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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
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**Submission to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation
Committee Inquiry into the Definitions of Meat and Other Animal Products**

I wish to draw the Committee's attention to a simple fact relating to the definition of 'meat'. This Inquiry is focusing on the legislative and regulatory framework underpinning the compulsory levy investment into meat category brands as declared through the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997*, as administered by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE). However, the Australian Government, through the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 4.2.3 – Production and Processing Standard for Meat (Australia only)*, as administered by the Department of Health through Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) has clearly defined the following terms:

Division 1 (1): **meat product** means a food containing no less than 300g/kg of meat.

Division 2: **meat** means any part of a slaughtered animal for human consumption.

meat producer means a business, enterprise or activity that involves the growing, supply or transportation of animals for human consumption.

These definitions provide clear explanation of what the terms mean (and therefore what they do not mean) and objective measures by which to assess compliance with these definitions. They have been developed using a rigorous, scientific methodology and remove any ambiguity as to what 'meat' is.

The standards in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* are legislative instruments under the *Legislation Act 2003*. They have been developed by FSANZ to lower the incidence of foodborne illness, thereby assuring consumers that food is safe to eat. Interestingly, in Australia the Code is enforced by state and territory departments and local councils and the DAWE, i.e. DAWE is currently regulating to these definitions.

As the terms, above, are clearly defined in legislation, it is incumbent on any legislative inquiry into their use to ensure that there is consistency of approach and application of these terms across the whole of the Australian Government. This would also ensure there is no contradiction in meaning or perverse outcome stemming from this Inquiry that would create the need to amend other legislation to accommodate some alternate definition.

I would implore the Inquiry to let common sense prevail – meat is meat!

Yours sincerely

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