

Subject: Submission: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture Media

As the website & Captcha did not respond please find attached submission from:

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At the outset, it seems clear that if the Aust farming industry had complied with animal protection laws and the relevant government departments had been effective in their oversight and regulation of this industry such an inquiry would not be called for - but it is - only because the animal farming industry and the government has failed and continues to fail the public.

Activists have repeatedly and importantly revealed that Aust farming practices are well below international standards. In response, government and industry concerted efforts to continue to merely just cover up footage depicting the reality of Australian animal agriculture, rather than address the problems only further damages reputation and alienates the public.

The public should have the right to make informed choices - and consequently I oppose limiting the ability of consumers to see what's being paid for when (if) purchasing meat, dairy, eggs or other animal products.

I thank the brave and morally motivated activists (and industry employees - don't forget) who have been directly responsible for exposing the following appalling systemic animal cruelty and industry-standard atrocities (to name just a few), which otherwise would still be secret:

* systemic uncalled for cruelty and abuse of agricultural animals (e.g. [REDACTED])

[REDACTED] ...the

list could go on for longer than the submission)

- * Gas chambers for pigs, 'spent' egg-laying hens, and 'unviable' broiler chicks
- * Male chicks ground up alive in the egg industry because they can't lay eggs
- * Male calves in the dairy industry slaughtered because they can't produce milk
- * Regular failure of stunning methods
- * Mutilations without anaesthetic or pain relief
- * Prolonged confinement in battery cages, farrowing crates and sow stalls
- * Greyhound live baiting
- * Live export

If animal cruelty/abuse were illegal and regulated, and the industry transparent and honest, there'd be no need for animal activists to capture footage inside farms and slaughterhouses.

I note that in more than 40 years of activists filming inside farms and slaughterhouses, there has not been a single instance of:

- * activist-related incident of a bio-security hazard,
- * violence towards farmers or workers, or
- * entry into private homes.

In all media coverage, public demonstrations in the city, activism rescues etc that I have seen on tv, read in newspapers and Facebook, the activists have all been non-violent and appear to have no interest in the homes, families or personal lives of farmers or workers.

Additionally, given factory farms are plagued with mice, rats, birds, bugs, and all manner of disease-carrying wild animals/insects - they hardly seem to fit the definition of bio-secure environments as touted.

Laws that protect companion animals do not protect farm animals. However, while much of the animal cruelty occurring every day across Australia is legal, in the many instances exposed that do breach existing laws the government regulatory departments responsible for oversight have not applied the law or pursued appropriate penalties and convictions.

Politicians also seem wilfully unfamiliar with the nature of Australian animal farming and slaughtering. It should be mandatory for all politicians having input into legislation that affects animals to first inform themselves by watching Dominion and attending a slaughterhouse.

After decades of investigations, uncovering hundreds of acts of cruelty, almost no prosecutions or repercussions have been imposed on the perpetrators.

The Department of Primary Industries or equivalent in each state (Dept of Agriculture) have continually failed to demonstrate they can balance their conflicting responsibility of monitoring animal welfare with that of ensuring business prosperity; consequently Australian animal farming is, in effect, an industry that chooses not to regulate itself, systemically breaches animal protection and welfare legal requirements, and falls well below community expectations (when their common practices are exposed by activists).

It is time for Aust to drag itself up to those animal welfare standards that most members of the EU, the UK, and accredited heritage farmers in USA are easily meeting with successful business models.

Until such time as the Aust farming industry and govt can prove themselves as transparent and trustworthy, I've reverted to only consuming in/buying from reputable overseas countries.