



Cattle meetings over – now time for action

After a long week of discussion, Queensland farm group AgForce congratulates the cattle industry on the mature approach it has taken on the future structure and funding of key industry bodies.

At its Annual General Meeting in Longreach, the Cattle Council of Australia decided to 'put on hold' its plans to restructure until the views of the broader industry are taken into account.

AgForce Cattle president Grant Maudsley said the decision recognises CCA needs to change to make it more responsive to *all* cattle producers and also provides the time to address the critical question of how CCA will be funded into the future.

"If the Council had pursued its planned restructure and ignored the strong chord of discontent in some sectors of industry I guarantee we would all be back at the table in a few years time debating the same issues," Mr Maudsley said.

"AgForce has never suggested we abandon CCA's current structure however we admit it needs a good shakeup to create a modern, well-resourced and effective peak council that can respond to the needs of the Australian cattle industry, government and an increasingly sophisticated beef market."

Mr Maudsley said the CCA's decision to immediately "power up" its taskforce structure and consult with the wider industry could bring fresh ideas to the table.

"AgForce has always and continues to fully fund our commitment to CCA; now is the time for those who have spoken out and asked for change to come forward and help make it happen. It's easy to criticise, but now comes the hard work of finding solutions."

Mr Maudsley said the industry has no time to waste and AgForce welcomes comments from new CCA president Andrew Ogilvie that a new-look Council should be well in train within six months.

"We can bicker all we like about how many people should sit on the board and who should get what vote, but none of that will matter if we don't figure out a way to get more money into CCA - then we will have let all cattle producers down."

AgForce Cattle will now work hard on behalf of Queensland producers to ensure the momentum generated in Longreach is maintained and looks forward to a plan of action from the new leaders of CCA.

Mr Maudsley said AgForce has also paid tribute to the efforts of two outstanding leaders of industry whose terms in office ended this week - Don Heatley, outgoing chairman of Meat and Livestock Australia and retiring CCA president Greg Brown.

“Don Heatley has proudly led MLA through some very challenging times and has never shied away from being the public face of the red meat industry no matter how tough things got.

“Under his chairmanship, MLA’s market development, promotion and R&D work has significantly boosted growth in the red meat sector with an eye always on dollars going back into producers’ pockets.”

“We also thank Greg Brown for his passion and long-standing commitment to the Queensland and national industry”.

“Greg’s forthright views and knowledge of policy detail will be a significant loss to the industry, and we particularly thank him for his strong advocacy of the northern beef sector.”

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Who is AgForce? AgForce represents thousands of Queensland broadacre producers who recognise the value in having a strong political voice. AgForce leads the way to ensure agriculture’s social, economic and environmental contribution is recognised by all levels of government. AgForce works alongside landholders, encourages and supports the next generation, builds industry partnerships and skills and promotes agriculture - for secure, sustainable, progressive and profitable food and fibre into the future.