

20 July 2021

Senator Susan McDonald
Senator for Queensland
Chair of Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Via email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator,

Senate Committee Inquiry into definitions of meat and other animal products

My name is David Allen and I'm a beef producer from Victoria. My family and I have been cattle and wool producers for over 100 years here in south western Victoria. My son is currently running the farm and we take great pride in supplying Coles with high quality grass fed beef. Previously we supplied JBS where we were regularly in their top 10 suppliers.

Thank you for the opportunity to write about the inquiry into definitions of meat and other animal products and meat category branding in Australia.

As a beef producer, I have personally contributed to the \$273.7 million in levies last year which was invested into the long-term prosperity of the Australian red meat and livestock industry. These contributions represent a significant investment in my business and the broader beef industry. We are genuine cattle producers and produce a very genuine product for the customers – when people pick up our product they must know that it is exactly as stated on the label. It beggars belief that labels don't describe exactly what the product is.

Truth in labelling is important for providing consumers with information about the food they buy. When products can use deceptive or misleading food descriptors or imagery on their packaging, there needs to be reform of labelling laws. Consumers want to make informed choices, and products that use beef or cattle imagery or language but don't have any beef in the product, misleads consumers.

Australian beef producers have a reputation in Australia and around the world for producing clean, green, high quality produce. I believe Australian beef producers should benefit from this reputation by receiving premium prices. This makes accurate labelling essential.

Products that contain no beef, should not be allowed to market themselves as beef. I support any measures the Committee may recommend that allows consumers to tell the difference between natural Australian beef from blended products, alternative proteins, and cultured meat. Furthermore, the term 'beef' needs to be legislatively protected to ensure that the current situation where products containing no beef are able to be marketed as products using the term beef is prohibited.

I also know that plant-based fake meats need to be ultra-processed with nutritional additives in an effort to even try and come close to red meat. **To present alternative proteins as nutritionally equivalent to beef is misleading.** I do not believe alternative proteins should carry descriptors or names that may allow consumers to be misled that the products may be beef products.

Producing food for the people is a very noble endeavour, I am proud of the product we produce and how it is marketed. Misleading consumers by using inaccurate and deceptive language and imagery is damaging for the reputation of Australian beef and our role as beef producers.

Thank you for considering my submission. I would welcome the opportunity to attend a public hearing to speak with the Committee in person.

Yours sincerely,

David Allen