

14th July 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Submission regarding the live cattle industry

The cattle which are used for live export are bred specifically for the Indonesian market and the meat is not suited to the domestic market. Even so, if these animals were left on the domestic market, it would tend to depress the domestic beef market and destroy this industry in our own country as well.

I find it extremely hypocritical that the government and some members of the public want to ban live exports due to supposed abuse by an Indonesian abattoir. But they are more than happy if these animals starve to death on Australian shores because we do not have enough feed for them. Maybe the ABC should do a documentary on this.

I did not realise that when the Gillard minority government came into power that they would be sticking their noses into hard working Australian family's businesses. This government panders to the minority and wants to 'look good' for the Australian people and dictate these small minded views on to the whole nation.

We have to remember that these animals have been sold and we do not own them anymore. Despite this, there appeared to be no discussion with Indonesia prior to the ban being in place. I found the temporary ban abhorrent and a knee jerk reaction that could have been prevented. How long did it take for the Agricultural minister, the foreign minister and the Prime minister to talk to Indonesia, way too long? Let alone voting against the motion by Bob Katter to provide stun guns to ensure a minimisation of interruption. Isn't this what we said was acceptable?

I found the ban on live exports extremely disappointing on numerous levels. I felt very unAustralian that the government felt that it needed to interfere in the live cattle industry with minimal prior consultation. What are these businesses, indigenous communities and families supposed to do? These people have set up legitimate businesses and the government wants to stop these hardworking families and communities from working hard. I did not realise that the government wanted more people to join the unemployment queue and receive government benefits.

Has anyone thought of the implications of banning of live exports may have on the top end? Oh that's right who cares about the top end. This government only cares about the eastern seaboard where all the votes are. It is not only the farmers and workers on the farms, it is the transport companies and drivers, handlers etc. This will cause a chain reaction of events which could decimate the top end.

What are we going to do with the cattle that are not exported? Some people do not want them to go to feed lots in Indonesia for the meat industry because some abattoirs may torture the animals they bought from Australian exporters. But are happy to see the cattle starve to death here, it does not make any sense. Isn't it better that they can be used for export and that another country can value add to our exported goods for their domestic market. Imagine everything you have worked long and

hard to raise and establish then being starved to death or even worse, you be forced to euthanase as their value no longer justifies the cost of keeping them. It is absolutely devastating to have to destroy your own stock, as many farmers have had to do in the past, and does nothing for rural community morale and the mental health issues are far reaching.

We have to remember that these animals have been exported and sold. We do not own them. We can assist Indonesia to implement better strategies in dealing with the slaughter of animals but that is all we should do. The most disappointing fact of this whole saga is that an independent member offered a solution to do this but was voted against. It sends a message about what this government thinks of rural exports. We don't seem to care what happens to our mineral resources after we sell and export these.

Seventy-five of the Indonesian abattoirs are owned by an Australian company that runs the abattoirs at international standards. So we have to punish the whole industry because of some footage by the ABC. Can we verify that these animals were Australian?

But what is the direct impact of these cattle remaining on Australian shores? The flora and vegetation will be decimated if the cattle remain and we do not have enough feed for them. Animals will be abandoned to starve and allowed to destroy the vegetation. If this industry is banned what plan will be put in place regarding the management of these grasslands? These will have to be managed ecologically.

I have no financial interest or involvement in live cattle industry but felt compelled to undertake a submission on this issue as we seem to forget about our agriculture industry far too much.

Yours faithfully,

Annaliese Dowling