

The animal agriculture industry is deleterious on many levels, including the massive environmental impact it has and the abhorrent cruelty it inflicts on animals (and therefore condones). Furthermore, it produces not only unnecessary food, but unhealthy food, as evidenced by not only those who thrive without consuming it but the ill health associated with consuming it.

The following article, focusing on meat, highlights these incontrovertible points:

<http://theconversation.com/five-ways-the-meat-on-your-plate-is-killing-the-planet-76128>

It is because of what is discussed in this article that the industry is facing such pushback from whistleblowers. This is a matter of justice, a matter of public health and a matter of public safety. It also about safeguarding our environment, which is in the most fragile state it has ever been in.

These issues alone should be enough to ring alarm bells and to jolt the public, the government and the industry itself out of its collective apathy.

Sadly, they are not and so it lies in the hands of certain organisations, political parties and individuals to try to ring those bells.

The mendacity of the industry in propagating its lies and propaganda, which admittedly do an effective job in duping the public into believing the bucolic image it conveys, is breathtaking to say the least.

However, despite all the many reasons that we should be rejecting animal agriculture, I wish to limit the scope of my submission to the issue of bio-security. Biosecurity has become a convenient catch cry of the animal agriculture industry but is a tenuous one at that.

We don't have to look very far to find the industry ITSELF engaging in regular breaches of biosecurity and yet it has the audacity to point the finger at whistleblowers for supposedly posing a threat to it. How can anyone, with any intellectual honesty, say that there are no biosecurity risks to be illustrated in the following link, all perpetuated by animal agriculture?

This is MERELY a glimpse in to the industry's biosecurity breaches, the very tip of a calamitous iceberg. Imagine what is out there that we are not aware of. It is truly mortifying.

<https://www.aussiefarms.org.au/kb/pigs>

Intensive animal agriculture keeps animals in crowded and stressful conditions and relies on the prophylactic use of antibiotics to prevent disease. However, antimicrobial resistance is a global health problem and this reliance on antibiotics is

a major factor in regards to this. Furthermore, these conditions are hotspots for disease and what the industry refers to as "pests", with the spread of disease often occurring due to the movement of these "pests", or the movement of animals exploited by the industry.

The pointed finger needs to do a 180 degree turn because the pretence of biosecurity is, at best, a disingenuous attempt to shift the focus, of what are nefarious practices in the industry, off the industry while trying to scapegoat another party. Again, anybody with any intellectual honesty should be able to see right through this veiled attempt from the industry.

It is imperative to recognise that the biosecurity angle is one that the industry has latched on to tightly and run with. After all, vociferous claims regarding biosecurity, even if unfounded, are surely guaranteed to instil panic and sway public sentiment and parliamentarians. In light of this it is, indeed, encouraging to know that there are people who do not buy in to this rhetoric and are willing to speak up against it. By participating in this inquiry I consider myself one of these people.

The possibility of a biosecurity event being caused by whistleblowers has, essentially, been exaggerated by the industry. I ask, where is the evidence that unauthorised activity by whistleblowers REGULARLY, and CONCERNINGLY, leads to biosecurity events? The crudity of the industry's claim in this regard, and its own complicity in biosecurity events, makes it the subject of ridicule.

However, the holes in the industry's argument do not stop there.

It is duplicitous of the industry to cry foul over biosecurity issues when police are often in attendance on farms in response to the presence of whistleblowers, all the while themselves not donning personal protective equipment or observing biosecurity protocols.

The veracity of the industry's argument becomes even more questionable when factoring in whistleblowers are, for the most part, aware of necessary biosecurity measures, use personal protective equipment and observe infection control processes such as hand and footwear decontamination. They are also aware of the need not to visit numerous properties within a short space of time.

Indeed, considering this, it could be argued that whistleblowers themselves could bring the industry up to speed with appropriate biosecurity measures.

I do acknowledge, however, that there was a time, perhaps even only twenty years ago, when whistleblowers did not observe biosecurity protocols. I myself was not aware of these and remember a time when nothing more than a mask was worn by whistleblowers.

However, like the advances in food in which the systemic abuse of sentient creatures is not required, the advances made by the animal rights, animal welfare and vegan

movements are making a positive impact on our world. The movements are becoming slicker, more knowledgeable and better equipped, as seen by appropriate biosecurity measures being followed when seeking to expose the industry.

The progress in these movements is reflected in the very fact why this inquiry has been called. Animal agriculture is nervous and so it should be. It is finally being held up for what it really is. As it digs its heels in the voices of justice will not be quelled. When motivated by a sense of justice, when what is right spurs you on, no amount of grandstanding from an industry like animal agriculture will shut you down.

Using the pretext of biosecurity in order to maintain the status quo of animal agriculture is misleading, a ruse to gag whistleblowers from revealing the truth of the insidious practices of the industry. In the RSPCA's discussion paper titled "Ag-gag Laws in Australia" (2014) this is addressed as follows:

"It is notable that current criminal and biosecurity laws in the U.S. and Australia already prohibit trespass and other actions that threaten biosecurity. Opponents of the laws claim that the real objective of the proposed laws is to shield livestock industries from public scrutiny and prevent consumers from finding out about common husbandry practices that may cause alarm".

<https://kb.rspca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Ag-gag-laws-in-Australia-RSPCA-Discussion-Paper-Aug-2014.pdf>

Bringing in draconian laws to silence whistleblowers is a measure to suppress the truth of animal cruelty and environmental degradation inherent in the industry. We need to be cognizant of this fact and not be hoodwinked by claims of biosecurity risks. To these claims I have a strong objection, as do many other people who are guided by a sense of justice, compassion and truth.

Unless one knows the truth about what occurs in animal agriculture one is not in a position to comment on it. For that reason, it is necessary to observe this truth, as revealed in the documentaries Dominion and Lucent:

<https://www.dominionmovement.com/watch>

<https://www.aussiepigs.com/lucent>

This should be compulsory viewing to contribute to this inquiry.

I hope that common sense and decency will prevail and that the issue of biosecurity will not be inflated to serve the purposes of animal agriculture. The problematic aspects of the industry need to be considered. It is important to recognise that there would be no whistleblowers if there were no problems in the industry. The

passion and commitment of whistleblowers is a reflection of the immensity of these problems.

I thank you for this opportunity to share my very real concerns on this issue, concerns that are shared increasingly by others for very valid reasons.

We will not be silenced.