

BARKLY BEEF



Northern Territory Government
Department of Business, Industry & Resource Development

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BLUETONGUE SURVEY CONTINUES IN THE BARKLY

The second phase of Bluetongue survey work will continue across random Barkly Region and Gulf properties in 2003 following the completion of the first phase of the virus surveillance in 2002.

Bluetongue is a virus spread by biting midges in the tropics and sub-tropics of northern Australia. Before bluetongue surveillance during the 90's began, many bluetongue sensitive markets would only accept cattle from below the Murray River for fear of importing bluetongue virus.

This current survey work over three years is supported by MLA and is intended to produce more hard data for which to base market negotiations upon.

All of the sampling during 2002 took place on Barkly, Gulf and VRD properties considered marginal for the spread of bluetongue during the wet seasons. The survey will determine a surveillance zone that does not have any reactors to the virus and adjoins properties to the north, which are affected by biting midges. South of this zone is a bluetongue free area. Sampling may also be used to determine

which serotypes affect land areas to facilitate negotiations for trade. Sentinel herds sampled over many years show no evidence of infection below the Barkly Region or around Alice Springs.

Northern Territory 2002 Results

Two-year-old cattle on nine properties were sampled in what is considered the surveillance zone and within 100km of the northern border of the bluetongue surveillance zone. Evidence of bluetongue infection was found on eight of the nine properties, including all three properties in the more southern bluetongue surveillance zone. This is further south than initially expected and survey sites for 2003 will take this into account.

There are eight types of bluetongue virus that may be found in the Northern Territory. Testing involves a broad-spectrum test for any bluetongue viruses initially, then more specific tests for the type of bluetongue virus if the sample was positive to the broad-spectrum test. Most of the positive samples were due to bluetongue virus type 1.

Table 1. 2002 NT Survey Results

<i>Property</i>	<i>BTV Zone (Feb. 2002 map)</i>	<i>No. tested</i>	<i>No. positive to both test types</i>	<i>Prevalence range (95% CI*)</i>
1	Surveillance	81	4	1.4 - 12.2
2	Surveillance	87	14	9.2 - 25.8
3	Surveillance	80	7	3.6 - 17.2
4	Possible transmission	60	18	18.8 - 43.2
5	Possible transmission	67	10	7.4 - 25.7
6	Possible transmission	60	1	0.04 - 8.9
7	Possible transmission	60	5	2.8 - 18.4
8	Possible transmission	83	1	0.03 - 6.5
9	Possible transmission	66	0	0.00 - 5.4
<i>Total</i>		<i>644</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>7.2 - 11.8</i>

* 95% confidence interval

(..continued from page 1.)

A national teleconference of the National Arbovirus Monitoring Program (NAMP) technical group was held in mid-December 2002. Results from this survey were discussed, and new zone boundaries have been proposed. The new zone boundaries are being endorsed by Biosecurity Australia, and the updated bluetongue surveillance zone map will be available soon at: www.namp.com.au. These boundaries take into account the results of the survey in Queensland and Western Australia.

The survey will continue during 2003 and 2004 and will

continue to concentrate on properties across the Barkly Tablelands and the southern Victoria River District.

There is an agnote on 'Bluetongue in Cattle' (No. 748/K41). If you would like more information about the virus either check the Internet (<http://www.nt.gov.au/dbird/dpif/pubcat/agnotes/agnotes.shtml>) or phone the Publications office on 8999 2307.

*Francois Human
Veterinary Officer
DBIRD Tennant Creek
Phone: 08 89624486*

A word from the Regional Director...

After a slow, dry start the weather has finally produced some excellent falls of rain across the district. Tennant Creek exceeded its rainfall record for the month of February.

It was with regret that Ray & Kay Jansen were farewelled from the district in January and we hope that one day they will return to the Barklys. They will certainly be missed, both for themselves & the many ways in which they gave assistance to the district. On a positive note we welcome the new manager of Helen Springs, Geoff Murrell and his wife Wendy, previously from Bulloo Downs in Queensland's channel country and hope they enjoy living & working in the Barkly region.

Staff changes in the Tennant Creek office are ongoing. Darryl Savage resigned and has taken up a position with the University of New England in Armidale and Andrew Doust has taken 12 months leave without pay. Darryl's position of Senior Animal Production Officer is currently being advertised. Francois Human commenced in early January as the Regional Veterinary Officer and a second Stock Inspector has been recruited and should commence in late March. Sally Towne, the new Landcare Facilitator, shares her time between the Tennant Creek office and Brunchilly Station.

