

## **Submission to Dept Agriculture on Live Export. October 2019**

We are on a sheep farm. Eat meat. Not animal activists or vegans and we are against Live Export.

Your submission asked for feedback on options that have been shown are currently unable to prevent the welfare of stock suffering.

This is supported by the most recent reports where despite parts of the report still being suppressed, photos of sheep were shown suffocating around dysfunctional ventilators.

You then ask for alternative options where  
“any options considered would need to be financially viable for exporters“

This would mean increasing welfare standards, cutting into the producers bottom line which they are stubbornly unwilling to acceptance shown by their reluctance to observe the summer ban and sneaking a shipment out a few days before deadline.

The best option is banning it altogether which is the inevitable future and the DeptAg would be more valuable to them in assisting with transition to frozen which is far more lucrative despite the flimsy and often incorrect excuses given for customers needing it live.

In the meantime, the three month prohibition should continue with extensions where extreme weather is predicted, along with the recommendations in the revised HSRA model (which the government has already committed to doing on multiple occasions)

To reverse the prohibition is sheer stupidity and will indicate to all that the Dept and the producers never had any intention of improving welfare in Live Export.

Given the information the DeptAg have has been developed after considering the McCarthy review, the final Heat Stress Risk Assessment (HSRA) review & submissions, Analysis of climatological data provided by the Bureau of Meteorology, Voyage reports, Independent observer reports (suppressed), Environmental data and observations from voyages to the Middle East the only option is clearly to plan the future shutdown of the industry.

It's head in the sand to think it's not going to happen and it's way past time we prepare for a transition to where we can deal with animals ourselves.

Domestic processing is the only way to ensure Australian animals' welfare.

We have countless examples of bad welfare from live export voyages, and we cannot dictate to other countries how they treat their animals.

Despite any grudging improvements to animal welfare standards, graphic images of welfare breaches mean the broader population is against the trade and impacts negatively on all food and fibre farming.

We are losing out domestic customers due to the known endemic cruelty in Live Export and disregard for stock welfare. The spillover is massive.

Processing all livestock onshore would be difficult, but the consequences of not doing so would be devastating. Better to start dealing with them now than have it chopped off overnight and you've no market for your animal at all

All this for just 0.5 % of total agricultural exports and less than 3,500 FTE jobs?

Many ex live exporters have made the transition, Dairy farmers have made the transition after losing majority profits overnight and with much less protection and concern from the DeptAg which seems significantly hypocritical.

If the transition away from live exports mean many farmers would need to change their businesses right down to the breed of animals they produce or review their future out of producing then that's what happens. We shouldn't be propping up a dying trade reliant on prolonged suffering of our stock under any circumstances.

Opinion polls have showed that around three in four Australians want to end the live export trade. The majority of Australians in rural areas and country towns want to end live exports, and more people in rural and country towns than anywhere else (just under 95 percent) were concerned over the inadequacy of current welfare standards.

As mentioned, this is not just affecting live export producers. It's affecting the reputations and social support for all farming. Younger people, who if they don't vote now will be soon, are turning away from meat and going vegetarian and vegan at a very high rate due to the cruelty in live export and their perceptions that it spills over into all farming.

These are our future customers. They are not ignorant they have access to all information and are moving with their wallets.

The potential for damage to reputation has spread beyond livestock exporters to the Department of Agriculture itself which continues to be under review for how it is functioning as a regulator of the industry. The live sheep trade is under greater scrutiny than ever before, and over a year and a half since the notorious Awassi Express footage was exposed, that shows no signs of subsiding.

Live sheep exports contribute around 0.5 percent of the value of Australia's total agricultural exports but despite the risks to Australia's reputation ending the live export trade is not an option that the Department of Agriculture will consider? Why not?