

SUBMISSION

I provide my submission in support of the continuation of the Australian livestock export industry.

In providing this submission I refer directly to the Terms of Reference that cover a range of issues surrounding the live export industry that the independent review will examine and my opinion is set out below:-

- a. the facilities, treatment, handling and slaughter of livestock, exported from Australia, in the importing country for consistency with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) recommendations and standards set out in *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2010)* published by the World Organisation for Animal Health and other relevant standards

I do not have the time to complete the submission as set out and I believe that there would be people in a position of a lot more authority to complete it a lot more accurately than I could. I am a producer, so I would like to set things out the way it affects us and other people in a position such as ours.

We have a Brahman Stud in the Longreach area (Qld)...a long way from the top end, but this ban has had a big impact on us. We have invested heavily in purchasing stud cows and bulls, to breed bulls for producers in the top end. Since the ban, our clients have contacted us to cancel the orders that they had for these bulls. So what happens to these stud animals now? They have to go to the meatworks. What a waste of all that breeding and genetics, now going to slaughter.

We live in an area subject to drought, so in our wisdom we decided to invest in Stud stock, with the idea that a bull at the same age, will return twice the money as a steer. This means that we can run half the number of breeders, for the same return, thus saving our country in dry times. However, we will now have to double the number of head we run on the same area, to make enough money to survive. We are trying to do the right thing in conservation, but the actions of this government is not allowing us to do so.

I believe that the general public need to be CORRECTLY informed about the cattle industry. I have friends in the city who were aghast at the 4 Corners report, but when I explained things from a producers point, they totally changed their minds. I can only talk to a small number of people...we need an advertising program that tells the truth, so that people can make an informed decision. I suggest you read this link www.greenfoodie.com.au blog /achive /Live exports /the graziers perspective. It is amazing what a little knowledge can achieve.

It is a very worrying situation when the heads of the animal rights organizations are sending out a message that is completely wrong, you can say that that is my view, but I will give an example of how lack of information can cause people to have a very wrong view.

HEATHER NEIL , CEO of RSPCA made this statement, when the manager of the Kimberly cattle property Moola Bulla, said that he was going to have to shoot 3000 old cows, due to lack of feed because he had not been able to sell his young cattle to Indonesia, so he did not have the feed for both lots of cattle.

QUOTE. "I think we really need to come back to the questions that, I hope this pastoralist is really exploring. Has he accessed the financial assistance that's available, and is he looking at other options for the cattle? No cull should be necessary of cattle in Australia" End quote.

I don't know where to begin, but I will try.

I assume she means that the pastoralist should get financial assistance to feed these cattle, because he cannot just hold them, they will have to be fed.

I used to work on Moola Bulla, so I am very familiar with the type of country etc. The country is very rugged with mountains, creeks (they cannot be fed in the paddocks, the other cattle and feral animals would also eat the feed, and you would have to drive all day just to get it to the cattle) So, the cattle have to be in a yard....to feed 3000 head so that they all get a portion, the yard would have to be very big, and set out in a feed lot style.....they also have to have a large number of watering points to water 3000 head. This is not the sort of yard the average property has. Anyway, let's say they did have this facility. The cattle will have to be mustered and drafted. Remembering that the pastoralist has no income, how is he going to pay for this? It takes months to muster a property of this size. The next step....he musters and drafts them, a lot will have calves, so they will all have to be mothered up, and the wet ones will be let go....all of which is taking extra days/weeks. So, he now has his yard of dry cows.....he has no staff, (remember he has no income)so how is he physically going to put the feed out for the cattle? Where is the feed going to come from? Look at a map and see how isolated the top end is. How much feed are 3000 head going to eat, day in day out? What is all that going to cost? Anyway, say he gets this far, the next thing will be that a lot of these cows will start to have calves. Cows cannot calve in a feed lot situation, for one the calves would be walked on, would mismother etc etc, and secondly they would get infections through their naval cord from being in yards full of manure etc. Suggesting he feed the cattle is like giving someone a car without wheels and telling them to drive it.

There are so many inaccuracies such as this and can you blame the poor public for having a very twisted idea of it all. It all seems so simple to them, they need to be given the FACTS, like the woman on the GREENFOODIE website.

Another thread that keeps coming up again and again, is the comparison to NZ...I see it so many times someone saying that if NZ can box their beef why can't we. If only it could be so simple. You only have to look at a map and see that NZ is in a climate where it snows, and the top end is in the tropics, the same as Indonesia. NZ breeds a totally different breed of animal, you cannot compare the two scenarios. It is so frustrating when only a tiny bit of information is given out and assumptions are made without all the facts.

I cannot believe that an industry can be shut down with so little knowledge coming from both the animal rights people, and also our government, especially the Minister for Agriculture. I would like to suggest that when ministers are given a portfolio, they are given one that they know something about, and if not, that they very quickly do whatever has to be done to acquire the knowledge that is required to make informed decisions.

b. the adequacy of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) as they apply to the preparation and export of all livestock with consideration of responsibilities for compliance and enforcement of the ASEL
c. the adequacy and effectiveness of current Australian regulatory arrangements for the live export trade
d. the types of livestock suitable (weight, age, body condition, breeds) for export as feeder or slaughter animals
e. the extent of monitoring required for each export consignment of feeder or slaughter livestock, in a manner that ensures accurate and transparent reporting to the Australian Government of the condition of the livestock from departure from Australia up to and including the point of slaughter in the country of destination
f. the risk management strategies necessary to address the welfare of animals from departure from Australia, up to and including the point of slaughter in the country of destination
g. other matters relevant to these terms of reference that the reviewer considers appropriate.

Signed:	Susan Smith
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Date:	14/7/2011