

New cattle tick laws for Queensland



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A new risk-based cattle tick management framework commenced in Queensland on 1 July 2016.

The new framework provides greater flexibility for producers moving livestock across the tick line and provides opportunities for reduced travel times and costs for industry.

Under the framework, part of Queensland is declared a tick-free zone and the remainder is a tick-infested zone.

All producers continue to have an obligation to report the presence of cattle tick and tick fever in the tick-free zone.

Owners of tick-infested properties in the tick-free zone have an obligation to ensure their livestock are tick-free before they are moved from the property, and to undertake a program to eradicate ticks from their property.

To ensure the tick-free zone remains tick-free, movement requirements apply to high-risk activities—such as moving livestock from the tick-infested zone to the tick-free zone.

The new framework also provides more flexibility for carrying out low-risk activities—such as moving horses across the tick line or moving livestock to feedlots and abattoirs.

Owners of tick-infested properties have an obligation to take all reasonable actions to prevent cattle tick spreading from their property, whether their property is in the tick-free zone or in the tick-infested zone. Property owners must practice good biosecurity regardless of their location and tick status.

Crossing the tick line

Under the new framework, movement requirements for livestock crossing the tick line provide a balance between protecting the tick-free zone from the introduction of cattle tick and allowing reduced restrictions for the movement of livestock that pose a low risk of spreading ticks.

High-risk livestock (cattle, buffalo and deer)

High-risk livestock are those species that are suitable hosts for cattle ticks and pose a significant risk to spreading viable cattle tick. High-risk livestock include cattle, buffalo and deer.

A biosecurity certificate issued by an accredited certifier must be obtained before high-risk livestock are moved from the tick-infested zone to the tick-free zone. The accredited certifier will only issue a certificate if the livestock being moved meet the risk minimisation requirement outlined in the *Queensland biosecurity manual*. Livestock being moved to a property in the tick-free zone will generally be inspected and treated with a chemical to ensure they are tick-free.

Livestock moving to an abattoir or feedlot in the tick-free zone pose a lower risk of spreading cattle ticks. Different movement requirements apply.

Low-risk livestock (horses, camels, goats, sheep and alpacas)

Low-risk livestock are those species that can be hosts for cattle ticks, but pose a low risk to spreading viable cattle tick. Low-risk livestock include horses, camels, goats, sheep and alpacas.

A biosecurity certificate is not required to move low-risk livestock into the tick-free zone from the tick-infested zone or an infested property. However, the livestock owner must meet the risk minimisation requirements outlined in the *Queensland biosecurity manual* before moving the livestock. The livestock owner must also declare the steps they took to meet the risk minimisation requirements and that the livestock are tick-free on their movement record.

Queensland biosecurity manual

The *Queensland biosecurity manual* provides detailed information on activities that should be undertaken to reduce the biosecurity threats most likely to impact Queensland. Livestock producers must follow the procedures outlined in the *Queensland biosecurity manual* to reduce the risk of spreading cattle ticks and to eradicate cattle ticks from an infested property.

The *Queensland biosecurity manual* is available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

Accredited certifiers

Accredited certifiers are trained persons who have been authorised by the Queensland Government to certify the status of livestock crossing the tick line.

Accredited certifiers can inspect and treat livestock, and issue biosecurity certificates to allow livestock to be moved from the tick-infested zone to the tick-free zone. Accredited certifiers can perform inspections and issue biosecurity certificates at any location. This allows livestock to be certified at their place of origin and then moved directly to their destination.

The accredited certifier system expands on the previous third-party provider system, with the addition of greater oversight to ensure the system is auditable and accredited certifiers are accountable.



Anyone can apply to become an accredited certifier, but you must complete appropriate training and have the necessary expertise and experience to be appointed. Accredited certifiers undergo annual audits.

An accredited certifier may have their accreditation suspended, amended or cancelled if a condition of the accreditation has not been met, the certifier has committed a relevant offence or the relevant fee has not been paid.

Infestations in the tick-free zone

Owners of properties that are infested with cattle tick in the tick-free zone have an obligation to notify Biosecurity Queensland of the presence or suspected presence of cattle tick or tick fever. The owners of these properties will need to follow movement requirements when moving livestock from the property and will be required to undertake a cattle tick eradication program.

Restricted places

Properties in the tick-free zone that are infested with cattle tick will be declared a restricted place. Properties designated as restricted places will be subject to movement requirements.

To move high-risk livestock from a restricted place to the tick-free zone, the property owner will be required to obtain a certificate from an accredited certifier stating that the risk minimisation requirements in the *Queensland biosecurity manual* have been met. The costs associated with the service provided by an accredited certifier are the responsibility of the property owner.

Removal from the restricted place register

To be removed from the restricted place register, a property owner must provide evidence to Biosecurity Queensland showing they have eradicated cattle tick from their property. This may include a detailed program outlining the actions that have been taken to eradicate cattle tick from the property (e.g. chemical treatment, destocking).

An accredited certifier must supply a report stating they have inspected livestock on the property and are confident the eradication program has been successful. The costs associated with the service provided by an accredited certifier are the responsibility of the property owner.

Additional validation may be undertaken by Biosecurity Queensland before a property is removed from the restricted place register.

For guidelines on eradicating cattle tick, contact your local biosecurity officer or call Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Surveillance program

A surveillance program for cattle ticks is in place for the tick-free zone. Under the surveillance program, Biosecurity Queensland officers will conduct surveillance to determine the presence of cattle ticks in the tick-free zone.

The surveillance program provides an understanding of where cattle ticks may be located in the tick-free zone, identifying key risk areas and any non-compliance with the new cattle tick provisions. The surveillance program will monitor the effectiveness of cattle tick eradication programs on infested properties in the tick-free zone.

The cattle tick surveillance program will not provide property inspections for market access or proof of freedom. These services may be provided by accredited certifiers.

More information

For more information on cattle tick management in Queensland, contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

