

# final report

Project code: B.FLT.0473  
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Date published: May 2013  
ISBN: 9781741919110

PUBLISHED BY  
Meat & Livestock Australia Limited  
Locked Bag 991  
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

## **Feedlot environment training workshops – NSW and SA**

Meat & Livestock Australia acknowledges the matching funds provided by the Australian Government to support the research and development detailed in this publication.

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## **Abstract**

An earlier project, B.FLT.0469 'Feedlot environment education training module', developed 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 module was developed to specifically address a requirement for Queensland feedlot operators to complete training that provided them with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of feedlots, in order to be eligible for the 20% licence fee discount under the state's Environmental Protection regulation. However, the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) recognised there was value in extending this training to all feedlots, given the need to update the lotfeeding industry on the recently finalised versions of the National Guidelines for Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia and the National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice. These updated documents are referenced within the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme and must be addressed within feedlot Quality Assurance manuals.

This project delivered workshops in Wagga Wagga, Moama and Tamworth in New South Wales and Adelaide in South Australia to assist lot feeders to achieve competency in feedlot environmental risk reduction management. A total of 48 lotfeeders attended the workshops.

## Executive Summary

An earlier project, B.FLT.0469 'Feedlot environment education training module', developed 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 module was developed to address a requirement for Queensland feedlot operators to complete training that provided them with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of feedlots, in order to be eligible for the 20% licence fee discount under the state's Environmental Protection regulation. However, the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) recognised there was value in extending this training to all feedlots, given the need to update the lotfeeding industry on the recently finalised versions of the National Guidelines for Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia and the National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice. These updated documents are referenced within the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme and must be addressed within feedlot Quality Assurance manuals.

This project delivered this training at workshops in Wagga Wagga, Moama and Tamworth in New South Wales and Adelaide in South Australia. In order to cover the key components of the documentation required for and outlined in B.FLT.0469, five modules were included in the workshops:

1. Environmental legislation
2. Risk assessment and reporting
3. Monitoring and environmental management
4. Environmental management: Specific issues (including effluent management, chemical and fuel storage, manure management, odour and dust, noise, dead animals and sandy soils)
5. Framework for continuous improvement

All participants to the workshop were given a 'take-home' resource pack, which contained a comprehensive set of notes, the PowerPoint presentation, a questionnaire to identify potential environmental risks and hazards on their feedlot and additional background information used during the workshop.

A questionnaire was completed in the final session of the course, and a certificate supplied to successful course trainees by ALFA. A total of 48 lotfeeders attended the workshops, and a 100% success rate was achieved in answering the questionnaire, ensuring they all received the ALFA certificate.

As a result of these workshops, lotfeeders were provided with tools for the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in their feedlot businesses.

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

Australian Lot Feeders Association (ALFA) recognised the need to update the lotfeeding industry on the recently finalised versions of the National Guidelines for Beef Cattle Feedlots in Australia and the National Beef Cattle Feedlot Environmental Code of Practice. These updated guidelines and code must be addressed within feedlot Quality Assurance manuals. The aim of this training is to provide feedlot operators and staff with an appropriate understanding of environmental risks and consequences in relation to the day to day operation of their feedlot.

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) commissioned EnviroAg Australia to deliver workshops in New South Wales and South Australia to educate and assist feedlot owners, managers and employees regarding the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in feedlot businesses. The workshop content was based on a previous MLA-funded project, B.FLT.0469, which generated the training, education and advisory module to aid feedlot operators and staff in operating an environmentally compliant feedlot, recognising and addressing the recent changes to guidelines, NFAS and legislative requirements.

## **2. Project objectives**

The project objective was to deliver training workshops in Wagga Wagga, Moama and Tamworth in New South Wales and Adelaide in South Australia to educate and assist feedlot employees regarding the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in a feedlot.

## **3. Methodology**

Using the resources developed in the B.FLT.0469 'Feedlot environment education training module' as a guide, EnviroAg developed a workshop, 'take-home' resource pack and self-evaluation questionnaire.

### **3.1 Workshop**

The workshop structure was designed to encompass the key components of the environmental feedlot training module built for B.FLT.0469. The key components were:

- A summation of the environmental responsibilities of lot feeders under state legislation, feedlot licenses and the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme.
- Explanation of the new requirements under The NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act (POEO) 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 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.

As a result, the workshops were based on five modules, including:

1. Environmental legislation
2. Risk assessment and reporting
3. Monitoring and environmental management
4. Environmental management: Specific issues (including effluent management, chemical and fuel storage, manure management, odour and dust, noise, dead animals and sandy soils)
5. Framework for continuous improvement

### **3.2 'Take-home' resource pack**

A 'take-home' resource pack was developed for workshop participants. It contained a comprehensive set of notes, the PowerPoint presentation delivered in the workshop, a questionnaire to identify potential environmental risks and hazards ('hot-spots') on their feedlot and additional background information used throughout the workshop.

### **3.3 Self-evaluation questionnaire**

A questionnaire was developed which was based on workshop content. It is to be completed in the final session of the course, with a 100% score required to successfully receive the course completion certificate from ALFA.

## **4. Results**

The environmental training workshops were delivered in the three New South Wales locations of Wagga Wagga, Moama and Tamworth and Adelaide in South Australia. There were 9, 8, 19 and 12 attendants at each location respectively.

All participants to the workshop were given a 'take-home' resource pack, which contained a comprehensive set of notes, the PowerPoint presentation, a questionnaire to identify potential environmental risks and hazards on their feedlot and any additional background information used throughout the workshop. During the day, participants recorded notes relating to their own feedlot, and as a result turned this pack into their own individual resource.

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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.

All participants completed a self-evaluation questionnaire at the end of the workshop, with a 100% success rate. As a result, all New South Wales and South Australia participants are eligible to receive their workshop certificate from ALFA.

## **5. Conclusion**

As a result of these workshops, lotfeeders were provided with tools for the identification and management of potential environmental risks and hazards experienced in their feedlot businesses.

Based on the feedback from the participants and success of workshops in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia, EnviroAg recommends commissioning of similar workshops in Western Australia.