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When Will They Ever Learn ???

Recently I attended live export hearings in Canberra, chaired by Senator Bill Heffernan and Senator Sean Edwards, and last week, attended the live export forum hosted by Sydney University at their Vet campus. The overwhelming consensus amongst most sensible people seems to be now focusing on the following issues:

- Food security is paramount for all governments in the coming years, and Australia is perfectly placed to provide clean and economical red meat protein to assist in lifting the quality of diets of our neighbours.
- That there is to be no more talk of phasing out or banning of any live export market under any circumstances, allowing a return to confidence for our producers and export customers.
- That transparency and genuine engagement with all sensible farming and welfare bodies must be improved at all levels.
- That Australia is the only country in the world who not only export high quality sheep and cattle, but also lends excellent vet education and on the ground commitment to improving welfare standards in those country's we export to.



It was particularly pleasing to hear of the incredible work done by our country's vet and government professionals over the past 20 years in export markets, where great opportunities have developed to improve animal welfare outcomes and form close friendships with our Asian neighbours.

Simply just shutting the door on our export markets will undo 20 years of quiet achievement by our Governments and scientific communities. Education patience and respect of other cultures has achieved more than any radical and poorly conceived plan to shut down these valuable markets. The question is, who will work with these customers to lift welfare standards and productive husbandry techniques if not us?

Also, the recent way in which the Government was forced into the temporary suspension of trade to Indonesia has all the marks of a type of reverse racism policy from the animal rights movement. Friends of mine from Indonesia were equally horrified and appalled at the behaviour of a few of their abattoir workers. For anyone to lump all Indonesians together like this shows a true lack of diplomacy and cultural sensitivity.

As with mulesing, now with live exports, market interference and ill conceived intervention destroys trade, years of hard work, and real people's lives.

When will they ever learn?

Regards

The Ag Industry Guy

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