

The Impact

We are sheep farmers from York, Western Australia.

This future ban has already impacted us. It has caused major instability for the future of our business (and many others). We grow crops as well but it's not safe in farming to 'put all of your eggs in one basket'. Sheep provide important income at different times of the year and if the crop fails or grain prices plummet, the sheep often help to keep the business afloat. Sheep prices were already unstable, many have been through extremely dry conditions for the past around 8 months, there is already enough suffering without a ban being slapped on live sheep export.

The AJP announced they did a deal with Labor to stop live export. Does that not then make this decision just political? Some comments I have heard are about animal cruelty but I am yet to see any evidence of Australia's current live export of sheep being cruel. Other comments I have heard are about the industry being in decline (in Australia) and not really mattering on a global scale anyway. This attitude is harmful. I believe about 4000 farms in WA are involved in the sheep industry. That is 4000 families in our rural communities. That doesn't include all of the other people employed in the industry that are also impacted. These people are only a drop in the global ocean for sure, but just imagine that you are one of those families. Farming involves borrowing large sums of money to function. Any financial stress on top of the already heavy debt is very difficult to manage. Prices are down, food and water for livestock has recently been scarce, and faith in the government to care is at an all time low around here after this latest 'slap in the face'.

The \$107million bandaid fix insultingly, possibly (maybe?) offered for the problem the ban causes isn't going to fix the industry this ban chops off. Yes chops off. Next time you're enjoying a chop, or a lamb shank, or your wool Ugg boots, remember the damage this proposed ban caused for so many. Those that support the farmers, can truly enjoy their food and clothing knowing they did the right thing stopping this ban. Everyone else, remember without farmers you would be naked, starving and sober (unknown source but I didn't say it first).

The farmers have even had a (peaceful) rally in the streets of Perth - the anger and grief of over 1000 real people was evident. Our children's grandparents were out in the street with their posters taking a stand for their son and grandchildren's future. Many farmers (including us) stopped seeding to drive through the city (Farmers stopping mid-seeding is a huge deal).

Swift actions of rallying in the streets, and multiple petitions of 10s of thousands of signatures against this ban - these actions to parliament are exactly what happens when something wrong has occurred and needs to be changed.

The ban is for political reasons.

The ban is not based on scientific facts.

The ban has a multitude of negative impacts.

The ban has a negative impact on global food security.

The ban has a negative impact on Western Australia's economy.

The ban has a negative impact on businesses, schools, events, sporting clubs, and mental health in rural communities.

The ban is a direct attack and has a negative impact on the WA sheep industry. Which industry is going to be attacked next for political gain?

The ban negatively impacts farmers, shearers, truckies, and so many more.

It is very un-Australian considering our history of sheep being an important part of making this nation so great.

Honestly, significant damage is already done just with the planned ban being announced. Damage to the stability of a great industry. Damage to important relationships with other countries. Damage to farming families and communities.

The government should be proud of those involved in the sheep live export industry. Thank you to the scientists and everyone else involved for ensuring Australia's sheep live export industry is ethical.

I request that this live export ban bill be thrown out immediately, an apology given to rural communities of Western Australia, and a very clear message of support given to our sheep industry for the world to see that our government does actually support farmers here, and yes we are a reliable country to do business with. Some damage is already done, but it is not too late to make better choices for the people of our great nation.