*Jenny Purdie
Regional Director*

“Rowdy” Farewells the Barkly

A number of years ago a quiet, polite and well mannered young man of 22 years moved to Tennant Creek to join the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (now DBIRD) as an Animal Production Officer. Nearly seven years later Darryl Savage has said his farewell to the Barkly.

Late last year the Tennant Creek Primary Industries said goodbye to an employee who had been an asset to the office since his arrival.

He commenced his position under Mark Adams, who after departing, handed over the roll of Senior Animal

Production Officer to Darryl (better known as “Rowdy”).

Rowdy embarked on many projects during his work with the Department, and earned the respect and friendship of many of the regions pastoralists and station staff.

He is now working at the University of New England, Armidale as a lecturer in Ruminant Nutrition.

Rowdy left the Barklys, as he came...quietly, so no-one would make a fuss of him. He left strict instructions for no “farewell” article in the Barkly Beef newsletter – but with him gone, who could stop us?

New Vet Appointment for Tennant Creek



↑ New veterinary officer based in Tennant Ck DBIRD office, Francois Human.

Francois Human and his family moved from Port Lincoln in South Australia to Tennant Creek in early January 2003 to take up the veterinary officer position at DBIRD (Primary Industries).

Francois originates from South Africa's Northern Cape Province where he has practiced both in private practice and state health work. In the latter job, he was involved in foot and mouth disease border surveillance, brucellosis surveys and some TB monitoring. Most endemic disease conditions here are similar to those found in northern South Africa. He is comfortable in isolated areas, as Upington in South Africa is

on the edge of the Kalahari-desert

with scenery not dissimilar to the red country between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

His wife, Carina, is an agricultural business manager with experience in the table grape industry. For the short term however, she will be busy with their two young children and helping at the primary school as a teachers' assistant.

We welcome Francois and his family to Tennant Creek, the Barkly region and government animal health service in the NT.

Francois can be contacted on phone 08 8962 4486, mobile 0427 003 026 or e-mail: francois.human@nt.gov.au

Stations to host Rangeland Courses

The Tennant Creek Primary Industries are continuing to offer the popular Barkly Rangeland Management Course to private and company pastoral stations across the Barkly and Gulf regions in 2003.

The Course has again received funding through the Natural Heritage Trust, which enables it to be offered free-of-charge to stations.

It is designed to increase staff awareness of natural resource management issues and includes pasture management and identification, weed identification and control and land monitoring sessions. The course can also incorporate

some animal production and animal health topics but is flexible for each station's needs and interests. The Rangeland Management Course can be delivered in 1-2 days, depending on time frames available.

If you are interested in having a Course run on your station, please contact the Tennant Creek Primary Industries office. As there are a limited number of courses being offered it will be first in, best dressed.

For further information please contact:

Pam Allsop

Pastoral Extension Officer

Ph. 08 8964 4494

TABLELAND TALK - What's on in & around the Barkly...

Barkly Landcare & Conservation Association AGM - The first meeting and Annual General Meeting for 2003 will be held on Friday 11th April from 10am in the DBIRD Conference Room. All members and interested people are encouraged to attend. Morning Tea will be provided.

Barkly Campdraft Association AGM - Following a very successful campdraft last year, the Barkly Campdraft Association will be getting together for their AGM on Friday 11th April in Tennant Creek in the DBIRD Conference Room from 2pm.

Kiana Campdraft - The first campdraft being held in the district for the new year will be Kiana scheduled for the 16-18 May. For further information contact Vicki Priest at Kiana on 08 8975 9986.

Brunette Ladies Day - The first gathering for the Barkly women in 2003 will be on the 24 May at the Barkly Homestead during the very popular Brunette Ladies Day. For more information contact Bernadette Burke on 08 8964 4522.

For all the events on in 2003 within the Barkly and beyond see our Calender of Events (compiled by Helen Kempe) inserted into this edition of the Barkly Beef.

Carrying Capacity Calculator Tested on the Barkly Tablelands

DBIRD have been getting a lot of requests for carrying capacity estimates from all over the Northern Territory.

Many of these are for new enterprises such as Aboriginal stations or newcomers to the region. There is even interest from valuers and bank managers. It is also of great interest to outside agencies, such as those making financial projections, and those who regulate land administration (eg NT Pastoral Land Board).

