



Strategy documents

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FutureBeef communication strategy

This strategy is designed to support the communication activities of the *FutureBeef Program for Northern Australia* and underpins the goals and business imperatives of the National Beef Production Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) Strategy and the NABRC RD&E Priorities Prospectus.

The FutureBeef Program is a collaborative beef extension initiative supported by state government and industry partners. Under this collaboration, from May 2012, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Queensland (DAF), Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (NTDPI&F), Western Australia Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA) and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) are now promoting integrated and stand-alone beef extension activities under the FutureBeef visual identity.

The FutureBeef program is guided by the National Beef Production Research, Development & Extension Strategy (2010) and the NABRC RD&E Priorities Prospectus (2012).

The catalyst for the FutureBeef collaboration was the need to increase the efficiency of delivery of research results, as identified by the National Research Development and Extension Strategy, and the northern state ministers for agriculture.

A new FutureBeef website, visual identity, and supporting collateral were launched on 8 May at Beef 2012 in Rockhampton. Existing communication activities are recognised in this plan and expanded upon.

Scope

This strategy will cover the main communication activities underpinning the FutureBeef Program up to June 2016.

Strategic approach

This strategy complements the National Beef Production RD&E Strategy, of which DAF is the lead agency. The FutureBeef Program will be the vehicle for how program partners deliver the extension component of the RD&E strategy.

Seven strategic imperatives form the basis of this communication strategy:

1. Enhancing food safety, product integrity and biosecurity
2. Increasing natural resource use efficiency and reducing environmental impacts

A joint initiative of:



3. Increasing cost efficiency and productivity (including adaptability and risk management)
4. Enhancing integration and value adding in supply chains (including cost efficiency)
5. Improving beef eating and nutritional quality
6. Developing new and existing beef markets
7. Aligning animal welfare practices with consumer and community expectations.

This communication strategy seeks to unite major partners, engage new stakeholders and producers across northern Australia, develop new partnerships both nationally and internationally and assist program partner staff to spread the message through a variety of branded communication tools – mainly involving FutureBeef extension activities.

This approach seeks to build on the:

- new expanded FutureBeef partnership between state agricultural departments and Meat & Livestock Australia
- excellent work already done by DAF extension staff to promote FutureBeef in Queensland
- existing partnerships with other project collaborators including natural resource management groups, universities, industry bodies etc
- existing networks which support FutureBeef RD&E activities across Queensland
- coordination, collaboration, efficiency and effectiveness of RD&E efforts nationally.

The FutureBeef Management Committee provides a critical role in the development and approval of the Strategic Plan, Annual Operating Plan, and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Plan, and will be responsible for the oversight of this communication strategy.

Goal

The goal of this strategy is to

- position FutureBeef as the major beef RD&E knowledge and service provider to the northern Australian beef industry
- support the coordination and collaboration of the FutureBeef Program.

Objectives

The following measurable objectives aim to achieve the goals of the FutureBeef communication strategy:

- Increase the awareness of and understanding for the FutureBeef brand, and program activities, among producers and key stakeholders through effective representation and promotion.
- Engage more beef producers to take part in FutureBeef extension activities using relevant and targeted communication tools and strategies.
- Convey key messages using innovative delivery modes and leverage beef industry stakeholders to achieve maximum Program penetration across northern Australia.
- Increase internal team capability and capacity through regular meetings, continuous improvement of key processes and professional development opportunities.



Target audience

The FutureBeef audience represents both internal and external stakeholders.

For the purpose of this strategy, people from partnering organisations directly engaged with, and contributing to, FutureBeef activities are classified as 'internal'. Those not directly engaged yet affected by activities through association are classified as 'external'.

External

Primary audience

- Northern Australia commercial beef businesses

Secondary audience

- Industry peak bodies or statutory authorities related to the beef sector
- Northern beef and national sector service providers
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector
- Natural Resource Management (NRM) agencies and other non-government related agencies

Internal

- FutureBeef partner organisation participants and drivers
- FutureBeef staff/ consultants

Key messages

Program messages

- The FutureBeef collaboration with State Government agencies and industry RD&E funders will integrate resources resulting in more effective, high-quality and client-focussed services and activities for commercial beef businesses across northern Australia.
- FutureBeef provides targeted research technologies and best management practices to help beef producers improve their productivity and increase their bottom line.
- The FutureBeef Program helps producers to become more resilient and adaptable to changing business environments, including climate variability.
- FutureBeef activities help beef producers make a significant contribution as good environmental stewards by using natural resources more efficiently and reducing environmental impacts.



