

There appears to be a belief that farmed animals do not feel pain or stress in the same way as domesticated animals such as dogs and cats. There is also an accepted belief that commercial considerations should temper animal welfare standards so that a degree of cruelty and suffering should be accepted and IS accepted today as part of "normal" farming practices. Examples of tolerated excessive cruelty include the intensive farming of pigs and chickens, battery hens, mulesing and the live animal export trade. All of those involved directly in these industries would or should acknowledge that the animals suffer. This, I believe, should NOT be tolerated and such practices should in fact be phased out. No civilised society should put a price on animal suffering and cruelty. All farmed animals should be able to behave in a manner that is natural to them. They should be able to experience sunlight and have the freedom to move, lie down to rest and be able to socialise with other animals. Further, the transport and slaughter of animals should be humane and minimise suffering. For this reason the live export trade should cease. When the Saudi trade was closed following the Cormo Express disaster the frozen carcass trade increased significantly. The frozen trade is a viable industry. Market distortions facilitate the live export trade. Further, the re-opening of local abattoirs would stimulate the economy of country towns therefore ensuring their survival. It would minimize the amount of time the animals spend on trucks and ships. Numerous Senate enquiries and more recently the Keniry Report concluded that the live export trade was unnecessarily cruel. One would assume that a bill entitled the National Animal Welfare Bill is there to protect animals not those who stand to gain commercially from their exploitation. This Bill should therefore include a proposal to end farming practices that inflict suffering on farmed animals. There should be no clause which permits or tolerates cruelty.

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