Over the past two months Genevieve Nash, an Agricultural Science student at the University of Qld, has been in the process of testing the accuracy of a Carrying Capacity Calculator for the Barkly region. The calculator is a modelling program developed in the VRD district by Primary Industries and Tropical Savannahs CRC to estimate long-term safe carrying capacities for individual paddocks. The aim of this project is not to derive rules for carrying capacities, but rather to enable us to validate whether or not this calculator actually works on the Mitchell grassland on the Barkly Tablelands.

Several producers were asked to assist with the project. The properties involved include Brunette Downs (AACo), Alroy Downs (Stanbroke), Newcastle Waters (CPC), Ucharonidge (The Beebe Family) and Mittiebah Station (NAPCO).

The process adopted is to:

1. Pick out two paddocks from each property and quickly assess current condition and tree cover.

2. Identify and check the paddock's land-types or land units, and then run the model.
3. The next step is to compare the estimates with as many records as possible (such as managers assessment, paddock records, satellite image vegetation change data and pastoral inspectors reports).

So far, the project is going roughly to plan, though it may take a while longer while all the maths is done to come up with the estimates.

Genevieve came to the Northern Territory not knowing what to expect, but looked forward to a bit of an adventure, and has certainly had an excellent and interesting time whilst here. The Barkly Tablelands in particular really hit a heartstring.

"What a magnificent part of the world you live in!" she says. "I have thoroughly enjoyed The Northern Territory, and am looking forward to returning (hopefully) once I have graduated. I would like to thank all those who are participating in this study – Meat and Livestock Australia, and the Staff at DBIRD Katherine and Tennant Creek. But especially I wish to extend my gratitude to the Station Managers and staff of the properties involved in this study, who have so kindly helped me out during this time."

*For further information contact:
Chris Materne
Senior Rangeland Officer
Ph. 08 8962 4492*

2003 SHOW PLANS ALREADY UNDERWAY

Planning for the Tennant Creek & District Show is already underway, so start selecting your best beasts to enter into the Shows Cattle Section which again will be hotly contested by a variety of Barkly Region bovines.

The Tennant Creek & District Show is being held on Friday, 11 July through to Saturday, 12 July. This years' Cattle Section will again mirror previous years with the Pastoral Industry BBQ sponsored by the Droughtmaster Society, being held from 11.30am on the Friday leading up to the judging of the various classes in the Show Yards.

There will again be seven commercial cattle classes:

Class 1. Pen of 2 Bulls (under 4 years) must be bred on exhibitor's property

Class 2. Single Bull over 2 years

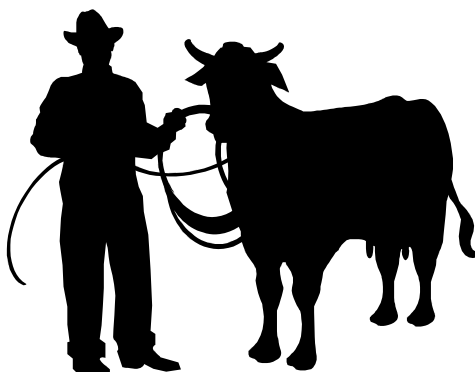
Class 3. Pen of 3 Mature Breeding Cows

Class 4. Pen of 3 Heifers (250 – 400kg) not yet calved

Class 5. Pen of 3 Steers (250 – 350kg)

Class 6. Pen of 3 Steers (350 – 450kg)

Class 7. Led Calf (3 – 8 months) judged on presentation of both calf and handler



The Barkly Beef Dinner will be held on the evening of the 11th July where presentations from the Cattle Judging will be made. For

further information

regarding the dinner, contact Belinda Rasheed at Avon Downs on 08 8964 5551.

The following morning, Saturday 12th July, the Droughtmaster Society will host their second NT Droughtmaster Sale in Tennant Creek again, offering a minimum of 60 bulls. A breakfast will be served at the Show Yards prior to the Sale, which will commence at 11am.

For further information on the 2003 Tennant Creek & District Cattle Section contact cattle steward, Pam Allsop on 08 8962 4494.

NT GOVT FAREWELLS WEED OFFICER

John McMahon has left the Northern Territory Government after 15 years service, and is bound for plenty of fishing and the blue waters of Bribie Island in Queensland.

John, or “Macca” (as he was more commonly known) came to Tennant Creek 26 years ago where he worked in the mines and for a time ran his own business.

Macca is a boilermaker by trade and prior to joining Primary Industries, worked for the Tennant Creek Town Council supervising a CDEP-like program on the construction of the Rodeo/Cattle yards at the Show Grounds.

