



Communique – grass-fed cattle industry roundtable, 16 December 2020.

Representatives of Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) and Cattle Producers Australia (CPA) met on Wednesday 16 December 2020 in Brisbane. The roundtable meeting was proposed by Minister Littleproud to catalyse existing industry efforts to settle a forward pathway, mechanism and timeline for reaching agreement on representation in the grass-fed cattle industry. The meeting was facilitated by Brian Ramsay and attended by observers from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Opening statements reflected a strong respect for the work done by CCA since its origins to represent the interests of grass-fed cattle producers on nationally important issues. Both parties expressed an appetite for reform and noted that the time to close an era of fragmentation in the industry was now.

The meeting acknowledged that grass-fed cattle industry representation is essential and there is a cost to producers, government, communities and the industry itself without strong, influential beef industry representative arrangements that can achieve unified positions on nationally and internationally important issues.

The meeting noted the need for a more democratic representative system, which engages most cattle producers. The meeting clarified the need to set a direction and make the transition to an appropriate governance arrangement, building on what is already working, and for the industry representative body to be able to chart its own destiny and not be dependent on others for funding.

The meeting agreed to six principles that should underpin a future industry representative arrangement:

- inclusivity;
- diversity (beyond geographic diversity);
- trust and respect;
- the ability to be proactive and strategic;
- performance, results and accountability, and
- sustainability (an enduring organisation).

The meeting noted the future model should have grass-fed cattle levy payers as members, but engage strongly with other industry associations, including state farming organisations. The future model should focus on the national and international issues that matter most and have a strong focus on two-way information flow with its members.

Representatives of CCA and CPA will meet again in early 2021 to continue their discussions and consider a roadmap for broader industry consultation.