

MEDIA RELEASE

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Zoetis announces \$100,000 donation to Beyond Blue to Support Mental Health in Rural Australia

Zoetis, the leading animal health business, has reached its goal of raising \$100,000 for the Beyond Blue Support Service to support mental health initiatives and reduce stigma around mental illness in rural and regional Australia. Zoetis has a long-standing commitment to supporting mental health in rural and regional communities, where accessing mental health care can often be challenging due to factors such as geographic isolation, stigma, and financial constraints.

Zoetis started partnering with Beyond Blue in 2016, and since then, has raised \$900,000 for Beyond Blue by donating \$5 from each sale of the company's livestock, pig, and poultry vaccines and drenches.

Lance Williams, Zoetis Senior Vice President, Australia and New Zealand, said, "Zoetis works closely with rural Australia through interactions with the country's farming community, agricultural stores, veterinarians and their families. We are proud to once again be supporting Beyond Blue and the important work they do."



The handover of the donation by Lance Williams, was attended by key figures including Beyond Blue Chair Linda Dessau AC CVO, former Governor of Victoria (2015-2023) and Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, and Georgie Harman, CEO of Beyond Blue. Also present were Fred Schwenke, Business Unit Director, Zoetis, Lauren Rowston, Business Unit Director, Zoetis, and Mark Willis Marketing Manager, Livestock at Zoetis.

Factors such as inflation, cost-of-living pressures, climate change, and the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the importance of mental health support, particularly for farmers and rural communities. The funds raised play a vital role in sustaining Beyond Blue's 24/7 mental health support services, which include counselling, advice, and referrals. These services are essential for providing support to individuals in rural and regional areas who face additional barriers to accessing mental health care compared to their urban counterparts. To date, thanks to Zoetis's donation, more than 15,500 people have been able to get the support they need through the service.

"The partnership between Zoetis and Beyond Blue goes beyond financial contributions," added Mr Williams. "It's about making sure that no one in rural Australia feels alone in their struggle with mental health, and that help is readily available. We want to encourage early intervention and remind people that reaching out for support is a sign of strength, not weakness. This donation will help ensure that those living in regional areas have access to support when they need it most."

According to the recently released survey results from Beyond Blue, *Australian Mental Health and Wellbeing Check 2024*¹, people are delaying seeking help for their mental health, with nearly half of those surveyed (49 percent) waiting until they are very or extremely distressed before they sought mental health support. Top barriers to seeking help included affordability of treatment, shame/stigma and people thinking their problem wasn't serious enough to seek support. Nearly half of all respondents – 46 percent – named financial pressure as a key factor in their distress. Housing affordability and personal relationship challenges were also identified as stress factors by 34 percent of respondents.

Beyond Blue's Support Service has proven to be a lifeline for many. Data shows that after contacting Beyond Blue, individuals often feel more understood, less distressed, and better equipped to manage their mental health challenges. This year's donation from Zoetis will allow Beyond Blue to continue to be there for people in rural Australia, so they can access the support they need, whether it be via phone, webchat, or online forums.

"We need to continue to lift the shroud of shame surrounding mental health conditions, so that more people reach out for support without waiting to reach crisis point," says Derek Schoen, a Corowa farmer and Beyond Blue board member, highlighting the critical need for early intervention.

"While rural Australians are known for their resilience, the pressures they face can take a toll on their mental health. It's not always easy to ask for help, especially when you're used to handling things on your own.

Partnerships like this one between Zoetis and Beyond Blue make it possible for people to seek help before problems grow.

Our message, when it comes to your mental health is don't wait until things really get on top of you. Let people know how you're feeling or check in with someone you've noticed changes in. The earlier the better. You're not alone."

Beyond Blue Support Service provides 24/7 free counselling, advice and referrals via phone 1300 22 4636, webchat or email at <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support>

ENDS

Hi-Res image available [here](#). Image includes (left to right)

- Mark Willis Marketing Manager, Livestock at Zoetis
- Lance Williams, Zoetis Senior Vice President & Cluster Lead, ANZ
- The Hon. Linda Dessau AC CVO, Beyond Blue Chairperson
- Georgie Harman, Beyond Blue CEO
- Lauren Rowston, Business Unit Director, Zoetis
- Fred Schwenke, Business Unit Director, Zoetis

About Zoetis

As the world's leading animal health company, Zoetis is driven by a singular purpose: to nurture our world and humankind by advancing care for animals. After innovating ways to predict, prevent, detect, and treat animal illness for more than 70 years, Zoetis continues to stand by those raising and caring for animals worldwide – from veterinarians

¹ [Mental Health and Wellbeing Check 2024](#)

Beyond Blue's Australia's Mental Health and Wellbeing Check, undertaken by the Social Research Centre at the ANU, surveyed more than 5000 people in June 2024, about their mental health and wellbeing. The last of these representative surveys was conducted in 2022.



and pet owners to livestock farmers and ranchers. The company's leading portfolio and pipeline of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and technologies make a difference in over 100 countries. A Fortune 500 company, Zoetis generated revenue of \$8.5 billion in 2023 with approximately 14,100 employees. For more information, visit www.zoetis.com.

About Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to reduce the impact of anxiety and depression in Australia. Beyond Blue provides information and support to help everyone achieve their best possible mental health, regardless of age, background and wherever they live. Beyond Blue works to give everyone in Australia the confidence to speak openly about anxiety, depression and suicide – both to seek support when they need it and to check in with those close to them – and tackle prejudice and discrimination wherever they exist. Beyond Blue's tools, resources and services create mentally healthy environments. Through dedicated programs, Beyond Blue supports schools, universities, workplaces and community organisations to protect and promote good mental health.