

We make this submission in support of the Australian live export industry for consideration in the 'Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets' Senate Inquiry being conducted by the Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee.

My husband and I, with the help of our son and his family, run a small property that relies on the live export market for 75% of our income. Our eldest daughter is married to a Grazier whose family also rely to a large extent on the export market. Our youngest daughter is married to Livestock Agent whom relies on the export trade for about 70% of his business. Most of our grandchildren have expectations of entering the workforce in some way related to the beef industry. If the live export doesn't continue, three generations of this family and their extended families will be affected.

None of us condone the cruelty that was shown on the Four Corners program, however I believe that the majority of the abattoirs in Indonesia that process Australian cattle are of a higher standard than those shown in this program. The Australian Government should have continued to allow export to those abattoirs owned by Australian companies or others that were up to the standards of abattoirs in Australia.

Since the live export trade started, the conditions for cattle in Indonesian feedlots and abattoirs have improved greatly. Should the Australian Government stop the live export trade from Australia then the standards in those abattoirs that are not owned by Australian companies will decline. Other countries that have lower standards than ours will export their cattle, on a much longer journey to Indonesia, and will have no input (nor want any input), into the welfare of the animals in Indonesia.

If Indonesia looks to other countries to supply them with a much needed source of protein, a lot of those countries have Foot and Mouth Disease. It would only be a matter of time before that disease would spread to Australia and cause untold damage to Australians own source of protein. The financial cost to Australia would catastrophic.

The cattle industry in Australia already has in place, a National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), where an animal that moves off its property of origin can be traced. This system could easily be extended to Indonesia to ensure that Australian cattle only go to the approved abattoirs.

The Australian live export industry directly employs 13,000 people and contributes 1.8 billion dollars to Australia's GDP each year. These figures will only have higher growth with the continued Australian Government support. The live export must continue, not only for those of us directly affected, but for the Australian community at large.

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