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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Andrew Hansen

Again I can report a relatively mild winter in the central tableland of New South Wales, no snow as yet, and once again that, the buttons are being cast before the end of July.

In May I attended the annual conference of the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and can report that the AVA Board has ratified the Association's policy on deer farming and velvet antler harvest.

Readers can view this policy on www.ava.co.au and follow the links to policies and positions.

The AVA is regarded as Australia's premium reference group for policy and information about animal health and welfare and provides advice to all levels of government.

An important part of the AVA policy relating to deer farming is the continuing integrity of the National Velvet Accreditation Scheme (NVAS).

With the changing marketing patterns of velvet in Australia the fall in quantity being sold in the Australian Deer Horn (ADH) pool and the increase in volume sold to private buyers, it is critical that our NVAS standards are not diminished. All ADH pool velvet must have a NVAS tag. Do private buyers have this requirement? How much velvet is being harvested by non-accredited farmers? The NVAS was a hard-won privilege for deer farmers. Don't let it fail.

I bring to your attention that all velvet exported to Korea must have an endorsement of the export certificate stating that each stick of velvet has an NVAS tag with an accreditation number of the currently accredited farmer, or is processed from velvet that was individually tagged with an accreditation number. It is up to the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) to enforce this requirement.

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) have had a change of heart and are releasing funds for deer research and development (see P5). I draw your attention to a genetic improvement project advertised in this edition (see P12), proceeding with support from RIRDC. Participants are required.

The federal Government has announced RIRDC is now able to provide a marketing role if requested by industry and funded by a dedicated levy. Something for us to consider in the future. And now, something to ponder over on those cold winter nights, RIRDC Corporate Plan 2012-17 is now available at <https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/12-025> and The Annual Operations Plan 2012-2015 at <https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/12-001>.

Membership subscriptions are slowly coming in. I encourage all who read this magazine to join the DIAA so that our association can truly represent the Australian deer farming industry to governments and the public.

Andrew Hansen
President DIAA