**Project Title:**

Improving smallholder beef health & production in Cambodia and Laos through developing and testing a program of best practice animal health

**Project Supervisor:**

Associate Professor Peter Windsor

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**One Sentence Project Summary:**

An opportunity exists for a PhD candidate to work within an ACIAR project aimed at identifying the preferred interventions that can improve smallholder beef health & production in Cambodia and Laos.

**Project Synopsis:**

This project addresses deficiencies in cattle health and production practices in Cambodia and Laos, two of the poorest countries in SE Asia. The majority of the mostly rural population is engaged in smallholder subsistence farming utilising large ruminants for rice production. With demand for meat growing rapidly in adjacent countries, estimated at over 3% per annum, a significant increase in export of cattle and buffalo for meat consumption in Vietnam, Thailand and potentially China is occurring, estimated at up to 25% of cattle traded and exceeding 100,000 pa per country (Windsor 2007, data from ACIAR project AH/2006/077, ‘Identifying research priorities for the development for the beef industry in Cambodia and Lao PDR with special reference to animal health interventions’, 2007). This trade offers both a means to address rural poverty through enhancing the quality of the animals and mechanisms supporting this mostly unregulated trade, plus presents a major risk to the control of transboundary diseases in the region, particularly Foot and Mouth Disease. In meeting both opportunity and risk of the developing beef trade in the Mekong region, ACIAR project AH/2005/086 is now commencing in Cambodia, entitled ‘Best practice cattle and buffalo health and husbandry systems for Cambodia’. A similar project is currently being negotiated with ACIAR for implementation in Laos in May 2008. The project aims to improve the profitability of large ruminant production by Cambodian smallholder farmers through improving disease control and husbandry practices.

**Other Information:** (e.g. scholarships/funding available, etc.)

Potential students should be eligible for an APA or UPA and may be eligible for additional support from the Australian Biosecurity CRC.