encourages efficient production practices, and to ensure science-based food safety and marketing regulations of emerging food technologies like lab-grown proteins.

On behalf of cattle producers in the United States and Australia, we greatly appreciate the commitment to address the growing transnational threat of foreign animal diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD). Combating these devastating animal diseases is an effort that requires both national preparedness planning and international cooperation. FMD is the most economically devastating transboundary disease threat facing American and Australian cattle producers, and the global threat level for FMD is higher than ever before with FMD present in areas of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and South America. Any incursion of FMD into our countries would result in the immediate cessation of trade in animals and animal products, and the potential restriction of movement of people and goods in affected areas. Likewise, LSD would also have a devastating economic impact on cattle producers. We call for the urgent and continued investment in critical infrastructure and preparedness activities in each of our countries to protect against and ultimately respond to outbreaks of foreign animal disease.

As cattle producers, we have a personal stake in protecting the environment, and we work hard to improve the quality of the air, water, and land while caring for the health of our animals, our families, and our local communities. Australian cattle producers care for roughly 50% of Australia's land mass, and U.S. cattle producers manage over 800 million acres of wildlife habitat, unique landmarks, and crucial ecosystems. We prioritize proper grazing of cattle because it improves soil health, leads to greater water retention, increases carbon sequestration, and reduces the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Without a doubt, healthy land and healthy water produce healthy cattle. Both industries are working hard to meet sustainability goals, and we encourage you to continue promoting our efficient, science-based technologies and production practices that enable us to produce more beef with less resources. While the anti-meat agenda equates less beef consumption with a healthier environment, managed cattle grazing is essential for healthy land management, and our science-based production practices result in healthier cattle, improved land and water quality, and happy consumers. It is critically important that our governments promote livestock production as an effective tool in land and resource management and a necessity for achieving climate improvement initiatives.

As global beef demand continues to grow, new technologies such as lab-grown protein are emerging to mimic or replicate the qualities of beef and capitalize on the positive eating experience of beef absent the conventional production of cattle. Most of these technologies are still in the developmental phase and are not commercially viable, but it is critically important that these technologies are properly vetted by regulatory authorities, so they do not pose a potential risk to consumer health and food safety. It is also important that regulatory authorities understand the long-term effects on human health, nutrition, and the environment that result from these emerging technologies.



If approved, we must ensure that marketing of lab-grown proteins is transparent and does not compromise the consumer trust that we have built as cattle producers. While some lab-grown protein companies may rely on disparaging advertising to differentiate their products, others may choose to bring little attention to the fact that their product is not from conventional livestock production. Regulatory authorities should ensure that lab-grown proteins are clearly identified on packaging to limit consumer confusion. The growing global consumer base wants access to safe, nutritious beef, produced from cattle that are sustainably and efficiently raised in a natural environment – not in a bioreactor.

On behalf of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and Cattle Australia, we are committed to addressing these issues and will work together to provide global consumers with our sustainably-produced beef.

Sincerely,

Mark Eisele
President
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Garry Edwards
Chair
Cattle Australia