



# final report

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## **Feedlot environment education training module**

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## **Abstract**

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) negotiated with the Queensland Government for the industry's quality assurance program, the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS), to become eligible to access the 20% licence fee discount under the Environmental Protection regulation. In order to access this discount, one person from each accredited feedlot must complete training that provides them with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of feedlots.

This project generated the course note documentation, a presenter's package, plus the education and assessment materials required to deliver the training necessary to equip feedlot personnel and quality assurance officers to achieve competency and certification in feedlot environmental risk reduction management.

## Executive Summary

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) negotiated with the Queensland Government for the industry's quality assurance program, the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS), to become eligible to access the 20% license fee discount under the Environmental Protection regulation. In order to access this discount, one person from each accredited feedlot must complete training that provides them with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of feedlots.

This project generated the course note documentation, a presenter's package, education and assessment materials. The course content and delivery aims to ensure that feedlot QA officers gain a meaningful level of environmental management knowledge to manage and reduce environmental risk on individual feedlots.

The project objective is to generate a training, education and advisory module to aid feedlot operators and staff in operating an environmentally compliant feedlot business specifically recognising and addressing the recent changes to guidelines, NFAS and legislative requirements.

The developed module will be utilised in a series of workshops and as an inclusion within the existing NFAS self-learning kit. The workshops will initially be run in Queensland and then rolled out in other states. However, conduct of these workshops does not form part of the requirement of this project.

The following elements are the key components of the documentation created for the training, education and advisory module:

- A summation of the environmental responsibilities of lot feeders under state legislation, feedlot licenses and the NFAS.
- Explanation of the new requirements under NSW Protection of the Environment Operations (POEO) legislation including template examples of how lot feeders can practically meet the requirements of the newly amended Act.
- The environmental and legislated consequences if lotfeeders don't adhere to these requirements.
- An explanation of the requirements of the new Guidelines (*National Guidelines for Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia*<sup>1</sup>) and Code of Practice (*National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice*<sup>2</sup>) emphasising how the new documents differ from the previous version.
- The inclusion of practical examples, tools and templates to assist feedlot operators to meet the requirements of the new Guidelines and Code of

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<sup>1</sup> Meat and Livestock Australia Limited (2012) *National Guidelines For Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Meat and Livestock Australia Limited in association with the Australian Lot Feeders' Association and the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee, North Sydney, NSW.

<sup>2</sup> Meat and Livestock Australia Limited (2012) *National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Meat and Livestock Australia Limited in association with the Australian Lot Feeders' Association and the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee, North Sydney, NSW.

Practice. This included, the use of a risk register and risk matrices to help identify the likelihood, consequences and priority of feedlot related risks and hazards that could lead to environmental harm.

The environmental education module delivered the following items:

- A 'delivery' package; designed for the instruction of the education module including PowerPoint presentations, additional background information and solutions to problems posed;
- A kit for attendees of the course; this package contains a comprehensive set of learning notes, available space for additional notes taken during the course, and a self-learning questionnaire to be completed in the final session of the course;
- The attendee kit in electronic form; so it can be incorporated into the appropriate industry website and used as an online training package, and
- A certificate that will be supplied to successful course trainees by ALFA.

The lotfeeding industry will benefit from the ultimate rollout and delivery of this program by gaining tools for the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in Australian feedlot businesses.

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## **1. Background to the project**

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) negotiated with the Queensland Government for the industry's quality assurance program, the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS), to become eligible to access the 20% license fee discount under the Environmental Protection regulation. In order to access this discount, one person from each accredited feedlot must complete training that provides them with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of feedlots.

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) commissioned EnviroAg Australia to undertake a project, using industry funds, to develop a module to train, educate and assist feedlot employees regarding the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in feedlot businesses.

## **2. Project Objectives**

The project objective is to generate a training, education and advisory module to aid feedlot operators and staff in operating an environmentally compliant feedlot business specifically recognising and addressing the recent changes to guidelines, NFAS and legislative requirements.

