



AgForce statement on animal cruelty

Joint statement by AgForce president Brent Finlay and AgForce Cattle president Grant Maudsley

State farm group AgForce, which represents Queensland beef cattle producers, strongly opposes any form of animal cruelty.

AgForce is shocked and concerned by the images of cattle being poorly treated which were broadcast on ABC's Four Corners program last night.

AgForce supports the inquiry into animal welfare issues in Indonesian abattoirs, announced by the Federal Minister for Agriculture Joe Ludwig today. It is unacceptable for any cattle, regardless of their origin, to be treated cruelly.

However, AgForce cautions against the immediate suspension or termination of exporting cattle to Indonesia for two reasons.

Firstly, it is important to recognise that the Australian cattle industry has led significant improvements and developments in Indonesian abattoirs to ensure livestock handling complies international animal welfare regulations.

If Australia was to exit the Indonesian market, who will monitor the situation and provide training and guidance on correct animal handling practices? We need to be in the market to continue influencing progress on this issue.

Secondly, the North Australian beef industry is structured around the live export of cattle to Indonesia.

The exit of Australia from Indonesia will have a devastating and wide-spread impact on families and communities who rely on this vital market, as well as support industries such as livestock transporters.

The geographical and seasonal challenges of producing cattle in North Australia combined with current freight networks does not make any other market viable.

The loss of their single market will severely impact hundreds of Australian beef producing families and have a huge flow-on economic affect across the nation as the domestic market struggles to handle the redirection of 500,000 cattle currently exported to Indonesia.

AgForce supports the controlled export of cattle to Indonesia, but only to processing facilities which meet and maintain international standards of animal welfare.

AgForce supports the acceleration of the continuing roll-out by Australia of training and equipment for Indonesian abattoirs to ensure animal welfare practices are adhered to.

AgForce will communicate our position to Minister for Agriculture Joe Ludwig and the Australian live export industry, and urges beef producers who rely on the Indonesian market to contact their local Members and Senator Ludwig to ensure a strong and constructive industry voice is heard.

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