John was recruited to the Weeds Branch of Primary

Industry & Fisheries in Tennant Creek in 1988 and joined Drew Gracie, the Senior Weeds Officer

Following Drew Gracie’s relocation to Darwin, Macca headed up the Weeds section and was assisted by Jonathon Peart. This is the position he was in when he completed his service with the Government on the 25th February 2003.

Macca has been an untiring supporter of the DPI social club over the years and a great BBQ chef during many a Tennant Creek Show and various social functions.

On Friday, 21st February, a farewell party was held for Macca in Tennant Creek.



↑ DBIRD Regional Director Jenny Purdie presents “Macca” with a book of highlights from his 15 years of service with Primary Industries.



Barkly Landcare & Conservation Association

UPDATE

I have now been in the role of Barkly Landcare Facilitator for nearly 2 months and I am enjoying it immensely. My role as facilitator is to coordinate the Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association and to assist with the achievement of regional natural resource management issues. It is a great challenge and I feel very positive about helping to improve our natural environment. I have an office in the Barkly House at the Department of Business, Industry, Resource and Development in Tennant Creek along with an office at Brunchilly Station where I live with my husband Chris. I commute between the two. Please do not hesitate to contact me to have a chat regarding any NRM related issues on your mind involving the Barkly region.

New 2003 Landcare Projects:

We have some great news in that our 3 envirofund applications that were lodged in 2002 by Chris Materne and Pam Allsop on behalf of the Barkly Landcare and Conservation Association have all been successful. Following is a brief summary of each of the projects we will be carrying out during 2003 and the benefits that

they will have for Natural Resource Management in the Barkly Region.

1. Collaborative integration of biodiversity and fire management on the Barkly Rangeland

This project aims to instigate collaborative bushfire training between the pastoral industry and local indigenous people, and to implement controlled burning practises into the Barkly region as a tool for biodiversity and pastoral management of the Mitchell grasslands.

A monitoring and evaluation program will gauge the success of the program and all the results will be communicated to the wider community.

Indigenous community involvement in the project is integral to cooperative fire and land management arrangements, and will act as catalyst for future collaborated and integrated biodiversity and land management between all stakeholders in the Barkly Region.

We received \$29 230.30 (including GST) for this project.

2. Riparian Restoration of Newcastle Creek / Longreach Waterhole

The wetland area of Newcastle Creek, leading into the Longreach Waterhole conservation area has been suffering from negative impacts over many years. Native flora and fauna is increasingly outcompeted by the invasive woody weeds *Parkinsonia aculeata* and *Caltropis procera* leading to the loss of biodiversity and habitat for native fauna.

This project plans to control the noxious weed infestations and promote the revegetation of native species thus allowing the wetland area to rejuvenate back to its natural state.

Education and awareness will also be an integral part of the project to ensure that the project outcomes are maintained into the future by the community.

We received \$28 879.40 (including GST).

3. Raising awareness in biodiversity issues in relation to grazing management

This project is to provide education and training for natural resource managers by including a biodiversity

module in the existing Barkly Rangeland Management and Victoria River Rangeland Management Course.

This will involve "training the trainers" of the respective courses such that it can be delivered in an informative manner by familiar people. These courses will be delivered on-station, to indigenous, private and corporate land managers.

We received \$15 384.60(including GST) for this project.

This is only the beginning of what we are setting out to achieve to make our natural environment a better place.

Future NRM funding opportunities for 2003 are looking promising so please let me know of any ideas or thoughts on NRM related projects that you would like to achieve in your area.

Bye for now, keep smiling, take care and remember, looking after our environment is looking after our future!!!

*Sally Towne
Barkly Landcare Facilitator
PO Box 159
Tennant Creek NT 0861
Ph: 08 89624479*

LOW STRESS STOCKHANDLING COURSES IN KATHERINE

Stockmanship has re-emerged as an important ingredient for successful livestock businesses.

This has come about from consumer demand for improved meat quality as well as the economic benefits for the livestock producer which include lower labour costs and increased productivity.

Jim Lindsay, a cattle producer from North Queensland, had the vision to begin training stockhandlers in low stress stockhandling methods several years ago and is now teaching producers how to achieve the optimum when handling any stock.

The basis for Low Stress Stockhandling principles lies in the predator-prey relationship between sheep and cattle and man and working dogs.

When asked about his stockhandling methods, Mr Lindsay said "Handling any animal is about attitude. We are the most intelligent party when we are working stock, so we have to consider the situation from the animal's point of view."

Mr Lindsay continued "If the right principles are implemented, livestock will move without stress through most facilities. Moving stock should be a stress-free, painless

activity for the livestock and handlers."

