

27 March 2023

Hon Mark McGowan MLA
Premier
13th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

via email: wa-government@dpc.wa.gov.au
CC: Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC

Dear Premier

We have signed this letter representing the supply chain, communities and families involved in the live sheep trade. Represented here are state farming peak bodies, shearers, transporters, woolgrowers and exporters.

We are very appreciative of the stand you have already taken against the Federal Labor Government's policy to phase out live sheep exports. In particular, we appreciate you have recognised the reform of the industry and its importance to both Western Australia and our key trading partners in the Middle East. We could not have asked more from you in your support of the trade so far.

In a letter, which we enclose, to Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for Agriculture, 25 organisations representing agricultural industries nationally outlined that the phasing out of live sheep exports was a red line issue for all of agriculture. As a sector we will never support legitimate industries being shut down due to vague notions of social licence or for political expediency.

We will not be engaging in a discussion about transitioning out of the trade. We will be approaching Minister Watt's consultation process as another platform to argue for policy change.

There is clear science-based evidence that the animal welfare outcomes of the industry have been outstanding. Minister Watt himself has recognised the industry's performance. The federal government's insistence on maintaining this policy is a clear acquiescence to an animal activist agenda hellbent on shutting down animal agriculture one industry at a time. Make no mistake, if live sheep exports fall, they will be coming after the cattle and wool industries are next.

The Federal Government has sold out Western Australia, and at least 3000 Western Australian jobs, to win some votes in east coast seats that have no understanding of agriculture. This is despite the fact your political success delivered the Prime Minister government.

There will be no winners in WA out of this policy. Any claims otherwise ignore the complexities and reasons the trade exists in the first place. We guarantee we will not be giving an inch in this battle and will be actively taking the fight to Canberra alongside our national agriculture colleagues.

Premier, you have never wavered in the face of pressure from Canberra. The Western Australian agriculture industry needs you more than ever, and we commit to be standing beside you as you stand up for WA and for what is right. Our plea is that you actively take up this fight beside us.

Yours sincerely



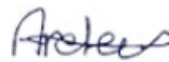
John Hassell
President
WA Farmers
(Inc)



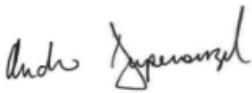
Tony Seabrook
President
Pastoralists and Graziers Association of WA



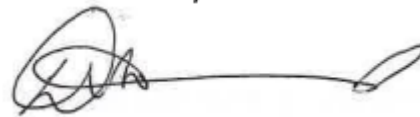
John Cunningham
Chair, West Australian Livestock
Exporters Association



Jak Andrews
Chair
Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association



Andrew Duperouzel - Nutrien Ag Solutions West Region Manager

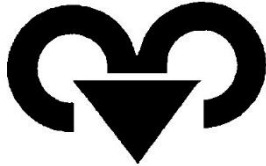


Dean Hubbard
State Livestock & Wool Manager





Neville Armstrong
President, Private Treaty Wool Merchants
of Australia Inc.



Michael A Campbell

President SMBAWA



Timothy J. Cowcher
Director Macco Feeds Australia

MACCO FEEDS AUSTRALIA
Stockfeed Manufacturers



Soniamol Johnson
Executive Officer
Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network (R.A.I.N.)



Troy Sloan
President
Compass Agricultural Alliance



Edward Riggall - Director, Agpro Management
Representing 200 Livestock enterprises





A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Faithfull".

Brad Faithfull
Director, Westcoast Livestock Pty Ltd

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerald Wetherall".

Gerald Wetherall
Managing Director, Westcoast Livestock Pty Ltd

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Max Wilson".

WA Manager
Dyson Jones WA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Max Wilson".

Max Wilson
President
The Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders (AASMB)



DYSON JONES



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Sibley".

ROBERT SIBLEY - PARTNER



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Vandenberghe".

David Vandenberghe
Chair
Association for Sheep Husbandry
Excellence, Evaluation and Production



Neil Morrel
President
West Arthur Shire



Timothy J Cowcher
Director TS & DE Cowcher Farms

Mandy Griffiths
Partner, Canowie Pastoral
Company



Alan Harris
President



The Victorian Stud Merino Sheepbreeders' Association Inc.

