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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Mrs Catherine Norman

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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When does a person who values animals, not as a meal but as a sentient being, cross the line and become an animal activist? is trespassing on a farming property as bad as ignoring the plight of animals? it really comes down to ethics.

My husband and I happened to drive past a farming property in country Victoria and I noticed that a sheep was stuck fast into a wire fence, held immobile by its head. I stopped the car and we walked back to investigate further. I was hoping the sheep would free itself and run off but it was firmly stuck and unable to move. There were no other sheep within sight and no house I could see. I had no idea how long the sheep had been trapped. Why had the farmer had not noticed this particular sheep when he had moved the others or rounded them up for market?

Yes we could have returned to the car and driven off but that is not something I could do. It would be against my moral compass and beyond any sense of decency to just drive away and let the sheep die a slow, painful death. So we entered the property and set to work, managing to release the sheep's head from the fence. The sheep was able to run off after release so we left and continued on our way.

So, who was in the wrong? The farmer for not ensuring the welfare of his sheep or us for entering his property and handling his stock? In my opinion the farmer should regularly check stock and their paddocks for feed and water and fences for damage. I am not a criminal. I have been raised to 'do the right thing'. I would not leave an animal in distress. I believe it is my responsibility to take action.

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File1:

File2:

File3: