

# Advancing the beef industry

THE North Australia Beef Research Council (NABRC) is an independent, incorporated association established in 1992.

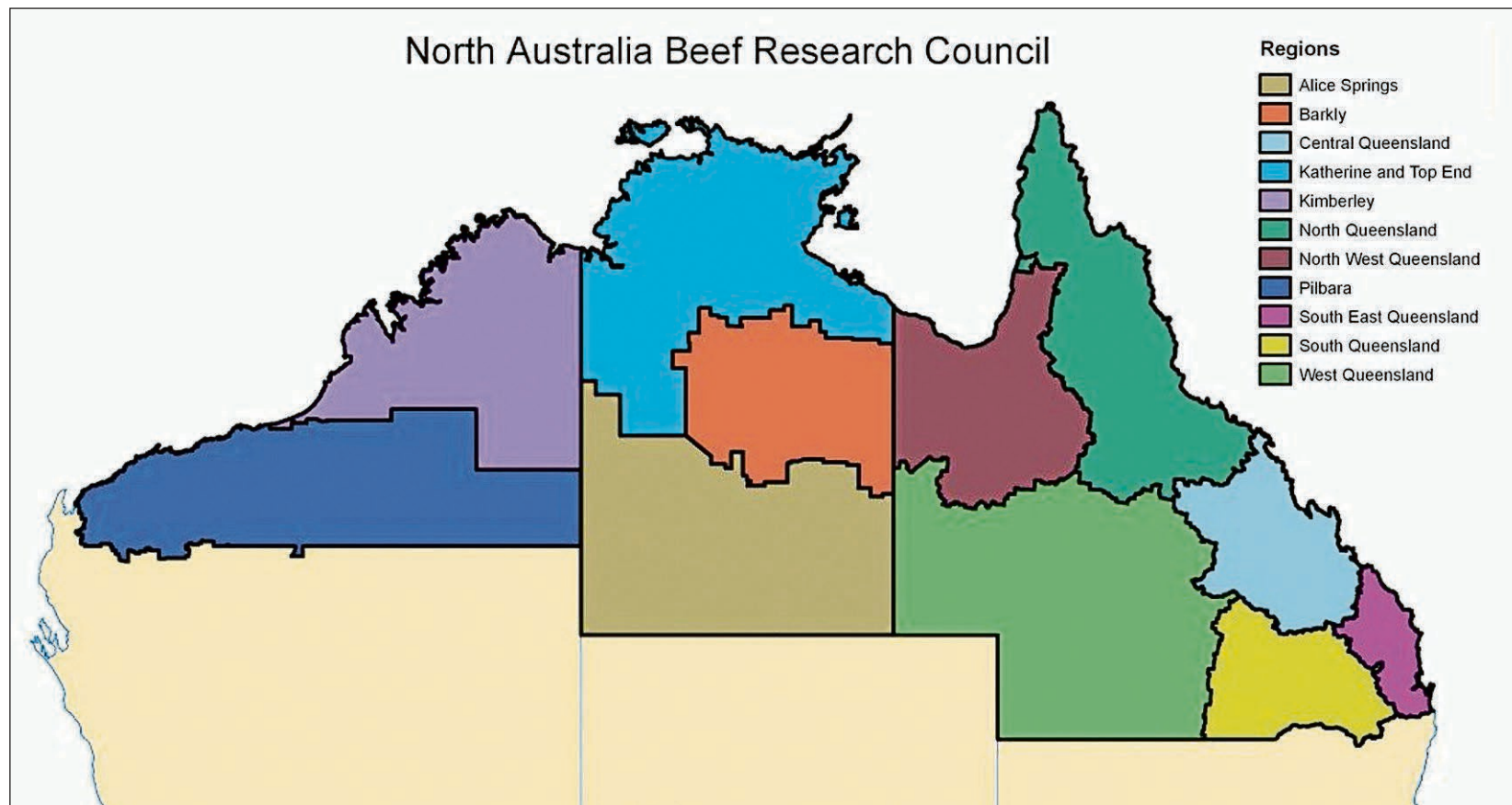
Its mission is to drive a focus on research, development and extension/adoption (RD&A), education and training that benefits the northern beef industry.

Producers, research organisations, research funders and education providers come together twice yearly to discuss strategic industry issues and identify priority RD&A issues.

Eleven Regional Beef Research Committees (RBRCs) led by a producer chair and supported by an agency-sponsored secretary, provide grassroots input to NABRC from across Queensland (6), the Northern Territory (3) and the Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Western Australia (2).

Each RBRC has a core of up to six producer members, plus other members representing state/territory agencies, CSIRO, universities, and key stakeholders in the region (stock and station agents or NRM groups).

The RBRC chairs are representatives on NABRC, alongside senior representatives of Meat & Livestock Australia



A total of 11 Regional Beef Research Committees provide grassroots input to North Australia Beef Research Council.

(MLA), relevant state government departments (QLD, WA, NT), CSIRO, industry organisations and other major R&D providers.

NABRC meets twice a year and plays a key role in the consultation structure MLA use to determine RD&A investment priorities.

