

Dear Senators,

It is with great concern that I send this letter to you all, this letter is to ask you all with all the wisdom you have been given to consider the issue of Global and Australian Food Production security. Australian milk production of 8.9 billion litres will be the lowest since 1997-1998 and five percent decrease on last financial year. (ABARE, 2010) In South Australia there are now only 312 dairy farms left with a 9 million litre drop in milk production in a 6 month period compared to last year. Considering we had a near record 7.83 million tonnes of grain harvested according to primary industry officials. "The Advertiser 5th March 2010" There is also plenty of fodder available, this has only occurred because of primary producers receiving below cost of production prices for their milk.

What we have been seeing is debt driven food production with Circumstances not under control of the primary producers.

How can the Government expect primary food producers to pass on their G.S.T tax liability if the government doesn't legislate for primary producers to pass on their legitimate production cost plus margin and G.S.T. Food cannot and should not be produced below legitimate cost of production.

In September 2000 member countries of the United Nations including Australia agreed to work towards eliminating global poverty and hunger the United Nation estimate 860 million people are short of food. Could some of the 3.7 billion dollars Aus Aid assistance include direct Australian food produce? Without viable food production we are and will be denying people in poorer countries than ours food if our food production drops. There are also people in this country who have fallen on hard times in many cases not of their own fault but due to job losses and having families to care for and are unable to afford food and are going to welfare agencies or to food banks.

The next loss is in the secondary food production where skilled workers lose their jobs due to loss in primary food production. Recent examples include Leitchville Vic dairy processing facility, 260 jobs lost in Port Lincoln S.A Tuna cannery and the Riverland Juice factory S.A. We can not afford to lose these people and their skills and commitment in food production.

I have attached a letter previously written to Peter McGauran previous Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

I urge all members of the Senate and also the House of Representative to read the submission's into this enquiry, remembering the true value of food and its security to Australia and the many other people in the world who rely on Australian primary food production.

Yours faithfully

Malcolm Fechner