

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **RED MEAT ADVISORY COUNCIL LIMITED\***

## Meat Labelling Bill Passed in NSW

The *Food Amendment (Beef Labelling) Bill 2009* has today been passed by the NSW Legislative Council, paving the way for beef grading to be made law in that State. This may have ramifications for the nation.

Red Meat Advisory Council Chairman, Mr Ian McIvor, AM, said industry always supported those parts of the Bill that were focused on Truth in Labelling but strongly opposed locking beef grading into legislation.

“Although the bill has been passed, Minister Tony Kelly has assured Parliament that proclamation of the Bill will not be granted until mid 2010.

“This provides industry with a further opportunity to work with the NSW Government in refining the Bill to a point that industry considers workable. I thank the Minister for this”, said Mr McIvor.

RMAC will seek a meeting with Minister Kelly, who only recently assumed the Primary Industries portfolio, to commence negotiations on the Regulations for this Bill.

An ongoing issue for the red-meat and livestock industry is the retention of the clause requiring beef from older animals to be labelled ‘low grade’ or ‘low quality’.

“While I acknowledge that the intent of this clause is to convey a more transparent message to consumers about eating quality, I believe it will fail to improve sale volumes as anticipated and will continue to meet the ire of cattle producers and beef retailers who predict it will turn customers away.

“I wish to acknowledge the degree to which the NSW Upper House Members familiarised themselves with this complex issue. Their heightened understanding should assist our negotiations over the next six months as we approach the proclamation of the Bill into legislation.

In the meantime, industry will be working with the Federal Minister and his department in guiding the process through the national forum of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council prior to its meeting in 2010”, concluded Mr McIvor.

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\* Red Meat Advisory Council Ltd is the peak advisory body for the red-meat and livestock industry and has as its members Australian Meat Industry Council, Cattle Council of Australia, Sheepmeat Council of Australia, Australian Lot Feeders' Association and Australian Livestock Exporters' Council

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