

Live animal export

I am writing as a former animal farmer, agriculture graduate and meat worker to lend my strong support to the proposal to phase out live animal export. I urge that the phasing out of this practice commences immediately and ends well before the term of this parliament.

The suffering of animals during shipment overseas has been well-reported on. Much farming and all slaughter, wherever it happens, involves cruelty; transport by ship to overseas places of slaughter is an avoidable addition to their suffering. I have also worked in the Middle East and aware of the extreme heat at times of the year. I understand there are cultural slaughter practices followed in other countries but given the cultural diversity of Australia it is conceivable that such practices could be applied in local slaughter.

Farmers will need a period of support to help them to transition. I would also urge the establishment of a new national centre of research into alt-protein with the aim of building a strong export industry in products, technologies and expertise; and would develop pathways to support farmers moving into this growing new industry. This would include cultivated meat, microalgae, bacteria, mycoprotein and plant-based substitutes for animal meat; it would provide greater value-added processing for local agricultural products particularly grains and pulses.

I am well aware of the high regard for Australian agricultural products around the world. Australia also has an international reputation as a fair and compassionate nation, the live animal trade undermines the trust in Australia's agricultural sector. We are well-placed to build on our reputation to offer leadership in Asia-Pacific in terms of both export of quality alt-protein products as well as support to our neighbours in building their own capacity.

I urge the phasing out to commence immediately and end before the term of this parliament; that farmers are supported in the transition and that pathways for farmers to benefit from new alt-protein development be supported by establishing a new national alt-protein research centre.

Dr Jeffrey Soar