

## Live Export submission

I am a farmer in [REDACTED] in Western Australia operating as a family run small farming business. I run a breeding herd of 300 cows and a 100 female yearling cattle herd in [REDACTED] and 2800 merino ewes, 350 maternal greenline ewes and 550 merino ewes for replacements and crop 250ha [REDACTED]. I employ 2 sons as full time workers and use contractors for specialized jobs.

So what would happen to my farming enterprise if live export is cancelled?

1. As mainly a livestock farmer the risk of income being above cost of production would be an extremely serious concern. Stopping live export means a major market would not be available so our marketing choice for lambs is reduced to two options: slaughter or grazier. Unless there is a under supply of livestock both these markets will be in decline. Markets only go up with competition. Graziers only buy if they can fatten and make a profit which means they will end up being slaughtered, and resulting in only one avenue of marketing setting the price. This is a disaster as competition governs our marketing prices.
2. Merino Wether lamb sales -the majority of these go live export at about 38kg live weight and this year, up to the last boat, were worth \$105 to \$120. Now because the boats cannot sale for a few months the market for these sheep is about \$30 to \$40. The cost to get these to slaughter weight could be up to \$50 per head and that is if you can get a booking at an abattoir.
3. Cattle Market- approx. 30,000 cattle leave on the same boats as the sheep. This is 42 days of Kill for our biggest abattoir which has a waiting time of 6 weeks at the moment. The cattle remaining in our local markets would create an over supply which forces the market down.
4. Drought Strategy -live export can take large numbers of young sheep that are not suitable for slaughter at the time of purchase. This has been a part of WA's drought exit for the last 45 years that I know of and has provided a good sale price which allows extra income to buy feed for the remaining flock.
5. Wool -a renewable product with multiple uses from top end clothing to insulation. This remarkable product would be in danger of becoming a cottage industry without live export as we don't have a market for our wether lambs.

So what are the solutions?

Live export should be allowed to continue and the moratorium should be lifted so in dry conditions a large number of livestock can be moved quickly before they become weak and need to be euthanized (it has already been proven that livestock can be shipped in this period within guidelines) Live export is not currently in violation of any animal welfare conditions, international or local. It is a legitimate industry with world wide export standards improved significantly over the years and no government should be allowed to shut it down. Previous science based reviews support live export. The impending impact on agriculture is very significant.

Building another abattoir wont help because our sheep numbers would not support one on our current decline in numbers. The cattle herd is increasing but not enough to support another world class abattoir.

We could air freight live lambs in with the government paying the difference in freight between shipping and air.

The significant impact on my farm would mean I will need to increase my cropping significantly which means a 2million dollar spend to upgrade machinery to current emission requirements. Selling all the sheep and cattle won't go anywhere near covering these costs and I still have the problem of land not suitable for cropping.

In WA now we export 70% of what we slaughter and send a lot of chilled products to Queensland to put on ships as our ports in WA haven't got the containers and reliable chain to risk sending the meat out.

I cannot see a solution that will keep my farm viable without live export 12 months of the year. After our family looking after the land for 65 years we don't know which way to go. Farming is a very complex business involving climate, soils, environment, marketing, transport, animal tracing, finance, employees, machinery and red tape and this submission doesn't go into the finer details of what could happen if we lose live export.

A 50 year phase out could be a solution with a review every 20 years. This would give the exports the confidence to keep upgrading and farmers the security to continue producing a world class product in wool, meat and live animals.

[REDACTED]

Rural Producer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

May 30, 2023