Research has shown that one of the major causes for losses in meat quality (bruises, mortality, meat downgrades) is from poor preslaughter handling by the stockhandlers.

As a result of many requests for his stockhandling school in the NT, Jim is teaching 2 stockhandling and 2 working dog schools in the Katherine region during early April.

The dates for the schools are: "Manbulloo Station", Katherine - 1 and 2 April (Stockhandling School), 3 April (Working Dog School). For further information or to book for these schools contact Pam McCosker on 07 4925 0144.

Aust Asia Export Services property, Katherine - 5 and 6 April (Stockhandling School), 7 April (Working Dog School). For further information or to book for these schools contact Gillian Webster on 08 8971 3110.

The 2 day Low Stress Stockhandling School is a prerequisite for Jim's 1 day Working Dog School. The schools are open to everyone.

Pastoral Market Update

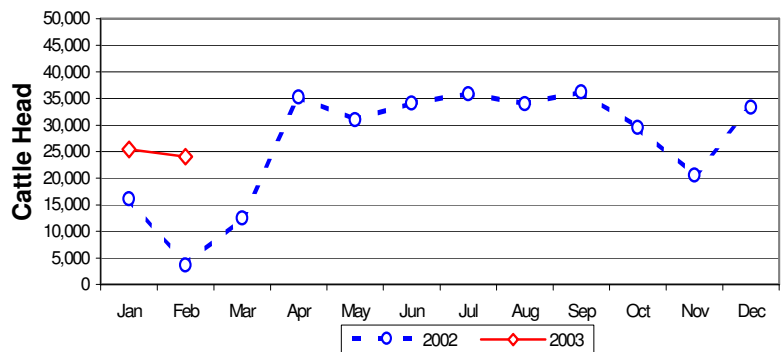
February, 2003

LIVE CATTLE EXPORTS VIA DARWIN PORT														
Destination	Total Cattle (including interstate)							NT Cattle only						
	2001	2002	Last year 28.02.02	YTD 28.02.03	1-28 Feb	Previous Month	Difference	2001	2002	Last year 28.02.02	YTD 28.02.03	1-28 Feb	Previous Month	Difference
BRUNEI	16,155	19,085	2,836	3,956	1,435	2,521	-1,086	11,003	12,012	2,514	3,341	1,382	1,959	-577
EGYPT	52,692	10,873	0	0	0	0	0	30,376	10,873	0	0	0	0	0
INDONESIA	151,190	199,327	7,276	32,754	15,957	16,797	-840	121,632	133,763	6,773	23,964	12,757	11,207	+1,550
PHILIPPINES	31,984	65,931	9,775	8,287	2,772	5,515	-2,743	25,701	52,692	9,775	4,770	1,155	3,615	-2,460
SABAH	110	318	0	0	0	0	0	110	17	0	0	0	0	0
SAUDI ARABIA	0	6,550	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,066	0	0	0	0	0
SARAWAK	0	1,033	0	320	0	320	-320	0	846	0	92	0	92	-92
VIETNAM	941	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W-MALAYSIA	5,055	18,765	0	4,130	3,890	240	+3,650	4,350	13,839	0	2,157	2,157	0	+2,157
EAST TIMOR	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JORDAN	0	688	0	0	0	0	0	0	688	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	258,127	322,602	19,887	49,447	24,054	25,393	-1,339	193,172	229,796	19,062	34,324	17,451	16,873	+578
				+29,560							+15,262			

"February at a glance"

- 24,054 head through the Port of Darwin during February. 1,339 head less than January, but a whopping 20,349 more than February last year.
- The current 29,560 head lead on 2002 obviously lauds well for 2003, however a major point of interest over the next couple few months will be the availability (or perhaps unavailability) of Queensland cattle.

Live Cattle Exports thru Port of Darwin
2002 v 2003



'OTHER' LIVESTOCK EXPORTS VIA DARWIN PORT (incl. NT and Interstate Stock)

Destination	Buffalo			Camels			Goats			Deer			Horses			Sheep			Pigs			
	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	2002	YTD 2003	1-28 Feb	
BRUNEI	3,359	698	173	144	15	15	2,439	758	758	37	0	0	0	0	0	430	0	0	0	0	0	0
EAST TIMOR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W-MALAYSIA	173	32	32	609	145	0	7,182	983	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1,573	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAUDI ARABIA	0	0	0	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SARAWAK	57	0	0	64	100	0	225	239	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PHILIPPINES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	6	0	0	0	0	0	686	0	0
INDONESIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THAILAND	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	320	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,589	730	205	935	260	15	9,846	1,980	758	357	60	0	44	6	0	2,003	0	0	686	0	0	0

