Chief Minister Adam Giles has inspected the first shipment of Territory buffalo to arrive in Vietnam.

Accompanied by representatives from the Vietnamese importer from ANIMEX and the Territory exporter SEALS, the Chief Minister visited a feedlot in Hai Phong Vietnam and inspected the 220 buffalo in the shipment, as well as Territory Brahman steers.

“It’s exciting to see this buffalo project becoming a reality after so much work by the Territory Government, the importers and exporters,” Mr Giles said.

It was at this same feedlot last October, where Mr Giles discussed the prospect of exporting Territory buffalo to Vietnam.

“Just five months later, those talks have delivered not just a single shipment, but the beginning of what we hope will be a long term sustainable industry between the Northern Territory and Vietnam,” Mr Giles said.

“This is a whole new market for Territory buffalo and another way we are building business opportunities in Northern Australia.

“In the long term, I see huge opportunities for Indigenous communities to harvest buffalo in the wild on Aboriginal land. Only the Country Liberals Government is supporting Indigenous economic opportunity and fostering job creation right across the Territory, including the bush.

“Seeing the buffalo and cattle in the Vietnamese feed lot is the realisation of all the hard work done by all those involved in commencing the new buffalo industry and promoting the live cattle trade in Vietnam.”

A second shipment of buffalo is due to arrive in Hai Phong in mid-March.

“Vietnamese importers are already showing strong demand for buffalo. On conservative estimates, the Territory buffalo industry could supply around 1000 head per month to live export, drawing from 100,000 animals in the wild and 10,000 farmed animals.” Mr Giles said.

In the past year Vietnam has quickly become the Territory’s second largest customer for live cattle after Indonesia and our newest customer for Territory buffalo.

Live cattle numbers have soared in the past year with 32,806 head of Territory cattle exported to Vietnam through the Port of Darwin in 2013, with a farm gate value of approximately $20 million.

“Vietnam represents an opportunity for the live cattle export industry to diversify its customer base,” Mr Giles said.

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