



## Animal ethics approval for NB2 activities

### Background

Producer groups established under the NB2 strategic partnership program are spread across Qld, the NT and the north of WA. As a result, activities that may require the approval of an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC), while addressing the requirements of the “*Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*”, are administered under State and Territory legislation.

As the NB2 pilot producer groups established in the NT and WA, and additional groups established in the foreseeable future are likely to be facilitated by State and Territory staff familiar and compliant with the requirements in their respective jurisdictions, **this document is focussed on the Qld requirements and legislation where two of the NB2 pilot producer groups and potentially additional new groups are, or likely will be, facilitated by private consultants.**

### Key points

- The routine record keeping (herd, feedbase, cashflow templates) being done by producers in the NB2 project does not need ethics approval.
- When it comes to interventions/practice change as a result of the NB2 program, i.e. changes in the routine management of the herd or the introduction of new technologies, then the requirement for AEC approval would likely be determined by the protocol for the intervention i.e. is it an experimental comparison approach with treatment and control groups of animals or a business decision to implement a change without a direct comparison group of animals.
  - If, for example, a change in routine management is across a whole herd or specific group, without comparing change versus no-change, then AEC approval is unlikely to be required.
  - However, an experimental protocol comparing change versus no-change would likely require AEC approval.
- Anyone using animals for scientific purposes must be registered with Biosecurity Queensland and obtain approval from an AEC. The registration of a representative entity for NB2 to cover non-agency groups is being examined.

- Scientific purposes are activities performed to acquire, develop, or demonstrate knowledge or techniques in any scientific discipline including:
  - Teaching
  - Research
  - Field trials
  - It also includes using any animal, or the remains of an animal that was killed specifically for any of the above purposes.

It is expected that on property interventions that require experimental protocols, therefore triggering AEC approval, will be developed by a specialist who will most likely be part of a research agency, and will therefore manage that AEC approval process.

- The following activities are not regarded as being for scientific purposes:
  - diagnosis by a veterinarian within routine veterinary practice, or biosecurity inspectors undertaking a disease response.
  - the routine production of food or fibre, including routine husbandry practices, record keeping and inspectorial staff undertaking routine regulatory activities
  - the training and application of agricultural extension work practices and students in veterinary science, veterinary nursing and veterinary technology.
  - disease surveillance where the procedures are being done for the health of the animal or herd.
- Animal ethics committee approval is not required for the training and application of agricultural extension work practices, provided **all** of the following apply:
  - the animals are at their home property
  - the procedures would occur normally as part of routine management
  - the animals are not subjected to anything additional to routine management
  - the teacher is competent to carry out the procedure
- The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries operates an AEC to provide public access for institutions unable to establish their own AEC.

**If there is any doubt as to whether ethics approval is required,  
advice should be sought from:**

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