Extension messages

FutureBeef knowledge and service delivery priorities (as aligned with the Rural Research and Development Priorities) and their program extension key messages are provided below.

Priority	Key messages
Feeding phosphorus	Key messages were updated in June 2015 as part of E.IFL.1302 Review and Update of FutureBeef Extension Training Packages (2012-15). See 'Key messages' document – FutureBeef staff intranet http://intranet.futurebeef.com.au/direction/plans/
Weaner management	
Whole of business management	
Heifer management	
Improving breeder performance	

Delivery modes

Integration and reinforcement of key messages across appropriate platforms will lead to improved understanding and retention of information. Using a targeted approach and a variety of channels to deliver key messages will also help to increase recipient contact with the message and increase the ability of people to find and retrieve information on their own accord.

- **Program** key messages will be used regularly and consistently in all communications and delivered in a variety of ways.
- **Extension** key messages will be delivered according to the integrated message delivery timeline.

Communication strategy and tactics overview

A range of communication strategies and tactics will be employed to meet FutureBeef objectives. Refer to the individual strategies for further detail.

Delivery mode	Strategy	Tactics	Lead agent(s)
Web	Web strategy	Website: online platform for publishing useful tools and resources.	Felicity McIntosh (DAF)
	Social media strategy	Social media (including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube): online social networking, publishing, sharing.	Rebecca Farrell (DAF), Jodie Wright (NTDPI&F)
	Webinar program	Webinars: web hosted e-learning on key topics (team and producer focused).	John James (DAF)
	eBulletin program	eBulletin: eBulletin subscription service promoting seasonal management practices and tips (including news and links to web resources).	Rebecca Farrell (DAF)
Multimedia	Multimedia plan	e-Learning package: Online self-paced training package around land condition and pasture monitoring. DVDs: Archive of production and technical information for industry Electronic files: Podcasts, slidecasts, PowerPoint presentations and images.	Jane Wightman (MLA)

Media	Media strategy	Print, radio, television, media releases and media briefings.	Krista Cavallaro (DAF)
Print marketing material	Comms material production calendar	Fact sheets, MLA Feedback, Frontier magazines and newsletters, posters, signage, industry magazines and publications.	Jane Wightman (MLA)
Events	Event promotions calendar	MLA BeefUp Forums, workshops (e.g. Business EDGE), Producer Demonstration Sites (PDS), Train the trainer activities, field days, breakfasts, guest speaker invites, open days.	Felicity McIntosh (DAF)
Internal team collaboration	Internal team collaboration strategy	Management Committee: meetings, teleconferences, workshops, email, conferences. Team leaders and staff: professional development training, FutureBeef website staff log-in, website and team learning webinars, regional team webinars.	Krista Cavallaro /John James (DAF)

Short-term action plan: strategies

Individual strategies underpin the communications strategy.

The following table summarises the individual strategies, their status, when they were last updated, required actions and lead agent. Completed strategies are attached for reference.

Strategy	Status	Updated	Lead agent
Social media strategy	Complete	FB staff intranet	Jodie Ward (NTDPI&F)
Communications strategy	Complete	FB staff intranet	John James (DAF)
Webinar program	Ongoing		John James (DAF)
Ongoing	Ongoing		Rebecca Farrell (DAF)
Communication planner	Ongoing		John James (DAF)



Integrated message delivery and timeline

A timeline is used to ensure integrated delivery of messages and to identify individual actions will be developed. Events and multimedia items can be built into this timeline to reinforce extension messages. An example is provided below.

	Week	Message	Delivery mode	Tactic/activity	Target audience	Staff	Feedback
September 2016	1	Weaner management	eBulletin	Article	Primary	Rebecca Farrell	Good feedback on article
			Social media	Posts/tweets adv webinar, event	Primary	etc	Positive responses
	2						
	3	Weaner management	Webinar	Webinar, refer program	Primary and secondary		40 attended
	4	Weaner management	Print article	Feedback Magazine	Primary and secondary		etc
			Event	Qld weaner Workshop	Vocational and Education Training sector		
December 2016	1	Feeding Phosphorus	eBulletin	Article	Primary		
			Social media	Posts/tweets link to eBulletin, promote webinar, tips on feeding			
	2	Feeding Phosphorus	Webinar	Webinar, refer program	Primary and secondary		
			Media	ABC country hour interview on phosphorus manual			
	3	etc					

Message spokespeople

Program partners and staff will be the key spokespeople representing FutureBeef in the media.

