ANIMAL INDUSTRIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE RELEASED

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Australia Real Estate Alert

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VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO SUPPORT ANIMAL INDUSTRIES THROUGH THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The Animal Industries Advisory Committee (AIAC) was established by the Victorian Government in October 2015 to consider whether the planning framework relating to animal industries is meeting the needs of farmers, councils and the community.

The Victorian Government last month released its response to the AIAC's final report. The response highlights the significance of animal industries to the Victorian economy and sets out 12 actions in response to the AIAC's recommendations.

The AIAC's final report and the Victorian Government's response are both available on the Agriculture Victoria website here.

Government Support for AIAC's Recommendations

In responding to the AIAC's final report, the Victorian Government supported, either fully or in principle, 31 of the AIAC's 37 recommendations, including:

- defining land use terms for the current known intensive animal production systems, including egg, poultry and pig farms and cattle, sheep and goat feedlots and changing the definitions of extensive animal husbandry and intensive animal husbandry
- requiring planning permits for these new uses
- removing the *1992 Piggeries Code* as an incorporated document and incorporating new codes of practice into planning schemes
- including separation distances between dwellings in the codes of practice
- establishing a panel of animal industries specialists to provide technical advice to local councils when assessing planning permit applications
- including application requirements for planning permit applications in the Farming Zone, Rural Activity Zone and Green Wedge Zone for intensive animal husbandry, animal keeping and rural industry.

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Recommended Actions

The 12 actions the Victorian Government has committed to in response to the AIAC's final report are to:

1. Support local government strategic planning by improving access to regional growth and land suitability information.
2. Establish an implementation reference group to facilitate continued improvement in planning for sustainable animal industries.
3. Introduce clear land use definitions for animal industries into the Victoria Planning Provisions.
4. Take a graduated approach to planning controls based on risk.
5. Provide early planning and development assistance through Agribusiness Development Facilitation and interactive web-based development tools.
6. Establish a panel of animal industries specialists to provide technical support to local government.
7. Remove the *1992 Piggeries Code* as an incorporated document in the Victoria Planning Provisions.
8. Develop a new general Code of Practice for animal industries complemented by industry-specific technical guidelines.
9. Develop a more consistent approach to determining separation distances for various animal industries and production systems.
10. Develop and make available short courses on sustainable animal industries.
11. Enable clear identification of water catchment areas to assist planning decisions.
12. Develop clear guidance to improve quality of planning permit applications, and develop model permit conditions to guide local government.

Next Steps

The Victorian Government is commencing all of the recommended actions immediately. The majority of actions will be led by Agriculture Victoria, which will be working closely with the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning.

Timeframes to deliver the 12 actions and frequently asked questions are available on the Agriculture Victoria website here.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised by the response.

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