

Dear Panel,

The Australian Labour Government has made a promise to the people of Australia to phase out live sheep export to win votes. There was never any consideration or consolation given to the Australian sheep producer until now. This consultation process now is a stretching of the meaning of the word. The submission process to the panel and government is asking us to problem solve the problems that the Prime Minister and his party have created. To be asked to answer how the live sheep export via sea can be phase out, to invent opportunities to expand local markets, increase the export meat markets, to tell you how this is going to impact us and our communities that we live in, the time frame, but most importantly do not say that you should not stop live sheep exports.

Firstly, all involved in our agricultural business are in support of the live sheep market via sea and it should not be stopped. The industry has listened and made improvements over the years and can say it has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world. Serious consideration needs to be given that there should be no time frame for the phase out period. As this needs to be run parallel to developing new processors. At the same time development of markets for this meat to go to. This will take time for the international market to be educated in buying already process meat. Our understanding is that the frozen meat market is already full. This then will mean growth in this area is going to be slow. Local markets are already full. This is obvious with the fact that prices are down, and that people have still got stock waiting to be sold.

Our understanding is that the current market receiving our live sheep want a live product and not an already processed product. If they are not going to receive this live product from us, they will find another country that will supply this. We can guarantee their Animal welfare standards will be well below ours. How is this helping the welfare of livestock worldwide?

This phase out will impact more than the Producers and the buyer. There are so many people involved in the growing of healthy sheep. There will be lost of income to trucking companies, shearers, stock agents, rural suppliers and many more people. These communities, our communities have been struggling for years now and the shutting down of any industry is only going to cause more loss of people and therefore infrastructure.

The one detail that needs to be addressed is what is going to happen to the sheep right now that have no market, as there has been no ship for them to go. These sheep are past the ideal window for the meat market and now are literally worth the fleece on their backs. What about the lambs that are dropping right now. That we are growing up to become healthy happy sheep. As it appears that the phase out period has already started. There is no market in Australia at this time that can even come remotely close to putting a value on that. No amount of blood money to help swallow this bitter pill will help. For our business there will be in a years' time a new season of lambs, and for many years to come. As the money is not why they are produced. No government is going to take that joy away. These sheep are worth more money than any government relief package can provide.

Regards

Callen & Annette Syred