In addition, two NABRC representatives sit on MLA's Red Meat Panel which assesses regional issues in the context of national red meat and livestock industry RD&A priorities.

Following a survey of members, incoming NABRC chair, John Taylor plans to

strengthen RBRCs.

"NABRC is only as good as the RBRCs - they are critical to defining the issues to address and identify new ways to advance the industry in those regions," Mr Taylor said.

The plan includes expanding capacity within RBRCs to

ensure they are equipped to address current and emerging industry issues and provide important consultation for R&D funding bodies.

NABRC will soon advertise for producers to be involved with their local RBRC.

In the meantime, if you are interested in being more

involved in your region's RD&A activities or knowing more about NABRC, visit [nabrc.com.au](http://nabrc.com.au).

Alternatively, contact John Taylor, NABRC chair, 0429 725 838, [chair@nabrc.com.au](mailto:chair@nabrc.com.au) or Janine King, secretariat, 0419 735542, [secretariat@nabrc.com.au](mailto:secretariat@nabrc.com.au).

## Improve your land condition

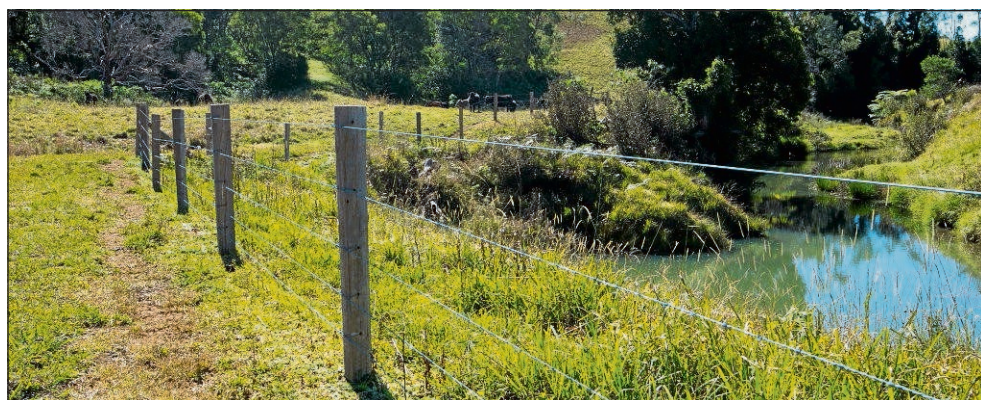
BURDEKIN, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary region graziers can improve ground cover and land condition through the Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS) program.

The \$6 million program provides one-on-one extension advice for graziers with areas of poor (C) or degraded (D) land to develop and

implement a tailored action plan for land management.

Landholders receive support to identify and improve areas of degraded land. Improving ground cover and reducing soil loss leads to economic and environmental benefits. Participating graziers may also be eligible for incentive funding for projects.

The program, funded by Queensland Government's Reef Water Quality Program, is delivered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), NQ Dry Tropics, Fitzroy Basin Association and Burnett Mary Regional Group. Contact DAF on 13 25 23 or alternatively, your Natural Resource Management Group.



Participating graziers may also be eligible for incentive funding for projects including small-to-medium scale gully remediation, or riparian and hillslope fencing.

# BRAHMAN GENETICS

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# New rules for animal welfare

THE Queensland government is committed to adopting the 'Australian Animal Welfare Standards for Livestock at Saleyards and Depots' following their approval at a national level.

Anyone in control of animals including owners, transporters, saleyard operators and anyone employed to manage or handle livestock is responsible for familiarising themselves with the new standards.

Key changes for cattle producers

- Appropriate pain relief must be used when castrating or dehorning. Not mandatory if cattle are less than six months old or less than 12 months and castrated or dehorned at their first mustering and yarding.
- Appropriate pain relief must be used when performing flank approach for spaying or webbing.
- Reasonable actions must be taken to ensure welfare from extremes of weather, drought, fires, floods, disease and injury.
- Dogs must be muzzled moving calves less than



New mandatory requirements for the treatment of cattle and sheep in Queensland, and all livestock at saleyards and depots will soon come into effect.

30-days old when not with cows.

- Electrical prods can only be used on cattle three months or older. Cattle must be able to move away from the prod.

It must be applied as sparingly as possible and must not be applied to face, udders, anus or genitals.

- Tethered cattle must be given the opportunity to

exercise off tether at least once each day and have space to stand, lie and move around for grazing.

- Disbudding calves using caustic chemicals can only be done if less than 14

days old and calf is not wet, is segregated from its mother for four hours after treatment and can be kept dry for 12 hours after treatment.

Dairy

- Daily welfare assessment required for lactating cows.

- Feed pad must have a well-drained rest area.

Beef feedlots

- Minimum floor area 9m square per standard cattle unit (equivalent of 600kg live weight).

- Mandatory daily welfare assessment.

- Owner/operator must complete annual risk assessments on heat stress and implement and maintain risk management system.

Spaying

- Non-veterinarians wanting to use the Willis dropped ovary technique must be accredited and hold competency in unit: AHCLSK335 - Conduct dropped ovary technique procedures for spaying cattle.

