

Date: 5.12.2024

Dear MP OR SENATOR

I am a ACO and Korean Certified Organic Beef Farmer based in the Murweh Shire, QLD and I strongly encourage you to support the *National Organic Standard Bill 2024* (The Bill) introduced in the Senate during the 18 November sitting week. This Bill is important to the organic industry because it will provide a definition for the term organic in Australia and it will help improve consumer trust in organic products and open market access opportunities for Australian certified organic operators.

Since New Zealand passed domestic regulation in 2023, Australia is now the last country in the OECD to not have a domestic standard for organic products. If Australia does not introduce a domestic standard Australia's organic industry behind our key trading partners, risking the livelihood of the approximately 3000 certified operators and producers currently in Australia.

Currently in Australia the National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce (The National Standard) requires all organic products in Australia being sold for export to be certified organic. However, the National Standard does not apply for domestic sales of organic products which means there is no legal definition for organic products in Australia and no legal requirement for certification of organic products sold domestically.

This has resulted in a two-tiered organic industry in Australia, made up of operators who have voluntarily certified to be organic and those who claim to be organic but have not become certified. Without this requirement, the certified organic industry has had to protect itself from greenwashing by uncertified organic operators which has created concerns for consumers. The organic industry has also lost opportunities due to the inability to gain equivalencies with key markets such as the United States and South Korea that require countries to have a domestic regulatory framework.

Senator Sterle, whether the government supports the Bill in the Senate, or creates its own Bill, it is urgent a domestic regulatory framework is introduced to protect organic operators

who have done the right thing and become certified. It was a Labor Government that introduced the National Standard in 1992 and this is another opportunity for Labor to implement reforms that will ultimately benefit the organic industry and the men and women who work everyday to provide some of the best organic produce you can find anywhere in the world.

Yours Sincerely,