

## Inquiry into Animal Rights Activism.

I am a beef farmer living and farming only a few minutes from the township. To this stage I have not been directly impacted by animal activists. I do have serious concerns with the potential of activism to impact on the agricultural industry.

**Animal Welfare:** My and most livestock regard their home farm as a safe zone where they are free to graze without fear. Bought in stock soon settle to accept this as home. Noisy and aggressive outsiders trespassing onto this "home range". Fear aroused by unrestrained incursions lead to stress and panic which could lead to traumatic injury to animals and possibly owners or aggressors if a rush was to occur. Economic loss could occur due to reduced productivity and ongoing stress. "Well-meaning activists have been known to release animals from enclosures for the well-being of the animals. This leads to traumatisation of the animal as it is being forced into an unfamiliar environment or worse onto roadways where the wellbeing of the animal and the public are put at risk. Animals are often enclosed as "best practice" for feeding in times of feed shortage, release from these confinement areas leads to increased stress on the animals. Animals in feedlots accept this as their home range where they are fed and watered. They ultimately have one bad day. Fear is learned from bad experience, it is doubtful if fear other than fear of the unknown is experienced by the animals.

**Biosecurity:** As a nation Millions of dollars are spent maintaining the "clean and green" status of our agricultural products, both animal and vegetable. Invasion of and interference with farm practices could lead to catastrophic breakdown in biosecurity. This could lead to the premature and wasteful destruction of animals and untold cost to industry and society.

**The Right to a Safe Work place:** Everyone is entitled to a safe workplace where they can reasonably expect to work without harassment, threat or intimidation. Farmers are particularly open to this sort of disruption as they work behind a low fence and often an open gate. It will be a sad day when the government has to provide security fences around all farms and guards are placed on locked gates.

The grounds for activism are based, to a large extent, on misinformation and ignorance which leads to hypercritical actions. We have heard of the demands for openness in agriculture but when this is offered as in the case of The Gippy Goat the general welfare of the animals is abused for the sake of closing down an industry. From my observations of activists at "work" the aim is to destroy the industry not Improve the wellbeing of the animals.