

Live Sheep Export

I am a partner in a cropping and sheep enterprise in [REDACTED] Western Australia.

The banning of the live sheep export trade will have a detrimental impact on our business, our livelihood, our community and our state's economy.

The proposed ban by Labor is already affecting our sheep trade with loss of confidence in the industry of our international trading partners and a significant drop in prices because not enough ships are coming to WA to export sheep.

The ban will also impact the cattle industry in WA which relies on sheep export vessels transporting sheep.

The ban will affect food security in our international trading partner countries like Kuwait, who have visited WA recently to oppose the ban and support the WA sheep industry.

Farming families are losing confidence in the future of their entire farming business which relies on sheep to diversify farming practices, manage pastures and manage weeds for a sustainable farming enterprise. We are already planning to reduce our pastures and decrease our sheep flock because of Labor's decision.

This ban will not increase production in local abattoirs, it will shut them down because the price of sheep is crashing and farmers will move away from sheep because of the low prices and no option to export live animals.

Abattoirs in WA now cannot handle the numbers of sheep to process locally, they cannot handle the supply now, how will they handle Labor's plan to increase onshore processing of sheep meat for local and export markets. Labour shortages across WA are critical now and not looking to improve.

While I understand this panel is not considering submissions that oppose the ban I believe it is the responsibility of this panel to listen to and consider the concerns raised by farmers and supply chain businesses are raising about the proposed ban.

It will be blood on Labor's hands for destroying a viable and world class live sheep industry in Western Australia.

I would like the panel to consider the experience the Namibian agricultural sector had to endure when their government decided to intervene and ban live sheep export to keep the industry within the country and increase jobs and production through their 4 local abattoirs.

What the Namibian government succeeded in doing was decimating the agriculture industry, almost completely wiping out the sheep stock in the country and subsequently putting 3 of the 4 abattoirs out of business in a very short time because there was not enough sheep in the country as prices had crashed and it was not a viable option for farmers to run sheep.

Now after almost 20 years the government has reversed the decision and live sheep exporting is again an option for farmers in Namibia.

While I appreciate the panel consulting with New Zealand about the countries position after the live sheep export trade was banned there, but I sincerely hope the phase out panel in Australia look further than our neighbours with abarely significant foothold in the international market for live sheep and instead look at other examples of countries who have banned the trade, like Namibia!

The Livestock Collective have done a great job sharing stories of the industry changes and improvements and documenting vessel voyages from WA to the Middle East

What are the likely ramifications if live sheep export is banned?

- Reduced animal welfare
- Reduced resilience and diversity across farming systems in WA
- Detrimental impacts on regional communities
- Poor environmental management on agricultural land
- Reduced meat processing
- Reduced wool industry
- Impacts across the grains.cropping industry
- Implications on important international trade relationships

We are fearful of what is next. If the Labor government can shut down a viable industry, a world class industry that WA wants to keep, what is next? What grounds does this government have to shut this industry down? Please share this information with us, let us know that this is driven by more than animal activists and those who think they have the right to cancel an industry that has nothing to do with their livelihood.

If the Albanese government proceeds with banning the live sheep export it will completely change the structure of the West Australian farming landscape

Questions going forward:

- What will the Labor government offer farmers and the industry supply chain businesses as compensation for destroying a multi-million industry, integral to the WA farming systems and economy?
- How will the Labor government justify banning an industry that has made marked improvements over the last 6 years, maintains THE highest standard of animal welfare for live sheep export in the world, has implemented every request by government and industry partners to improve ventilation and spacing on vessels, has an industry-imposed moratorium to reduce the risk of livestock loss during northern summer months on vessels and the list goes on.
- How can the Labor government justify their decision to ban the industry based on the improvements made? Where is the evidence that this industry should be banned?
- Is the Labor government prepared for the litigation to follow for the unconstitutional methods of banning a viable, functioning, successful international trading relationship?
- When will the Labor government provide the scientific evidence and modelling that the live sheep export industry is unsustainable?
- What research has Labor undertaken into the requirements by our international trading partners and their needs for food security?
- How many of our trading partners exactly in the Middle East will supplement their live sheep trade with processed chilled meat?
- And how many of those trading partners in the Middle East plan to source their sheep from other countries, mostly within the African nations with some of the lowest animal welfare standards in the world
- Once the Australian live sheep export is banned, will the Labor government share with the general public the numbers of deaths on ships across every country who subsequently exports sheep to our lost trading partners?
- When the sheep stock numbers in WA plummet due to a significant drop in prices, how will the Labor government support enterprises that rely on the sheep industry in WA i.e. abattoirs, trucking companies, live stock agents etc?

I seriously hope the panel can convince the Labor government to reconsider the live sheep export ban due to the detrimental impact it will have on the Western Australian agriculture industry

Perhaps consideration can be given to banning live sheep export from the Eastern States of Australia and leave the Western Australian industry to continue.

Thank you for the panel's time in considering every application.

Do not ban live sheep export from Western Australia