

I am opposed to the cessation of the live shipping trade however I am strongly opposed to animal cruelty. The live shipping trade has come a long way, improved their methods and the stock are nowadays are treated well and kept in good conditions. Stopping the live sheep trade will only make the shipping companies purchase their livestock from other countries that do not uphold animal welfare to the degree Australia does, therefor in fact causing more animals to be mistreated.

My partner and I, 5 years ago in 2018, started investing in marino sheep, thinking it was a sound "blue chip" investment. We have cumulatively put in over \$100,000.00. 5 years later we are only just starting to see a return on our money. With the stopping of live shipping and the abrupt disappearance of the wether sheep market, the upcoming dramatic drop in the price of sheep will make sheep farming an unviable business model. If the government were in fact here to help the farmers, and wanted to also close the shipping trade, they would slowly build up the processing of meat here to be exported, firstly finding markets overseas for mutton. At present we have so many sheep hitting the markets here in WA that all the abattoirs have a massive backlog and the live shipping hasn't even been ceased as yet.

Best practice sustainable farming methods, tried and tested, have for a long time revolved around rotational farming. Where you rotate the paddocks that are cropped and grazed by livestock. If the government takes away the market of wether sheep, a multitude of farmers will drop rotational farming and start monoculture of grain growing. This leads to the increased use of toxic chemicals and harmful fertilisers being used on the land. Grain farmers also have a tendency to clear every tree that is in sight, making further room for cropping, cumulatively adding to loss of habitat and further increasing the pressure put on our already vulnerable wildlife.

Perhaps the politicians could take a step back and see where sheep farmers sit at the present. Price of livestock has already come tumbling down. Price of fertilisers are at a record high. Price of fuel to run farm machinery is also astronomical. To top it off the insurances needed to run a sheep farming business and have contractors, shearers etc working on the property is becoming exorbitant. There is already very little profit to be made. The cessation of live shipping will be the final straw for many sheep farmers.

Perhaps instead of stopping the live sheep trade, the government could start educating the fanatics that the sheep are now being well looked after and kept in good conditions.

Alison A'Court, [REDACTED]