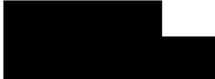




Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Ms Lucy Stegley



## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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As third generation farmers on the Mornington Peninsula since the 70s, 15 years ago our family came to the realisation that the way we earned a living was not consistent with our values.

We valued our farm dogs and let them live out their natural lives without threat of rape (forced artificial or manual impregnation), torture, exploitation, slavery and a premature, violent death.

Our cattle on the other hand, we did not afford such luxuries. For we had been conditioned (and the law states) to consider them as "property" - mere walking "livestock products" to capitalise on as we deemed fit. Pasture raised for some of their short lives, they made a pretty picture in the paddock to help sell the perpetual lie (both to us, and the consumer) that their whole existence was a humanely pampered one.

Our family became aware of the World Health Organisation's classification of red meat as a "Probable Carcinogen" and processed meat as a "Class 1 Carcinogen". We delved into the myriad scientific literature which revealed the deleterious effect of animal "products" on human health and the environment. Why did we not know this!? For over 30 years, we thought we'd been providing the public of Victoria with a safe and necessary source of nutrition!

Furthermore, we had to look honestly at the part we were directly playing in the breeding, raising, slaughtering and consuming of non-human animals purely for profit. We knew "our" cattle were often shipped off to intensive feedlots to "finish" them by fattening them on grain. We even made a short documentary called 'Paddock to Plate' about the predetermined life path of one of the herd. What we witnessed in the saleyards, transport vehicles and slaughterhouses changed us forever. We simply couldn't be hypocrites any longer - "loving" our animals just until the day they became dispensable for the dollar.

Seeing the unnecessary brutality and insanity of raising sentient beings merely to please

the human palate has been life-changing and humbling.

We now grow fruits and vegetables.

We thank the independent animal rights and health activists, researchers, film makers, journalists, non-profit and political organisations that devote their time to helping other farmers and Victorians face the dark truth of the animal exploitation industry. We are grateful to them for lifting the veil. If slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be vegan - and THAT is the inconvenient truth whose time has come.

Digging our heels in and trying to continue to hide the horrors won't help the farmers, our health or our environment. Supporting sustainable and timely (start yesterday!) transitions to a farming industry that is underpinned by growing protein from produce is the way of the very near future. Our family is proof that career pivots are not only possible, but inevitable.

Thank you.

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File1:

File2:

File3: