

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 334
Asked on 2 May 2013

MR MULHERIN asked the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MR McVEIGH)–

QUESTION:

With reference to the outbreak of Bovine Johne's disease, will the Minister (a) provide an update on the number of properties still under quarantine, (b) advise the number of animals which have returned positive tests and (c) provide detail on the industry assistance program for affected producers?

ANSWER:

(a) As of 29 May 2013, movement restrictions remain in place on 53 Queensland properties that received animals from an infected stud near Bajool, south of Rockhampton. Biosecurity Queensland officers continue to work with the property owners in the management and testing of animals to resolve the property disease status.

(b) To 29 May 2013, a total of 17 properties, including the original property, have returned at least one positive bovine Johne's disease (BJD) result.

Definitive testing by microscopic examination and the culture of tissues has confirmed infection of six animals on four properties, including the original property.

Of these four properties, three are classified as Infected. The disease status of one of the properties with a confirmed infected animal has been resolved and the property is not considered infected.

The remaining 13 properties all received cattle from the stud and have all returned positive BJD test results in cattle. Infection has not yet been confirmed by definitive testing and these properties are classified as Suspect.

Four of the 13 Suspect properties have recorded positive BJD results in individual animals.

Nine of the 13 Suspect properties have recorded positive test results on pooled, multi-animal samples.

Further testing and epidemiological assessment is being undertaken on the thirteen properties to determine the property disease status.

(c) In January this year, the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry announced \$2 million in funding to kick-start the Queensland Cattle Industry Biosecurity Fund. A loan of up to \$3 million will be provided to be matched dollar-for-dollar by cattle producers through a voluntary industry levy.

Industry has advised that it is critical to progress the BJD financial assistance scheme in tandem with the proposal to introduce a voluntary industry levy.

An interim committee of industry leaders has been working over the past few months to provide the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry with advice on these matters. The priority will be helping producers whose businesses could be impacted by long-term movement restrictions and those who have to test animals as part of the current BJD response.

From 31 May 2013 affected producers have been able to apply for financial support through QRAA.