

World-First Koala Chlamydia Vaccine Approved

Landmark Moment for Wildlife Medicine

Libourne, September 12, 2025- Australia's veterinary medicine regulator has approved the world's first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia, the leading cause of death in koalas in Queensland and NSW*. The approval by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) under its minor use category marks a turning point in the fight to save one of Australia's most beloved native species.

"This is a high-quality, veterinary-approved product that can now be used in wildlife hospitals, veterinary clinics, and in the field," said Professor Peter Timms, lead researcher at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC).

The vaccine developed over more than a decade by UniSC's Centre for Bioinnovation, targets *Chlamydia pecorum*, which can cause painful urinary tract infections, infertility, blindness, and death in koalas. *"Some individual colonies are edging closer to local extinction every day,"* Timms warned, citing infection rates as high as 70% in parts of South-East Queensland and New South Wales. Until now, antibiotics were the only treatment option, which is not a sustainability solution for long term.—The new vaccine offers a safer, more effective alternative that aligns with best practices in wildlife veterinary care. Professor Peter Timms said, *"We knew a single-dose vaccine with no need for a booster was the answer to reducing the rapid, devastating spread of this disease."*

Backed by Science, Proven in the Field

The vaccine's approval follows a decade of rigorous clinical trials, including the largest and longest study of wild koalas ever conducted. Led by UniSC Senior Researcher Dr Sam Phillips, the study confirmed the vaccine's safety and effectiveness across multiple generations of koalas in both captive and wild settings.

"This study found that the vaccine reduced the likelihood of koalas developing symptoms of chlamydia during breeding age and decreased mortality from the disease in wild populations by at least 65 percent," said Dr Phillips. *"It's based on Chlamydia pecorum's major outer membrane protein (MOMP), and offers three levels of protection reducing infection, preventing progression to clinical disease and, in some cases, reversing existing symptoms."*

The vaccine's single-dose design is especially critical for field veterinarians, minimizing handling stress and logistical challenges. *"Operational feasibility is key in wildlife management,"* said Pierre-Marie Borne, Director of Ceva Wildlife Research Fund. *"This vaccine represents a crucial intervention to safeguard endangered species and serves as a model for similar conservation efforts worldwide."*

Ceva Wildlife Research Fund: Driving Innovation in Wildlife Health

Ceva Wildlife Research Fund, which is the charitable arm of [Ceva Animal Health](#), played a pivotal role in bringing this vaccine to life. [Ceva Wildlife Research Fund](#) provided critical funding and expertise during key stages of development. Ceva Wildlife Research Fund is committed to preserving biodiversity, fighting against zoonoses, and facilitating interactions between wildlife, farm animals and humans.

Ceva Animal Health's legacy in animal health innovation spans decades, with a global footprint in both companion and production animal sectors and the investment in wildlife research through Ceva Wildlife Research Fund underscores a growing commitment to ecological stewardship.

Find more information about the Ceva Wildlife Research Fund and its programs **by clicking [here](#)**



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About Ceva Wildlife Research Fund

Ceva Wildlife Research Fund is a unique endowment fund that aims to finance applied research projects focused on protecting the health of wildlife.

The three main missions of the fund are: preserving biodiversity, fighting zoonotic diseases, and facilitating interactions between wildlife, farm animals, and humans.

Ceva Santé Animale, the 5th global animal health company, whose mission is to provide innovative health solutions for all animals to ensure the highest level of care and well-being, has created Ceva Wildlife Research Fund with the challenge of financing applied research projects with fast-observable results, with a maximum time horizon of 3 to 5 years.

<https://www.ceva.com/wildlife-research-fund/>

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* <https://www.org.au/blogs/koalas-forever-tackling-chlamydia-in-koalas-to-bring-them-back-from-the-brink-of-extinction/>