

Submission to the Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure
Committee on the Impact of Animal Rights Activism in Victoria:

Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism in Victoria

Dear Sir/Madam,

I appreciate the opportunity to lodge the following submission to the **Victorian Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee on the Impact of Animal Rights Activism**.

Almost every person care about animals and their welfare. Most of these people have heard about some of the abhorrent conditions and death in which these beloved animals face. They may be familiar with the atrocities of the live export trade; However, they may be less familiar with male chicks being ground up alive in macerators or the industry standard practice of pigs killed in gas chambers; all of these things exposed by animal liberators in Victoria.

Were it not for activists working undercover, we would not know about any of this. I believe that all members of the community need to witness the truth about animal agriculture.

The following submission relates to and considers the Terms of Reference provided by the Legislative Council. I conclude that the public has the right to know about the realities of industry standard practice in the animal agriculture industry for the following reasons:

My specific concerns, as per the Terms of Reference, are as follows:

a. the type and prevalence of unauthorised activity on Victorian farms and related industries, and the application of existing legislation:

1. There have not been a significant amount of unauthorised activities on Victorian farms and related industries to warrant any changes to current legislation.
2. The nature of the unauthorised activities have been non-violent, calm and peaceful.
 - a. the animal liberators have showed deep concern for the welfare of animals, reflective of views of the greater public.
 - b. no acts of violence have been instigated by an animal rights advocates during these activities.
3. The unauthorised activities have occurred in an effort to expose truths and educate the public about the mistreatment of animals in Victorian farms and related industries.
 - a. at present, there exists no other forms of education about animal agriculture practices for the Victorian public that are reflective of the truth and independent of economic bias.
 - b. the activities by the animal rights protectors have been effective in cohering members of the public to show concern about animal welfare in the agriculture industry.
4. Whistleblowers are an integral part of society.

- a. whistleblowers have been proven historically to be important in exposing great injustice.
 - b. whistleblowers are celebrated in society and receive accolades for their efforts.
5. Most animal rights advocates are female and legislation against these types of advocates is an attack on their compassion.

b. the workplace health and safety and biosecurity risks, and potential impacts of animal activist activity on Victorian farms, to Victoria's economy and international reputation:

1. Animal rescuers usually wear protective, that exceeds that which the workers of the institutions themselves wear, to minimise biosecurity risks.
2. These undercover investigators do not travel from place to place as the animals and workers do.
3. The biosecurity risks that already occur in the animal agriculture sector due to their crowded conditions are of far greater concern i.e. bird flu, salmonella, swine flu.
4. Economy is not a valid consideration in the issue of animal welfare and animal life.
5. Australia has the opportunity to set standards for all animals, beyond domestic animals, for the world to follow.
6. The health and safety of slaughterhouse workers, including PTSD and psychological issues, is severely compromised and requires intensive monitoring.
7. Microbial resistance is a global concern for the human race brought about by the animal agriculture industry.

c. animal activists' compliance with the Livestock Disease Control Act 1994, Livestock Management Act 2010, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986;

1. Footage obtained by whistleblowers and animal liberators show that the industries and their employees are not adhering to these Acts themselves.
 - a. refer to recent documentary Dominion filmed by animal advocates in animal agriculture settings.
 - b. refer to footage provided on the Aussie Farms Repository.
2. The Acts mentioned need to be extended to include animals of all species and not solely domestic animals.

- a. there is no evidence to suggest that animals killed for consumption are any different to domestic animals in all aspects.
- b. animals are not a necessary part of a healthy diet for a human.
- c. animal consumption is strongly linked to disease in humans.
- d. this type of thinking leads to the promotion of indifference within society, leading to other societal problems.

d. the civil or criminal liability of individuals and organisations who promote or organise participation in unauthorised animal activism activities

- 1. If existing monitoring of these organisations was occurring, there would not be a need for public monitoring of these practices.
 - a. CCTV cameras should be mandatorily placed in all animal agricultural facilities, for the animals and the workers
- 2. As animals cannot represent themselves, individuals and organisations must exist to represent them.
 - a. it is a moral imperative to protect the innocent.
 - b. such displays of kindness and compassion could positively influence society.

e. analyse the incidences and responses of other jurisdictions in Australia and internationally; and

- 1. There is a growing global movement in concern for animals.
- 2. Research is showing that animal consumption is harmful to health.
- 3. Less people are relying on the animal agriculture industry and choosing kindness over cruelty.
- 4. Climate change and environmental degradation is of paramount concern to the human species.
 - a. animal agriculture is the biggest contributor to environmental damage.
 - b. a shift towards plant based agriculture should be implemented immediately to avoid irreparable damage to the environment.

f. provide recommendations on how the Victorian Government and industry could improve protections for farmers' privacy, businesses, and the integrity of our biosecurity system and animal welfare outcomes, whether through law reform or other measures.,

1. Transparency and not secrecy of animal agriculture industry practices is vital.
2. Stricter penalties for those who harm animals, regardless of species.
3. A gradual phase out of these industries and greater financial incentives for a shift to more ethical, healthier and environmentally sound practices.

Thank you for considering my views and public expectations.