

I respectfully make the following submission to the inquiry.

There is already ample evidence of the extreme cruelty and suffering involved in the live sheep export trade. I assume that members of the committee of inquiry are aware of this and see no need to repeat it in this submission.

Given this, there must be an immediate end to the trade. If the suffering of animals is not sufficient motivation, there are other compelling arguments.

While there will be an initial need to support farmers transiting from selling produce in this way, there is economic benefit in shifting from live export to the export of value added processed meat. Given our renewed economic ties with the UK this is timely.

There are additional benefits for rural communities in the reactivation of meat processing plants in country. Many workers were thrown into unemployment when these plants closed. That such plants are subject to Australian standards of animal welfare, given the well documented cruelty of processing in other countries, is also a major consideration.

The argument that the countries to which we currently export are unable to accept frozen meat is demonstrably incorrect. Any purchasers of imported meat, be it alive or dead, in such countries has access to refrigeration. To suggest otherwise verges on racism.

It is also incorrect to argue that some countries have specific requirements for religious processing of meat products. There are a number of halal slaughter plants in existence in Australia and this could be extended. Again a valuable opportunity to both value-add and ensure an appropriately humane approach to meat processing.

I trust that we will follow the example of New Zealand in ending an approach to meat export which is both cruel and economically foolish.

Thank you.