Media Release

Willem Westra van Holthe, Member for Katherine
Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

New live export market breakthrough

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The Northern Territory Government has welcomed news there has been a major breakthrough in live cattle export trade negotiations between Australia and China.

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Willem Westra van Holthe said cattle could be shipped to China within months, following an agreement signed by Federal Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce late yesterday.

“This is unprecedented and could see open access for the Australian export industry into one of the largest markets in the world,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“Once the agreement is finalised, exporters- including Northern Territory producers- will be able to start working with Chinese importers to implement the Export Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) and establish supply chains to meet demand.

“This development is a huge shot in the arm for industry and reduces the risk of our live export industry relying on a single market,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

The live export trade is worth around $230 million annually to the Northern Territory economy.

Minister Westra van Holthe said both the Federal and Northern Territory Governments have been working tirelessly to increase live cattle exports.

“We’ve all worked hard to bring the live cattle export industry back from the brink of despair following Labor’s catastrophic ban on live exports in 2011,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“Back then no-one would have predicted the success we’re seeing today. It’s been possible purely through the hard work of both industry and government.”

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