Media enquiries related to FutureBeef will be directed to Bob Karfs, Director (Beef and Sheep) (DAF) for progress to the appropriate contact. Specific enquiries related to a particular region, field of research or project should be directed to the media manager or elected contact.

General enquiries relating to the management and directives of the FutureBeef Program should be directed to the Management Committee, specifically, the primary and secondary spokespeople:

Primary FutureBeef spokesperson: Krista Cavallaro (DAF)

Secondary FutureBeef spokesperson: Jane Wightman (MLA)

Branding

Refer to FutureBeef Branding Guide.



Monitoring and evaluation

The success of the FutureBeef program will be assessed through a structured monitoring and evaluation plan.

Objective	Communication tactics	Measures of success	Method of measurement
Increase the awareness of and understanding for the FutureBeef brand, and program activities, among producers and key stakeholders through effective representation and promotion.	Website Events Print marketing material Social media Team learning and producer webinars Multimedia eBulletin	Consistent branding across all marketing touch-points. Regular FutureBeef branding in extension staff activities. Producers recognise the brand as relating to RD&E in the northern beef industry.	Social media feedback, industry perception survey.
Engage more beef producers to take part in FutureBeef extension activities using relevant and targeted communication tools and strategies.	Program related events Producer Demonstration Sites (PDS) Workshops Field Days Train the trainer activities Producer webinars Multimedia, eLearning package	Building knowledge, skills and confidence among beef producers (30% of producers engaged). Supporting adoption and practice change (50% of producers engaged). Maintaining broad industry awareness (50% of producers).	Ex ante and ex post full business analysis. Benefit cost analysis as per Program evaluation of research adoption activities.
Convey key messages using innovative delivery modes and leverage beef industry stakeholders to achieve maximum Program penetration across northern Australia.	Website Events Print Social media Media FutureBeef eBulletin MLA Feedback and Frontier magazines and newsletters Multimedia	Producers aware of how to participate and benefit from Program activities. Producers understand opportunities and recognise advantages of adopting best practice management and new technologies.	Event feedback sheets, producer surveys, stakeholder inform/formal feedback, media analysis (number, frequency, topic, location), web trends/stats, social media stats (reports)
Increase internal team capability and capacity through regular meetings, continuous improvement of key processes and professional development opportunities.	Management Committee meetings Regular webinar meetings Teamwork maintenance Team learning webinars Professional development	Focused and engaged team. Meeting outcomes as per Program M&E. Knowledge exchange by RD&E professionals.	Internal staff survey, staff performance benchmarking.

Issues and challenges

Issue	Response
Ensuring that Program messages are delivered consistently to producers and stakeholders across northern Australia through the partner agency networks.	Clearly defined key messages and communication channels (QA process for message creation and delivery).
Maintaining commitment by major partners and stakeholders to the allocation of resources for the successful delivery of the Program.	Management Committee communication and facilitation of Program objectives and outcomes. Resource planning and allocation; level of transparency in partner budgets. Utilise existing resources and networks to achieve maximum penetration of the Program.
Recognition, understanding and acceptance of the FutureBeef brand among internal and external stakeholders.	Team leader facilitation of staff in learning, understanding and participating in FutureBeef initiatives (e.g. webinars). Communication activities as outlined in this communications strategy are encouraged by Program Leaders for adoption among staff and stakeholders.
Retaining relevancy (content and delivery) to target market over the life of the Program.	Identifying and capitalising on opportunities. Evident process for integration of opportunities into current Program. Encourage a culture of innovation, team learning and contribution (e.g. active participation in FutureBeef staff intranet functions).

Budget

The FutureBeef Program with DAF, MLA, NTDP&F and DAFWA is part of the Memorandum of Understanding. There is no specific project funding at this point in time. Partner organisations will continue to manage their respective budgets but all FutureBeef activities will be planned collaboratively. This in turn will identify new opportunities to divert funding to higher priority activities as well as to identify future funding opportunities. Resources will be shared between major partners (DAF, MLA, NTDP&F and DAFWA).

If you have any problems, queries, or feedback, please contact the FutureBeef eExtension team (info@futurebeef.com.au).

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