

24 March 2020

## Veterinary medicines essential for food safety and animal welfare

Veterinary medicines are essential to protect animal health and welfare, for food safety and to limit the spread of zoonotic disease.

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA) Executive Director Ben Stapley today called on all levels of Government to ensure that the manufacture, distribution and transport of veterinary medicines can continue uninterrupted.

Mr Stapley urged Governments to ensure that access to animal health products would continue throughout any further potential measures introduced to limit the spread of COVID-19.

“I have outlined specifically the essential nature of veterinary medicines to the Federal and State and Territory Governments. These are products that are critical to protect the integrity and safety of our food, as well as protecting the health and welfare of all animals under our care,” Mr Stapley said.

“The animal health sector is working with Governments, industry partners and particularly veterinarians to ensure veterinary medicines are available.

“I know the veterinary sector is working to ensure they are able to provide the best clinical support to animal owners.”

“Should Governments impose further social distancing, self-isolation and individual movement restrictions, the manufacture, transport and distribution of vaccines, antibiotics, parasiticides and other animal health products must continue. This would be in line with other similar jurisdictions such as New Zealand where animal health services have been identified as essential.

“Over two-thirds of Australian households have a pet and the support and comfort these pets provide during times of social isolation should not be underestimated. We must not forget these pets have ongoing health needs.

“We note that some governments have indicated that agribusinesses supplying agriculture must continue, and we welcome that. However national consistency in approaches by all jurisdictions will be important. The importance of Australia’s food supply chain has been made clear to Australians in recent weeks, and we must continue to provide farmers with the tools they need to keep producing the highest quality food that they are renowned for.”

**Media contact:** Brie Colley 0474 740 808