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21 February 2000

ANIMAL QUARANTINE POLICY MEMORANDUM 2000/13

REVISED CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF CATTLE FROM NEW CALEDONIA

ADOPTION OF QUARANTINE POLICY

This Animal Quarantine Policy Memorandum (AQPM) advises adoption of revised conditions for the importation of cattle from New Caledonia.

Draft revised conditions for the importation of cattle from New Caledonia were circulated for comment as AQPM 1999/83 on 7 December 1999. Some amendments were made to the testing requirements for Johne's disease (JD) and enzootic bovine leucosis (EBL) after consideration of comments.

Respondents expressed concern that the conditions for JD included a clause indicating that individual cattle for export could be tested for JD using the absorbed ELISA. AQIS acknowledges that the JD absorbed ELISA is a herd test rather than an individual animal test and has revised the draft conditions taking this into account. One respondent requested that following a herd or sample of the herd test, the option of testing reactors by faecal culture or slaughter and histopathology should be provided, in recognition that the ELISA is a screening test and does not have perfect specificity.

Australia recently provided comments on a draft OIE Code chapter on JD and proposed a revised Article for cattle. The revised Article incorporates a sampling technique for herd status assessment developed by the National Johne's Disease Control Program (NJDCP). The draft conditions have been revised to make them consistent with NJDCP Standard Definitions and Rules and the proposed draft OIE Code chapter.

It was recommended that the conditions include an option for detection of EBL virus by sheep inoculation, on the basis that virus isolation tests for EBL can be difficult to perform and virus detection by sheep inoculation offers a very sensitive alternative. The revised conditions include this option.

A comment was also received suggesting the inclusion of a requirement that cattle have been born in New Caledonia on the presumption that New Caledonia could import cattle from France with little restriction. AQIS assumes that the possibility of importing a BSE infected animal via New Caledonia is the issue of concern in this case. This suggestion has not been adopted as the BSE certification requirements in the draft conditions reflect current Australian

import policy. Furthermore, New Caledonia has only imported cattle from Australia and New Zealand since 1993.

The attached conditions will come into force on 21 February 2000. Thank you for your assistance with the development of this import policy.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1982*, all submissions received in response to Animal Quarantine Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the Memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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