

Live sheep exports to the Middle East

The four policy options miss the critical fifth option which underlines the intent of the inquiry: to ignore calls to end live sheep exports.

If you haven't already deleted this submission please read on. I'm not a vegetarian.

The first option of the five should be a total ban on live sheep exports. The other four options are pandering to misconceptions, laziness and greed.

1. Under the Jewish rules of Kashruth ("Kosher") and the Muslim variation of Halal, what is primary is that a qualified and certified slaughterer strikes the single blow that kills that animal. One could argue that there is NO prohibition on the use of stun-guns. This is a discussion worth having with the various (and sometimes competing) rabbis and imams. There are also rules about hanging the carcass to bleed.

Sending Australian sheep around the world to be slaughtered deprives Australians of work and income, and delivers much lower quality meat.

2. Refrigeration – or the lack thereof - is the furphy of all furphies. There is nowhere in Indonesia or the Middle East than can't have electricity for refrigeration. I don't know how this one ever gained currency. Assuming for one moment that there was no local refrigeration and we export live sheep to Jakarta, Dubai, Amman or Tel Aviv – what happens then? The animals are killed at a central abattoir and then the cuts are sent to rot in the heat of the neighboring suburbs? Seriously?

Where is there this massive lack of electricity and refrigeration to where we can't send vacuum-packed frozen meat? Nowhere I've been in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey or Egypt, that's certain.

There is no reason – other than the usual bureaucratic bribery and graft – that we can't slaughter the animals in Australia, giving the work to qualified and certified slaughterers, and charge more for the better quality Australian lamb.

Any destination country claiming that they don't have refrigeration needs to be very closely examined. What are they doing with all the money they currently make from employing slaughterers and butchers and why can't they invest in cool rooms?

Perhaps if we could actually find a place that didn't have facilities we could include a dozen solar panels and a Tesla battery in our foreign aid budget to solve the problem.

3. Finally, your discussion paper says that Australia's live sheep exports are worth \$239 million – a drop in the ocean compared to the \$11.8 billion Victoria alone earns from educating foreign students. Perhaps this 0.5 percent of all Agricultural exports needs to be discarded if it so brutally tarnishes our essential farming sector as it has.

I believe this inquiry is coming from the wrong starting point entirely.

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