The developed module will be utilised in a series of workshops and as an inclusion within the existing NFAS self-learning kit. The workshops will initially be run in Queensland and then rolled out in other states. However, conduct of the workshops was not part of the requirement of this project.

## **3. Methodology**

EnviroAg personnel met with industry and government representatives to establish the boundaries of the project. Using existing industry documentation and the guidance of MLA, a package was created for the delivery of a training module.

### **3.1 Method**

The information was gathered from the primary sources listed below:

- Communications with relevant regulators, ALFA, MLA and Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee (FLIAC) representatives;
- Desktop review of the current legislation key guidelines and literature search; and,
- Discussions with professional lotfeeders.

### **3.2 Description of methods**

The project primarily involved meeting with relevant government regulators and industry representatives, plus a desktop research review. The desktop review assisted with identifying relevant legislation, industry best practice and developed the information into an appropriate training package framework.

Project consultation occurred with key ALFA, MLA and AUS-MEAT personnel to ensure that the module met the needs of the feedlot industry and regulators. Notably, the module under development was amended following feedback from the FLIAC.

### 3.2.1 Liaison with ALFA, MLA, AUS-MEAT, FLIAC and government

An initial meeting was held in October 2012 and drew together relevant representatives of ALFA, MLA, AUS-MEAT and government regulatory agencies. EnviroAg personnel gained a first-hand understanding of the requirements of these organisations in respect to industry training needs for environmental planning and management.

Once the documentation for the education module was in a draft form, it was submitted to all organisations for review and provision of feedback and a project representative met with MLA to understand the final requirements.

### 3.2.2 Literature search

The literature search was via the internet, telephone and direct contact with governmental representatives and feedlot industry operators. The most recent Guidelines (*National Guidelines for Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia*<sup>3</sup>) and Code of Practice (*National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice*<sup>4</sup>) were reviewed for relevant content as was the NFAS Manual<sup>5</sup>. Analysis and lists of changed content in these documents were a key element of the work.

### 3.2.3 Review of legislation and industry guidelines

Recent legislation was compared with earlier legislation, with differences identified, highlighted and incorporated into the manual and training module.

### 3.2.4 Production of the module documentation

All material included was subject to ongoing review by MLA and the final draft was peer reviewed by the appropriate organisations. The handbook document was constructed in the format specified by MLA. The final copy has been created with live hyperlinks so that online activities including self-testing are enabled. It is print ready.

## 4. Results

As required by MLA, the environmental education module delivered the following items:

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<sup>3</sup> Meat and Livestock Australia Limited (2012) *National Guidelines For Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Meat and Livestock Australia Limited in association with the Australian Lot Feeders' Association and the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee, North Sydney, NSW.

<sup>4</sup> Meat and Livestock Australia Limited (2012) *National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Meat and Livestock Australia Limited in association with the Australian Lot Feeders' Association and the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee, North Sydney, NSW.

<sup>5</sup> Feedlot Industry Accreditation Scheme (1996) *National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme: Standards Manual*. Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee in association with AUS-MEAT, Sydney.

- A 'delivery' package; designed for the instruction of the education module including PowerPoint presentations, additional background information and solutions to problems posed;
- A kit for attendees of the course; this package contains a comprehensive set of learning notes, available space for additional notes taken during the course, and a self-learning questionnaire to be completed in the final session of the course;
- The attendee kit in electronic form; so it can be incorporated into the appropriate industry website and used as an online training package; and
- A certificate that will be supplied to successful course trainees by ALFA.

## **5. Conclusion**

The educational module documentation is now reviewed and finalised with MLA.

The next stage of the program will be a separate project to deliver the education module package material to Australian lotfeeders in a series of regional workshops. The training package materials have also been supplied to ALFA, who will make them available through their website, and AUS-MEAT, for incorporation into their existing NFAS self-learning kit. This will ensure the industry has access to the tools for the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in Australian feedlots on an ongoing basis.