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Move to free up importation of farm, vet chemicals

THE Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority has been criticised for being inefficient.

And at the same time, Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce has set out his expectations to the APVMA about cutting red tape.

Mr Joyce recently wrote to the APVMA — the Commonwealth statutory authority that registers all agricultural and veterinary chemical products into the marketplace — to begin talks on how to minimise regulatory burdens for farmers and related industries.

An APVMA spokeswoman said they were looking at ways to achieve that for industry.

“Work to reduce the regulatory burden on industry commenced in 2013 with a comprehensive review of our practices, in particular how we can streamline the process for registration of chemicals,” she said.

The APVMA said new information technology tools available from July 1 would improve information flow.

Prime lamb producer Nicola Bussell from Alpine Dorpers at Carboor outlined her criticism of APVMA in her submission to the Federal Government’s agricultural competitive taskforce white paper.

Running more than 1500 commercial ewes, Mrs Bussell said “Australia’s animal welfare has been compromised while this body has blocked permission to import ... well known and vaccines, medicines and drenches.”

“Australia was three years late in receiving the latest drench for worms in sheep,” she said. “Mastitis and footrot are two common and debilitating animal health issues for which preventable vaccines have been long available for the rest of the world.”

Mrs Bussell said producers were expected to compete in the global marketplace, “yet we then give them significant handicaps by reducing access to effective, mainstream, animal health treatments and chemicals often available for years in the countries of our competitors.”

The APVMA spokeswoman said the organisation didn’t “comment on submissions to other processes”.

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/commodities/move-to-free-up-importation-of-farm-vet-chemicals/story-fnkeqfxg-1226925992511>