

# Beef Central News

## Katter calls for cattle industry crisis meeting

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Independent MP Bob Katter is calling on state and federal governments to convene an emergency summit to address what he terms as a crisis in the cattle industry that has pushed many graziers close to breaking point.

Mr Katter, head of the Katter Australia Party and member for the North Queensland seat of Kennedy, said producer profitability was being crushed by falling cattle prices, a diminished live export market and widespread drought from Charters Towers to the Northern Territory, which had been exacerbated by disastrous fires during summer.

Bovine Johne's Disease had placed additional pressure on dozens of northern graziers forced to comply with movement restrictions as their herds are tested for the disease.

Mr Katter said his party was calling for state and federal governments and rural financiers to participate in a crisis summit and to come to the immediate aid of graziers who were facing an uncertain future.

He said will develop a steering committee with industry representatives and other interested parties to develop proposals to aid the industry in the next five days.

"We must urge upon the banks to shoulder a sense of responsibility in this crisis whilst both state and federal governments must be made to shoulder their responsibilities since most of these problems are attributable to the policies of successive governments," Mr Katter said in a KAP press release.

Mr Katter said paper losses to cattle and land values could now exceed \$2 billion, and predicted the situation would dramatically worsen over the next twelve months.

With the average northern cattle operation now carrying more than \$1.4 million in debt on average, according to last year's QRAA rural debt survey, the industry was close to breaking point, he said.

He said he informed Treasurer Wayne Swan of his call to action on Friday and said representatives of State and Federal Governments to contribute to the development of a united and workable plan for the industry.