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The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP
Minister for Agriculture
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Joyce

The zoonotic disease Q fever is one of the most debilitating diseases affecting farmers and workers in agricultural industries. Caused by a bacterium *Coxiella burnetii* it is carried by a wide range of animals with the main carriers being farm animals.

Infected animals shed the bacteria in birth fluids, placental tissue, urine, faeces and milk. The bacterium is tough and can survive difficult conditions and stay in the environment for long periods. When humans come into contact with material contaminated with the bacteria they may become infected.

People with Q fever suffer badly, this can range from high fever, nausea, muscle and joint pain and loss of weight through to chronic fatigue. About 20% of people infected end up suffering from Post Q Fever Fatigue Syndrome.

A vaccine for Q fever has been available in Australia since 1989 and in 2001 the Australian Government funded a National Q Fever Management Program. The program consisted of systematic delivery of a subsidised Q fever vaccination service to targeted populations with a high risk of environmental exposure.

Livestock SA is aware of a number of people badly affected following infection by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii*. Their plight has caused many in rural communities in South Australia to consider their own vulnerability to the disease.

It is more than ten years since the last Q fever vaccination program was wound up. Since the winding up many new entrants to the livestock industries have taken positions on farms and in agricultural service industries.

To reduce the chance of Q fever becoming a serious risk to all in the rural communities of South Australia, Livestock SA is asking that a new National Q Fever Management Program be funded; including the subsidisation of Q fever vaccinations of all individuals in rural areas over 15-years of age and who have not previously been vaccinated.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Power
President Livestock SA