

Submission towards the Productivity Commission, Final Report on the Regulation of Agriculture - Managing Animal Welfare in the Australian industry, August, 2016.

This is an individual submission to the Productivity Commission Report on the Regulation of Agriculture is made in August 2016.

1. Regulation of Farm Animal Welfare

The Regulation of Farm Animal Welfare is my key interest. Having read the Personal Responses and Views Form on Animal Welfare, as provided on your website, I share the views and opinions expressed under the grouping of 'Several Hundred Individuals'; and the general thrusts of most, and possibly all, of the views and arguments of those expressed in the section headed 'Comments from Several individuals'.

The RSPCA submission of 12 February, 2016 is also strongly supported. I am pleased that this organization has taken up its much needed leading national role in general animal welfare.

2. Establishment of Independent Office of Animal Welfare (IOAW)

Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 of the Draft Report, are strongly supported for the establishment of an Independent Office of Animal Welfare (IOAW). This important Office must be properly funded, in the proposed arrangements, in all aspects of its work as described. The word 'scientific' must not be interpreted as narrowly as 'efficient', but rather as 'clearly defined' and 'evidence based'. The decisions of the Office must be in line with the expectations of the community and not able to be dismissed as merely emotive. Its legal base and authority must be firm and authoritative, with its work effectively promulgated and enforced. National standards must be truly acceptable to all sections of the Australian community, and not to the agricultural industry alone. There must be balance.

3. Live Animal Exports Archaic Nineteenth Century Method of Increasing Australian 'Market Share Overseas' - Akin to Slavery.

My greatest concern, shared as now documented by submitters, is to cease live animal export which is ethically unsound, and eating into our national psyche. Live animal exports are the modern day equivalent of slavery which was retained for so long, because it was economically profitable for some. Slavery is banned in modern countries now, and our live animal exports must be too. New Zealand can move forward without live animal exports, so can our nation Australia.

4. Live Animal Exports (Cattle) from the Northern Territory

Living in Darwin, the live export trade is all around us. One sees trailer load of trailer load of cattle driven down to the wharves to be exported on packed cattle boats. The NT Cattleman's Association and the NT Government support this 'old

technology, an 'Agricultural method' based on what originally could happen in North Australia, in the nineteenth century. There is industry talk of extending exporting live animals to far away North Korea, and to China, as well as Vietnam and Indonesia. This is in spite of the temporary halt in 2011, and the horror cruelty in Vietnam, in June 2016. Many were aware that this was totally predictable, once that trade started.

5. Live Animal Exports (Sheep) from Western Australia

For many years I have supported the Perth group, Stop Live Export (formerly PACAT - People Against Cruel Animal Transport). This group has witnessed the live export of millions of sheep, mainly to Middle Eastern countries.

Part of the justification for this was the need for Halal killing methods for people of the Moslem religion. This justification is now redundant, since Halal certified abattoirs are now throughout Australia. This massive sheep trade has an appalling record in terms of animal deaths during long sea transport, and in brutal uncontrolled handling and killing methods in destination countries.

Self regulation by the live animal industry does not work, and self interest and especially as antiquated foreign flag ships are often used. Even in past months, there has been a ship breakdown at Fremantle. The operator's response was to move the crippled loaded vessel off limits offshore, so that the sheep could not be offloaded. This prevented the RSPCA from attending to the welfare of the sweltering animals on the vessel.

6. Increasing 'Market Share Overseas' - New Methods

Achieving 'market share overseas' is stated as one of the two key criteria for the Productivity Commission. This phraseology however does not justify continuing in the same way based on live animal exports. Self regulation has not worked, and can never work, as there are too many various factors beyond our control in Australia.

Livestock Export industry profits depend on the trade continuing in this way. Time has expired on this lazy, wasteful, old fashioned way. How accurate are the reports. Animals must be transported to ports. Old ships break down. Quarantine is not welfare. Expensive ESCAS provisions still fail to ensure animal welfare. Live animal export trade is a blot on our nation's reputation. Using this method we will never be able to eliminate cruel abuse in abattoirs, and uncontrolled killing places in third world countries. Most Asians are smaller physically making it harder for them to control live cattle.

7. New Innovations in the Australian Meat Industry.

Now is the time to change to new ways of increasing 'market share overseas', by Investing locally in Australian abattoirs, including regional abattoirs. Moving to chilled, frozen and processed meat exports, particularly as Asian markets upgrade to meet the demands of rising middle class consumers is the new way.

The advantages are:

- 7.1 Transporting animals regionally, instead to a few ports.
- 7.2 Eliminating huge shipping, quarantine, and ESCAS overhead costs
- 7.3 Assurance of local slaughter standards
- 7.4 Increased employment in regional Australia
- 7.5 Better management of our meat industry within Australia
- 7.6. Stabilizing of domestic meat prices
- 7.7 Promoting value added initiatives within Australia.
- 7.8 No more huge national reactions to overseas cruelty to Australian animals
- 7.9 New varieties of quality Australian meat exports to Asia and other markets.
- 7.10 Less need for meat imports.

This change is based on local investment, some innovation, and more local jobs, but it is 'not rocket science.' There will be initial resistance to phasing out the live animal export trade by those involved in it. However, cruel, outmoded, and unhealthy nineteenth century methods, must be replaced by a modern, cleaner, healthier, and a more innovative and sophisticated Australian meat industry.

8. Change has begun in the Northern Territory

The Australian Agricultural Company is a very large, long established, pastoral company in Northern Australia. It has recently opened a new state-of-the-art abattoir at Livingstone, just south of Darwin.

We wish it success as the new model for the meat industry in Australia, instead of our animals being shipped overseas to die.

9. Additional Comments for the Productivity Commission Regulation of Agriculture Final Report.

This is a list of random additional comments related to Regulation Agriculture and Animal Welfare.

- 9.1 Regulation required stopping pressure from major supermarkets

- 9.2 Government repair to the corporate damage to the dairy industry
- 9.3 Free range piggeries
- 9.4 Free range eggs
- 9.5 Space standards for food poultry
- 9.6 No birthing crates
- 9.7 More sensitive welfare for newborn male dairy poddy calves
- 9.8 Standards for the agricultural welfare, and transport of goats, pigs, camels, deer, buffalo, horses and donkeys
- 9.9 Painless crutching and tailing
- 9.10 No confined sheep for fine wools.
- 9.11 Permit natural social herding wherever possible
- 9.12 No puppy farms
- 9.13 Facilitate organic farming
- 9.14 Feedlot welfare
- 9.15 Avoiding spray contamination of crops
- 9.16 Monitoring of welfare in stockyards – transport, shade, watering feed. Etc.
- 9.17 Encouragement of new local farmers markets
- 9.18 Sustainability and best disposal of waste.
- 9.19 Protection of catchments and management of water resources
- 9.20 Limit the size on monoculture
- 9.21 No horizontal or unconventional fracking
- 9.22 Prioritize Agriculture over destructive coal mining.
- 9.23 Provide wild life corridors, and reserve areas of natural vegetation.
- 9.24 Leave natural shade for grazing animals.

10. Thank you for this opportunity for consumers of the Agriculture Industry to make input for your Final Report.

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