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Date: 12 June 2014

Attention: Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: jsct@aph.gov.au

RE: Inquiry into the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Korea.

Sheepmeat Council of Australia (SCA) endorses the submission made by Meat& Livestock Australia on behalf of the red meat industry in response to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties inquiry into the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Korea.

SCA is the national Peak Industry Council representing and promoting the needs of Australia's lamb and sheepmeat producers. More information about SCA is provided in the attachment.

SCA is a strong supporter of the Korean – Australian Free Trade Agreement (KAFTA). The KAFTA, upon entry into force will help provide certainty in the sheepmeat trade by eliminating the current import tariffs of 22.5% on lamb and mutton over 10 years. SCA also supports the fact that no arbitrary safeguard provisions were introduced for lamb and mutton in the KAFTA.

Korea has developed into an important part of the sheepmeat sector's diverse range of international markets. Over the past few years Australian sheepmeat exports to Korea have risen steadily, with the volume during 2012-13 around 4,000 tonnes (three quarters lamb and one quarter mutton) – the second highest exports on record. These volumes might seem small but we export sheepmeat to over 70 markets worldwide and each market is important to our industry's profitability

There is significant potential to grow consumption in Korea. The sheepmeat industry has made an ongoing investment in developing the Korean market over recent years and is currently actively working to introduce more Korean consumers to the product.

The sheepmeat industry through MLA funds improvements in market access and growing demand for our meat products in Korea. SCA works closely with MLA to ensure that comprehensive FTAs with emerging markets continue to be a high priority for industry.



If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ian McColl
President
Sheepmeat Council of Australia



Attachment

BACKGROUND - SHEEPMEAT COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

SCA is the national Peak Industry Council representing and promoting the needs of Australia's lamb and sheepmeat producers.

The objects of SCA are;

- to represent and promote the interests of Australian sheepmeat producers
- to carry out activities necessary for the advancement of the sheepmeat and live sheep export industries;
- to collect and disseminate information concerning the sheepmeat and live sheep export industries;
- to co-operate with industry stakeholders and organisations at the state and national level and overseas;
- to maintain interaction and co-operation with its Members, relevant Government departments and authorities at Federal, State levels, and local government levels, and with other relevant industry organisations;
- to promote the development and resourcing of the agricultural and pastoral industries of Australia;
- to act as the Prescribed Body for the sheepmeat industry in Australia within the Red Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the Australian Meat and Livestock Act 1997 (the Act).

SCA represents sheepmeat producers in Australia and provides a mechanism to bring a diverse range of issues and needs to the policy making process. The Council draws on many formal and informal processes to achieve this. Principal amongst these is input from the state farming organisations, which have extensive networks within their jurisdictions.

As the recognised peak body for the sheepmeat industry under the Act, SCA sets the strategic objectives to be pursued by the levy funded organisations Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), Animal Health Australia (AHA), and the National Residue Survey (NRS), examining and approving their programs and budgets. We are involved in priority setting for industry R&D and marketing activities both domestically and internationally as set out in the Red Meat MoU. Under the MoU SCA assesses the performance of services delivered by expenditure of lamb and mutton levies.