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

**Indonesian trade ties strengthened**

6 December 2015

The Northern Territory Government is strengthening trade and relationship ties with Indonesia, with the gifting of four purebred Riverine Buffalo bulls today.

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Willem Westra van Holthe said it was an honour to officially hand the bulls over to Indonesian Consul Mr Andre Omer Siregar.

“Indonesia is the Northern Territory’s largest live cattle export market and the Country Liberals Government has worked hard to foster a strong and positive trade relationship; the gifting of these bulls is another sign of the goodwill and friendship that exists,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“As well as fostering interest in Riverine Buffalo, it is hoped that the gifting of these animals may also play a role in assisting Indonesia to increase self-sufficiency in local buffalo meat and milk production.

“Currently, the majority of Indonesia’s herd are Swamp Buffalo, which are primarily used for draft work and meat production.

“My Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries will work with the Indonesian Government to assist in their cross-breeding work involving the Riverine Buffalo and Swamp Buffalos to produce a superior F1 cross-bred animal,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

F1 cross-bred Riverine Buffalo growth rates have been shown to be superior to swamp animals with up to 40 per cent increase in growth.

Minister Westra van Holthe said the four Riverine Buffalo Bulls which are being gifted will go into two artificial insemination centres in Indonesia.

“We expect the semen from each bull could be used to service hundreds of cows each year, which could be of significant benefit to the Indonesian people,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“Cross-bred buffalo steers can reach the required 420kg live weight in 14-18 months, instead of the 24-30 months it takes Swamp Buffalo.

“If this breeding program is successful, it will result in a much greater capacity for buffalo meat and milk to be readily available for the local Indonesian people.”

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