

Review of the Grassfed Cattle Transaction Levy

Summary of the Final Report and Recommendations · 2026

The grassfed Cattle Transaction Levy (CTL) is the largest levy in the red meat sector. It had not been comprehensively reviewed since 2009, and the \$5 rate was last changed in 2006, some 20 years ago. In March 2025 Cattle Australia, as the industry's Prescribed Industry Body, commissioned an independent Review Committee. The Committee looked at two questions: **is the levy delivering value to levy payers today**, and **how could levy payers get greater benefit from it?**

1,000+ grassfed levy payers heard across every state and territory	34 regional face-to-face consultations, plus online sessions	\$61.9m average grassfed levy revenue a year since FY08	\$8.68 what the \$5 levy set in 2006 would be worth today in real terms
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“The recommendations for reform included here serve as a pathway to restructure this system to put producers back at its core.”

REVIEW COMMITTEE, FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What we heard

- Levy payers want a **more accountable, transparent system** that clearly reports the value returned from their levy.
- The levy **has delivered value**, but it needs to work harder and not become complacent.
- Producers will support a levy change if there is **greater transparency and accountability** on why it is needed, how it will be used and what it delivers. They backed further investment in the National Residue Survey, biosecurity preparedness and industry representation, and greater independence for integrity systems.
- Producers want a **stronger voice, through Cattle Australia**, in how their levy is invested.

What the analysis found

- The \$5 rate has not changed in 20 years, and its **real value has fallen by around 42%**. Over the same period, cattle gross value of production has more than doubled.
- About **\$0.87 of every \$5.00** now funds communications, industry capability building and integrity systems, which have no dedicated funding stream of their own.
- The **National Residue Survey underpins access and beef prices in all our markets**. It now spends more than it receives from the levy and needs more funding.
- The **case for increased investment in marketing programs was not made**. Fully “restoring” the levy’s real value (around +\$3.70) was rejected as the benefit was not clear.

RESOLUTION FOR THE MLA AGM, NOVEMBER 2026

Improved accountability, transparency and reporting before any levy change Then, and only then, a \$1 increase to \$6.00 per transaction

Cattle Australia recommends that the reforms be undertaken together. **If they are introduced in full by 1 July 2027**, the grassfed levy would increase by **\$1.00 to \$6.00 per transaction by 1 July 2028**, to fund increased focus on and investment in:

- accountability of levy investments to grassfed levy payers
- strategic biosecurity investments
- sustainable funding for the National Residue Survey
- industry representation and capacity building
- dedicated funding for integrity systems

Where each dollar would go

Levy stream	Current	Change	New	What the extra funding supports
Marketing (Non-R&D)	\$3.66	+\$0.69	\$4.35	Industry representation, secure dedicated ISC funding, industry defence and education on beef production systems (~\$8.8m a year)
Research & development	\$0.92	+\$0.20	\$1.12	Improved R&D, adoption and strategic biosecurity investments (~\$2.5m a year)
National Residue Survey	\$0.29	+\$0.11	\$0.40	Residue monitoring and market assurance (~\$1.4m a year)
Animal Health Australia	\$0.13	–	\$0.13	Unchanged
Emergency Animal Disease Response	\$0.00	–	\$0.00	Unchanged. Activated only when a response is required
Total per transaction	\$5.00	+\$1.00	\$6.00	

Fixed minimum portions per transaction. Marketing to be renamed "Non-R&D". Extra revenue estimated at 12.7 million transactions a year.

\$0.84

minimum per transaction

Integrity and biosecurity. A dedicated amount for the integrity systems (NLIS and LPA), pre-emptive biosecurity research and pre-outbreak extension with grassfed producers, drawn from both R&D and Non-R&D funds.

\$0.60

minimum per transaction

Industry representation. Funds industry representation and builds producer capability, education programs, defence of the industry against activism and disinformation, and better extension and adoption.

THE REFORM PACKAGE

Eight recommended actions, in sequence

- 1 Brief Government**
Fully brief the Minister and the Department, and seek support to implement the recommendations.
- 2 Engage each levy recipient body**
Make sure available levy funds, including matching funds, are used as efficiently as possible.
- 3 Full program assessment**
Each levy recipient justifies and publicly reports the value of every program, before FY2027/28 budgets are approved.
- 4 Staged \$1.00 increase**
The levy rises to \$6.00 by 1 July 2028, only if the reforms are in place by 1 July 2027.
- 5 Flexibility between streams**
Cattle Australia can approve movement of funds between levy streams under a governance framework.
- 6 Fixed review cycle**
Full review every 10 years, aligned with red meat industry planning, plus a 5-year mid-cycle report.
- 7 Stand-alone Integrity Systems Company**
Separate from MLA, with a majority-independent board and proportional representation of levy-paying sectors.
- 8 Funded industry representation**
Set aside a fixed minimum of \$0.60 per transaction for representation, education and engagement.

WHAT CHANGE CAN BRING

- 1**
Greater accountability and producer oversight of strategic priorities
- 2**
More flexibility to manage risks to industry
- 3**
More funding for critical services, and services that are easier to use
- 4**
A leading posture against disease and pest outbreaks
- 5**
Better engagement with the community on grassfed beef production, for a more profitable and sustainable industry

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Nov 2026	By 1 Jul 2027	By 1 Jul 2028	By end 2030	2035
Ballots, advance votes and proxies close 3.30pm (Qld) 22 Nov. MLA members can also vote live at the AGM on 24 Nov. Report to the Minister follows.	Reforms in place. Full accounting of value from each levy recipient published.	Levy rises to \$6.00 under the new allocations.	Comprehensive structural review, aligned with the industry's 2040 strategic plan.	Mid-cycle review, testing priorities against "market failure".

Final Report and Consultation Summary: cattleaustralia.com.au/the-cattle-transaction-levy · levy@cattleaustralia.com.au