

ATTN: Secretary, Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional
Affairs and Transport

As a consumer who is very concerned with environmental protection and animal welfare, I am increasingly frustrated by the lack of regulation with regard to the labelling of animal-derived food products, such as meat. I strive to make informed choices when buying such products, as I have no wish to support animal cruelty or inhumane practices. However, without a clear and consistent labelling system, I find that this is a near impossible task. Labels such as "organic", "free-range", "bred free-range" and "biodynamic" seem to have no clear or fixed definition, and I feel that there is no way to be certain that the products I purchase have been ethically produced.

I understand that the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport is currently conducting an inquiry into this issue. I urge you to explore all options available to ensure truth and consistency in legislation and regulations concerning the labelling, branding and marketing of animal-derived food products. I ask you to ensure that terms such as "organic" and "free range" are clearly defined and linked to consistent national standards for environmental protection and animal welfare.

However, animal-derived products are only one aspect of the issue. I believe there is also a need to establish nationally-consistent regulations for all grocery items which have a potential environmental or ethical impact. This issue needs to be dealt with comprehensively - amending legislation in one area is an excellent start, but the problems caused by insufficient regulation will remain unless further inquiries are carried out.

As an ordinary citizen, one of the most important tools of protest I possess is my consumer power. Without support from government regulation, I am deprived of this power. My ability to participate in my society - to have a say in how my affairs are managed - is lessened. In a democratic nation, the government has a fundamental responsibility to preserve and protect the participatory rights of its citizens. To fail to do so is to betray a fundamental duty. I implore you to carefully consider my request, and treat this inquiry as a golden opportunity to advance animal welfare, environmental conservation and democratic rights.

Sincerely,

Ms Lucy Morgan