Abstract

Northern Beef Industry Emerging Market, Supply Chain Gap Analysis & Sector Capacity Baseline Study

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† Presented at the third International Tropical Agriculture Conference (TROPAG 2019), Brisbane, Australia, 11–13 November 2019.

Published: 29 March 2020

Abstract: With an ongoing interest in developing northern Australia, we undertook a beef situation analysis to assist the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australian in tailoring their investment decisions. The northern beef industry is dominated by rangeland enterprises that include family farms, indigenous pastoral enterprises and large corporate interests. The analysis was a whole of supply chain examination of current practices, strategies and plans. It included consultation with producers, industry groups, research organisations and government departments. The competitive advantages of the northern beef industry are its adapted production systems, low cost base and geographic positioning that allows it to take advantage of south-east Asian markets. However, the inherent low productivity, high capital costs and over reliance on a small number of markets make it vulnerable to market shocks. We found that the industry faces challenges in maintaining profitability and the ability to translate research to practice to enhance productivity its social license to operate. The review makes recommendation under four themes: There is an ongoing need for research and develop for profitability and productivity gains for the top businesses; There is a need to improve the translation of proven R and D to farm practice for the majority of the northern Australian beef industry; There is a need to support and develop business cases for economic enabling infrastructure to allow the northern Australian beef industry to remain competitive and intensify production, and; There remains some regulatory reform and derisking required to support investment in the industry and allow diversification.

Keywords: Northern Australia; beef industry; tropical beef production

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