The nationally agreed standards and guidelines are available online at [animal-welfarestandards.net.au](http://animal-welfarestandards.net.au).

For information contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23 or email [info@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@daf.qld.gov.au).

## NEW FORMULATION GIVES GRAZIERS MORE PRICKLY ACACIA CONTROL OPTIONS



GRANULAR Products, in collaboration with Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), have launched the new Regain 750WG herbicide for control of prickly acacia and other woody weeds. The new formulation provides graziers with an option to manage infestations using existing spray equipment and previous knowledge of herbicides.

Eliza Barrett, research and development, Granular Products, said the formu-

lation contains the active ingredient Tebuthiuron in a stable and lightweight formulation making it easier for landholders to freight and store.

"Efficacy trials were run over two years to examine the effectiveness of the WG formulation resulting in 100 per cent control of prickly acacia," she said.

MLA program manager, sustainable feedbase resources, Cameron Allan, said the aim of this joint

project was to deliver a new control product which could assist overall management in seeking to keep land clear of prickly acacia.

"This control method is targeted at prevention across large sections of grazing land to minimise expansion of infestations and allow productive grazing to continue," he said.

Prickly acacia contributes to soil erosion, decreases biodiversity and reduces the available pasture for

livestock. Paul Hubbard, chief executive officer of Granular Products, said the release of the product had been very well received.

"The availability of this product offers farmers and graziers an opportunity to control prickly acacia, without being cost prohibitive. It provides an alternative, affordable and longer-term approach for the end user in their fight to control prickly acacia," Mr Hubbard said.

### PRICKLY ACACIA

- Prickly acacia is a highly invasive 'Weed of National Significance' spread across several million hectares of Mitchell grass plains.
- It has significant economic and environmental impacts on beef enterprises.
- For more information, search for prickly acacia at [www.mla.com.au](http://www.mla.com.au)



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\* Based on NLIS market share data, 2020.







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## Inspiring careers in the cattle industry

# Taking steps to be 'job ready'

A NEW pastoral training program in Western Australia's Kimberley region is providing practical skills for Aboriginal trainees seeking employment in the grazing industry.

Developed in response to industry requests, the program aims to support a career path for young Aboriginal people and provide the pastoral industry workforce with a skilled, entry-level cohort.

The program was coordinated by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia (DPIRD WA) and delivered by Queensland's VET Centre, the Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation and the Kimberley Agricultural and Pastoral Company.

Ten young men spent two weeks working on Myroodah station in WA's Kimberley region gaining practical skills with cattle and horses, developing confidence and learning the foundational skills required to be "job ready" to work in the pastoral industry.

"The graduates learned practical skills like fencing, water point maintenance, animal handling and wel-



The first participants of the Aboriginal Pastoral Academy recently completed their intensive training program.

fare, and additionally received language, literacy and numeracy training," Melissa Hartmann, the DPIRD WA Aboriginal economic development manager said.

"The Academy has had

great industry support, including offers of employment for graduates and offers to host future training opportunities."

Three program graduates have commenced full-time

employment on stations across the Kimberley and others have opted to return to school.

The program delivered a low stress stock handling course, in conjunction with

the Nyamba Buru Yawuru people's Warrmijala Murrugulayi pre-employment program.

"Joining with the Warrmijala Murrugulayi program for this part of the course has

“

The Aboriginal Pastoral Academy pilot has laid the foundations to build employment pathways, which will generate far reaching benefits to industry, as well as local communities in the north.

been a great opportunity for trainees of both programs to learn practical skills together," Ms Hartmann said.

The Aboriginal Pastoral Academy pilot will now be developed into a broader program by DPIRD WA with input from the local industry.

For information contact DPIRD WA, (08) 9474 2505, enquiries@dpiird.wa.gov.au

# Selling weaners must fit long-term strategies

HIGH weaner prices across northern Australia may encourage sales of younger cattle by beef producers who would normally target an older turnoff age. The decision to sell steers early, possibly as weaners straight off mum, needs to balance the short-term opportunity with the long-term strategy.

Recently, economic modelling work in the Drought and Climate Adaptation program, using Breedcow and Dynama herd budgeting software, emphasised the importance of considering whole herd structure when setting female culling and steer sale age targets. Breeder productivity, steer perfor-

mance, market access and the relative prices of steers and females at different ages, and sale weights for the region need to be considered.

The modelled optimum sale age (31 months; 474kg) in the Northern Downs area increases average profitability by \$71,000 per year. This age of turnoff, in association

with less breeders in the herd, greatly improves business flexibility in a variable climate.

Col Burnett, cattle producer north of Julia Creek and a participant in the project, says he budgets for 25 per cent breeders, otherwise calving rates and stock condition drop if the season fails.

"Don't rule out selling weaners but consider long-term profitability and drought risk," he said.

In the long term, selling older steers was consistently more profitable than the sale of weaners in all modelled regions across northern Australia. There is a cash flow deficit if returning to selling

older steers which can be difficult to overcome.

Impact on long-term profitability should be considered carefully when selling to take advantage of short-term price premiums.

More information is available at futurebeef.com.au (search for DAF6).

■ Lindsey Perry, 0477755243.

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