

Australian Chicken Growers' Council Limited

ABN 31 837 493 703



PO BOX 12009
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4003

Phone: (07) 3837 4747
Fax: (07) 3236 4100

Email: acgc@acgc.org.au

President: James Mifsud

Vice- President: Jodie Redcliffe

ACGC submission on the Regulation of Australian Agriculture Productivity Commission's Draft Report 2016.

Australian Chicken Growers Council (ACGC) represents the interests of contract meat chicken growers nationally through six state organisations. The Council's core business is to grow the Australian chicken meat industry by providing support to growers and industry knowledge to government to develop policy that promotes a sustainable and innovative industry.

- New South Wales Farmers Association Poultry Meat Group
- Queensland Chicken Growers Association,
- South Australian Meat Chicken Farmers
- Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association Chicken Meat Group,
- Victorian Farmers Federation Chicken Meat Group,
- West Australian Broiler Growers Association.

The chicken meat industry is vertically integrated with the majority of chicken grown out on farms contracted to a specific processor.

ACGC welcomes the opportunity to make further comments on these documents.

ACGC is a member of the Australian Chicken Meat Federation (ACMF) and fully supports any submission it makes. We particularly appreciated the opportunity to meet face to face with the Commission.

ACGC supports the position the report has a wide range of issues which currently have the potential to impact on the agricultural sector. Like most farming operations we support the use of regulations in quarantine and food safety.

We support the recommendations made by the report in relation to GMOs.

Given the likely impacts of Climate Change in the future and plateauing productivity there needs to be a national approach to the issues relating to the use of GMO's and labelling. The debate has been hijacked by special interest groups who have used emotive language to frighten consumers into believing that consuming or using GMO products will have significant consequences for their health and the environment. There clearly needs to be a robust debate lead by the Australian Government that ensures the community is clear on advantages of using GMOs and to identify any negative impacts.

Clearly animal welfare is another policy area that the Australian Government needs to re-engage in. It is vitally important for animal industries and intensive animal industries in particular, that animal welfare expectations are underpinned by good science and not perception. While the States are currently responsible for enacting animal welfare legislation there is really no constitutional issues that cannot be overcome as was the case when the Australian Government took control of water nationally.

The setting of Standards and Guidelines nationally has provided some consistency in the way they are applied at a state level but states do have the opportunity to vary the application of these often as a result of pressure from groups advocating some "higher standard" which is clearly based on perception and not supported by good science. Clearly there are groups who are using animal welfare as a means to stop the farming of animals altogether.

However, ACGC would not support the concept of an "independent" body nationally to handle the setting of Standards and Guidelines. Given the complexity of the issues in Poultry alone we do not believe that such a body would be able to effectively operate without stakeholder input which would bring us back to where we are currently. The current arrangements involving Animal Health Australia as the co-ordinator does allow a wide range of stakeholder input. The community is given the opportunity to have input through the Regulatory Impact Statement. While

community expectations are important it is equally important they understand that good animal welfare should be based on science and not perceptions.

Gary Sansom

Executive Officer

Australian Chicken Growers Council Ltd