Nathan Craig
Executive Officer
West Midlands Group



Josh Lamb
President, Australian Council of
Wool Exporters & Processors Inc

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF
WOOL EXPORTERS & PROCESSORS



John Colley
Managing Director
AWN



Hamish McLaren
President, NSW Stud Merino
Breeders Association Ltd



Adele Scarfone
Executive Officer
Southern DIRT



Evan Croake
General Manager
Techwool Trading



Sandy Forbes
Chair
Stirlings to Coast farmers Inc



1 March 2023

Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

via email: minister.watt@agriculture.gov.au

cc: The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia
Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Senator the Hon Don Farrell, Minister for Trade and Tourism

Dear Minister

Re Live Sheep Phase Out Policy

We write to advise that we oppose the Australian Government's policy to phase out live sheep exports.

Signatories to this letter are the Chairs and Presidents of peak livestock bodies, national farming organisations and state farming organisations. We have signed this letter as the policy is a whole of sector issue, not just a livestock exports issue. The policy represents a red line that cannot be crossed. We will never support legitimate agricultural industries being closed for political reasons, or to suit activist agendas.

We recognise that the live sheep industry has not been without its past challenges, but also acknowledge and commend the industry for its reform, which has been substantiated by evidence and enhanced Australia's trading reputation internationally.

This reform has been recognised by the Western Australian Premier and his Agriculture Minister. We note that you have also acknowledged the improvements the industry has made.

If the live sheep industry is phased out in spite of its reform and positive animal welfare outcomes, which can all be evidenced, then an appalling precedent will be set, one which alarms all of us.

All of our industries have, at some point, become the target of activist agendas that do not portray our industries truthfully.

It would set a dangerous and concerning precedent for the government to prioritise activist agendas over recognising the overwhelming evidence of reform and improvement. Activists will not stop at just the live sheep industry. Any accession to their agenda undermines all of our industries and the work and investment we have collectively made to Australia being a world leader in animal welfare.

The live sheep industry, like all our industries, exist to support Australia's food production and provides for the food security and market preferences of our international trading partners. We do not believe it can be 'transitioned out of' in a way that benefits producers. It would be detrimental to rural communities and international markets. All the evidence is farmers who remain in sheep will suffer a financial cost if the trade ends as it is the only mechanism that provides additional competitive tension in the market. The industry's removal would penalise farming families and our international friends, to our country's detriment and at the cost of approximate 3000 jobs in Western Australia.

We acknowledge that you have sought to engage meaningfully with us on this matter and we appreciate the manner in which you have done so. We note that shortly you will be announcing a consultation process about how the policy will be implemented.

However, we advise that in making our contributions to this process we will continue to oppose the Australian Government policy to phase out live sheep exports and continue to advocate for a change in this policy based on evidence and contemporary experience. As far as we are concerned, the industry must be viewed on its current standing and improvements as it remains a vital part of the Australian agricultural sector.

Yours sincerely



David Galvin
Chair
Australian Livestock Exporters' Council



Andrew Spencer
Chair
Sheep Producers Australia



Fiona Simson
President
National Farmers' Federation



David Foote
Chairman
Cattle Australia



Steve Harrison
Independent Chair
Wool Producers Australia



John Falkenhagen
President
Goat Industry Council of Australia



Barb Madden

Barb Madden
President
Australian Lot Feeders' Association



Rick Gladigau

Rick Gladigau
President
Australian Dairy Farmers



Peter Baldwin

Peter Baldwin
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Livestock & Property Agents
Association Ltd



Jak Andrews

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Chair
Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association



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John Hassell

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President
WA Farmers



Rebecca Reardon

Rebecca Reardon
Vice President
NSW Farmers' Association



Emma Germano

Emma Germano
President
Victorian Farmers Federation



Joe Keynes
President
Livestock SA



Ian Sauer
President
Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association



Georgie Somerset
General President
AgForce Queensland



David Connelly
President
Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association



David Warriner
Chair, Northern Territory
Livestock Exporters Association



John Cunnington
Chair, West Australian Livestock
Exporters Association



Jim Teasdale
Chairman, South East Australian Livestock
Association




Greg Pankhurst
President, Queensland Livestock Exporters
Exporters Association





Darren Spencer
President
WA Shearing Industry Association



David Fyfe
President, Livestock & Rural Transport
Association of Western Australia



Allan Hoble
President, Stud Merino Breeders
Association of Western Australia