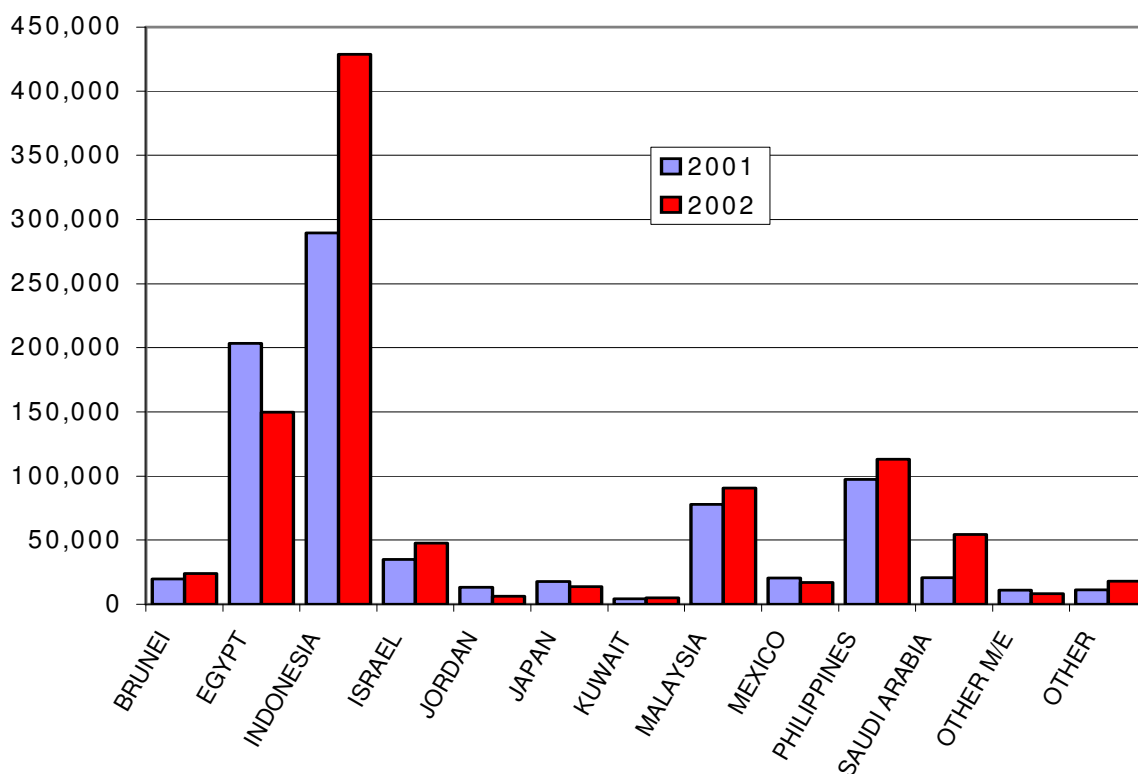
Australia Wide 2002

2002 was the biggest year ever recorded for Australian live cattle exports.

Australian Live Cattle Exports					
Country	2001	2002	Difference	%	Value
BRUNEI	19,879	24,143	+4,264	+21.5%	\$17.8 million
EGYPT	203,206	149,771	-53,435	-26.3%	\$99.5 million
INDONESIA	289,525	428,486	+138,961	+47.9%	\$256.7 million
ISRAEL	34,966	47,777	+12,811	+36.6%	
JORDAN	13,186	6,165	-7,021	-53.2%	
JAPAN	17,957	13,893	-4,064	-22.6%	
KUWAIT	4,391	5,237	+846	+19.2%	
MALAYSIA	77,925	90,646	+12,721	+16.3%	\$45.3 million
MEXICO	20,541	17,129	-3,412	-16.6%	
PHILIPPINES	97,411	113,263	+15,852	+16.3%	\$65.9 million
SAUDI ARABIA	20,800	54,354	+33,554	+161.3%	\$31.7 million
*OTHER M/E	11,195	8,430	-2,765	-24.7%	
**OTHER	11,492	18,246	+6,754	+58.8%	
TOTAL	822,474	977,540	+155,066	+18.8%	\$613.4 million

*OTHER M/E – Palestine, Qatar, UAE, Oman.

**OTHER – NZ, USA, China, New Caledonia, India, Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, Mauritius.



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