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From: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture [REDACTED]
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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Unfortunately, Australian animal farming has lost much credibility over the years in the public's eyes, largely in my opinion due to the persistence of the Live Export Industry and the publicity surrounding it. How can farmers send their animals to such hell?

This implies that perhaps farmers do not care about their animals welfare in general and as there is absolutely no transparency within the farming or slaughter industry, we are therefore reliant on "whistle-blowers" and rescuers to show the public the truth of what happens on Aussie animal farms in an effort to improve animal welfare and the lives of these farm animals. These caring passionate people show us what farming does not, the truth. The reality of being born a sheep or pig or cow. The reason we rely on "Whistle-blowers" is because of inadequate or non existent animal protection in farming systems. Farm animal are exempt from laws that protect our domestic animals. It is the 21st Century and the cruelty of Australian Farming methods is not decades out of date but centuries behind.

I am sure that the animals farmers don't want the general public to know the truth of what happens on farms or in slaughter houses as they are well aware themselves it will have a negative impact on their business. But instead of improving animal welfare, they choose instead to accuse the whistleblowers, call them terrorists and introduce a law to stop these people from showing us the public the truth.

It is a shame that this results in trespass, but what are the alternatives when there is such refusal to be open and honest and no effort to do anything to improve animal welfare.

A 2019 report titled Australia's Shifting Mindset on Animal Welfare commissioned by the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources suggests it's the majority of Australians who care about animal welfare. The report found 95% of respondents viewed farm animal welfare with concern and 91% wanted reform to address it.

In 2016, a Productivity Commission report suggested the current process for setting standards for farm animal welfare does not adequately value the benefits of animal welfare to the community.– It suggested the process for setting standards would be improved through the creation of a statutory agency responsible for developing national farm animal welfare standards using rigorous science and evidence of community values for farm animal welfare.

Ultimately by making laws to stop compassionate people entering properties to show the truth, doesn't improve animal welfare, it sends a message out to Australian's, that the Government doesn't care about

animal welfare, it only cares about keeping an industry, which is hugely responsible for climate change, going. It is "fixing" an issue by hiding it. This isn't fooling anyone and ultimately harms the animal farming industry, as more and more people turn their backs on the meat industry. It hurts those farmers who are trying to maintain a high standard of animal welfare.

What should be done instead to return the confidence of the Australian consumers? Include farm animals in the Prevention of cruelty to Animals Act, recognise their sentience, make mandatory CCTV in ALL slaughterhouses, stop live export once and for all.

Alternatively, look at encouraging and offering incentives to small independent farmers to diversify away from the industry especially in drought areas.

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File1:

File2:

File3: