



Media Release

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NAIT commitment is a positive step say Meat & Wool New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association

The two bodies representing New Zealand's meat industry have welcomed the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture David Carter that the Government has committed to the next phase of the National Animal Identification and Traceability (NAIT) project for cattle and deer.

Meat & Wool New Zealand Chairman, Mike Petersen agreed that the NAIT project has had a long incubation.

“However, we are now at the stage where we can finally move ahead with some certainty to implement what will be a cost effective and robust cattle traceability system to ensure we can continue to access world markets.”

Meat & Wool New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association have worked together to represent farmer and industry interests and say moving forward with NAIT will help maintain the confidence of our meat products in export markets.

“A robust system will require the support of Government for legislative reasons, and the commitment by the Government to support the funding of NAIT recognises that there are national benefits to NAIT proceeding.”

One of the priorities for both Meat & Wool New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association had been to ensure that the traceability system was affordable for farmers and the wider industry, and the cost-benefit analysis presented in the business case showed the benefits far outweighed the costs.

“Most of the major beef trading nations around the world already have animal ID systems in place and if we don't keep up, our trade might be compromised. This has been a compelling driver for us, but so too has been making sure we get a system in place that farmers can afford.”

Another issue for both organisations has been safeguarding the information that will be collected as part of NAIT, and strict rules are envisaged to protect the access to and use of NAIT data.

Meat Industry Association Chairman, Bill Falconer congratulated the tenacity of NAIT Chairman, Ian Corney, who had worked for a NAIT system that was able to safeguard the disease-free status of New Zealand's meat products, as well as improve the country's capability to respond to any possible animal disease outbreaks in the future.

For more information please contact: Meat & Wool New Zealand Chairman, Mike Petersen 021 243 7344 or Meat Industry Association Chairman, Bill Falconer 021 939 520.

Link to Hon David Carter's press release

<http://www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?articleId=31905>