

Mrs Jessica Bateman

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Wednesday, 31 May 2023

Senator the Hon Murray Watt

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Subject: Urgent Action to End Live Animal Export, Promote Sustainable Alternatives, Support Farmers, and Embrace Plant-Based Protein and Lab-Grown Meat

Dear Minister Watt,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my support for the Australian Government's commitment to ending live animal export and to urge further action in promoting sustainable and compassionate alternatives. I commend your dedication to addressing the ethical concerns, animal welfare issues, and environmental impacts associated with the live export trade. In addition to the measures previously mentioned, I believe that embracing plant-based protein and lab-grown meat as innovative solutions can have a profound positive impact on our food system and environment, while ensuring support for our farmers.

To successfully achieve the cessation of live animal export, foster the growth of sustainable alternatives, support farmers, and embrace plant-based protein and lab-grown meat, I suggest the following measures:

1. **Setting a Definitive End Date:** It is vital to establish a definitive end date for live animal export within this term of Parliament. Doing so will provide certainty and clarity for Australian farmers, allowing them to plan and transition their businesses accordingly. Prolonged uncertainty can have detrimental effects on farmers' livelihoods and our agricultural sector. It is crucial to provide a clear roadmap and timeline for the phase-out of live animal export.
2. **Farmer Transition Support:** Implement comprehensive support programs and financial incentives to assist farmers and producers in transitioning from live animal export to sustainable alternatives, including plant-based protein production and lab-grown meat. These programs can include training, education, and grants to facilitate the adoption of new

farming practices and the diversification of agricultural production. By supporting our farmers during this transition, we can ensure their long-term viability and success.

3. **Investment in Rural Infrastructure:** Allocate funds to enhance rural infrastructure, such as research and development centres, processing facilities, and marketing cooperatives, specifically focused on supporting the production and distribution of plant-based protein and lab-grown meat. This will create new opportunities for farmers to engage in sustainable and innovative agricultural practices, contributing to the growth of alternative food industries and avoiding prolonged uncertainty in the sector.
4. **Market Access and Promotion:** Work collaboratively with industry stakeholders to establish market access for plant-based protein and lab-grown meat products, both domestically and internationally. This can be achieved through trade agreements, consumer education campaigns, and participation in international trade events. Promote the benefits of Australian-grown and sustainable food products, highlighting the expertise and quality of our farmers. By focusing on alternative industries, we can rebuild and enhance our international reputation.
5. **Research and Development Partnerships:** Foster partnerships between farmers, research institutions, and technology companies to drive innovation and enhance the competitiveness of our agricultural sector. Support research projects that focus on improving the efficiency, productivity, and sustainability of plant-based protein production and lab-grown meat technologies, ensuring farmers can benefit from cutting-edge advancements. By investing in research and development, we can position our farmers as leaders in the emerging fields of sustainable food production.

By taking these actions, Australia can demonstrate its commitment to ending live animal export, promoting sustainable alternatives, supporting farmers, and embracing plant-based protein and lab-grown meat. This multifaceted approach will contribute to ethical animal treatment, environmental sustainability, the prosperity of our farming communities, and the restoration of our international reputation.

I kindly request your urgent attention to this matter and emphasise the importance of setting a definitive end date for live animal export within this term of Parliament. It is crucial to provide certainty and support to our farmers, avoid prolonged uncertainty, and rebuild our international reputation. Together, we can pave the way for a more sustainable, compassionate, and resilient future in our agricultural sector.

Thank you for considering my views on this important issue. I look forward to witnessing positive and decisive action towards ending live animal export, embracing sustainable alternatives, supporting farmers, and fostering innovation in our food system.

Yours sincerely,

Jessica Bateman