

SUBMISSION

I provide my submission in support of the Definitions of meat and other animals products Senate Inquiry.

In providing this submission I refer directly to the Terms of Reference that cover a range of issues surrounding the current state of meat category branding in Australia and my opinion is set out below:

Short introduction about yourself or the organisation that you represent
<p>We run a commercial Brangus cross operation in the Katherine region of the NT. While we predominantly supply the live export market at the moment we are exploring ways to supply to the domestic market and higher end export markets.</p> <p>We have been involved in the industry for over 30 years and in the Katherine region for the last 10.</p> <p>We have also been involved with MLA as producer representatives for research, development and adoption strategies.</p>
<p>a. The potential impairment of Australian meat category brand investment from the appropriation of product labelling by manufactured plant-based or synthetic protein brands, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. the use of manufactured plant-based or synthetic protein descriptors containing reference to animal flesh or products made predominately from animal flesh, including but not limited to “meat”, “beef”, “lamb”, and “goat”; andb. the use of livestock images on manufactured plant-based or synthetic protein packaging or marketing materials.
<p>Australian beef (and other red meat) is grown and produced under the highest environmental and animal welfare standards possible. The product we produce is sustainable, renewable and predominantly utilises land which is unsuitable for growing crops or other foods. Our product has unique nutritional and taste characteristics which have been carefully cultivated over generations of careful breeding, research and development. These characteristics belong to beef solely and other food products should not be allowed to ‘get a free ride’ on these decades of research, investment and hard work.</p> <p>I have no problem with plant based products as such, however if they are so good they should be able to develop their own names and branding that clearly distinguish themselves from red meat.</p>
<p>b. The health implications of consuming heavily manufactured protein products which are currently being retailed with red meat descriptors or livestock images, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. consideration of unnatural additives used in the manufacturing process; andb. consideration of chemicals used in the production of these manufactured protein products.
<p>There is nothing simpler, tastier or more natural than a piece of steak or a lamb chop grilled on a barbeque. Red meat products offer an option which is minimally processed after being produced using strict animal welfare, food safety and environmental standards. All animals entering the food chain must adhere to strict withholding periods regarding the application of chemicals and declarations of veterinary products used. The red meat supply chain is regularly tested for a range</p>

of chemical and disease residues with the result that Australia has the best food safety record for red meat in the world.

The labelling requirements for plant based products are not clear and concise enough to provide consumers with adequate and accurate information about what they are consuming.

- c. The immediate and long-term social and economic impacts of the appropriation of Australian meat category branding on businesses, livestock producers and individuals across regional, rural and remote Australia, including:
- i. the reliance upon imported ingredients;
 - ii. the support of regional employment; and
 - iii. the state and commonwealth taxation contribution from the Australian red meat and livestock sector.

If Covid has proven anything it is that Australia is reliant on our agricultural industry and regional areas to survive. Allowing plant based food products to confuse consumers and damage the brand of red meat has economic and environmental implications not just for red meat producers but the broader economy and public.

Every Australian government (state and federal) has regional economic development as a priority and the red meat industry is a critical part of that. As already stated, red meat is largely produced in areas which are not suitable for crops or other industries. The red meat producers in these areas are also environmental stewards and perform critical land management services as well as contribute to regional economies as employers and purchasers of goods and services. Damage to the red meat industry brand and value will reduce these producers' ability to care for the land and contribute to regional economies.

In addition to being produced areas not suitable for other industries, the red meat industry also utilises plant products (especially grain) which are not suitable for human consumption and turns these into food products which are suitable for human consumption. The red meat industry does this under extremely strict protocols and to extremely high standards, producing a product which is healthy, natural and free from synthetic additives.

- d. The implications for other Australian animal products impaired from the appropriation of product labelling by manufactured plant-based or synthetic proteins.

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- e. Any related matters