

# **The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy**



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# PRELIMINARY

- **Was asked to cover 'Government 'philosophies, priorities and programs'**
- **BUT – current Australian Government is 'caretaker'**
- **CAN talk about DAFF's programs, what has led to them, and bipartisan policy settings**
- **CAN talk about what has been the role of the Australian Government historically**
- **CAN'T talk about Government '3 P's' as above**



# This Presentation 1

- **What IS 'animal welfare'? (4-7)**
- **Who is responsible under the Constitution? (8-12)**
- **Why 'important' to the Australian nation? (13-16)**
  - In particular, for the Department of Agriculture?
- **What are the Global Trading Rules (15-17)**
  - International responses
- **Australia's approach & response (18-20)**
  - International efforts
  - National situation



# This Presentation 2

- **'Australian Animal Welfare Strategy' (17-26)**
  - Vision, History, Strategic Importance & Goals
- **AAWS Implementation – progress (27-34)**
- **AAWS Livestock Consistency Project (35-52)**
- **AAWS Communications (53-57)**
- **Implications for Animal Welfare in the Livestock Industries – how could the AAWS help (58-60)**
- **Conclusion (61-63)**



# WHAT IS ‘ANIMAL

**WELFARE?** ~~Objective evidence~~ whether positive outcomes delivered through application of certain practices - from science

**HOWEVER - ethics, societal views, economic factors in final decision making on ‘acceptable’ practice**

*Ultimately is values-based judgement.*



# **Leads to 'Duty of Care'**

## **- delivered in different ways**



# SO - 'ANIMAL WELFARE' IS -



- ***Physiological & Behavioural***
- ***Delivered under '5 Freedoms'***

## ***Carer's Duty of Care to provide:***

- Adequate feed, water, nutrition
- Protection - avoid fear & distress
- Shelter - prevent heat & cold stress
- Management & facilities - prevent pain, injury and disease
- Facilities - recognise normal patterns of behaviour.



# AND IS PROMOTED BY -

- ***Laws (eg POCTA since 1820's in Britain)***
- ***Codes and Guidelines (eg Model Codes since 1980s, Australian Code for Research since 1960s, others)***
- ***Principles – eg the 3 "R's" for use of animals in research***



# WHO HAS POWER TO CONTROL?

**Covered by Australia's Constitutional Framework**

**Three Levels of Australian Government:**

## **1 Federal Government**

- Limited powers – don't include animal welfare and disease control in States and Territories
- Include international and interstate trade (including live exports directly), corporations and Quarantine



# Australian Constitutional Framework

## **2 State and Territory Governments**

- **Responsible for animal health and disease control, and animal welfare**
- **Prevention of cruelty to animals legislation (POCTA) and RSPCA inspectors**
- **Portfolio involved varies – in Eastern States (4) is DPI.**
- **Causes difficulties in common application of nationally agreed welfare codes/standards.**



# Australian Constitutional Framework

## 3 Local Government

- **Responsible for urban animal management , i.e. dog/cat registration and enforcement**
- **Animal pounds and shelters therefore local responsibility BUT often run by NGOs such as RSPCA as production animals including horses often involved**
- **In WA local government is responsible for administration of that State's Animal Welfare Laws**



# SUMMARY: AUSTRALIA's NATIONAL APPROACH

**Animal Welfare +/- totally jurisdictional matter**

**BASICALLY Codes of Practice underpin outcomes based framework plus State laws**

**Australian Government to promote national consistency  
AND for control over export trade**

- live exports & export meat processing ONLY
- **Australian Standards** – thru-chain arrangements for export & abattoirs



# ANIMAL WELFARE DRIVERS -

## INTERNATIONAL

Is now a Global issue

- Are we 'too efficient' at producing animal protein?
- Outrage at Cormo Express
- Animal activists generate media attention
- Commercial driver - demand for 'animal welfare friendly' products



The Cormo Express at anchor in Kuwait.

Picture: AFP      Source: *The Age*



# IS IT TOPICAL?

## PETA out to kill off exports

A radical animal rights group has launched a campaign targeting Australia's livestock exports to the Middle East.

PETA, or People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, said Australian cattle and sheep were abused while being transported and at Middle East abattoirs and released footage it said was

## Saleyards must lift their game

**COMMENT**  
on the market

by Jenny Kelly

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THERE was a telling comment made during last week's saleyard conference that sums up

touched on many of the same issues during a talk at last week's saleyard conference at

## Our farmers take lead in animal care

FARMING and industry leaders have released an independent report that confirms Australian live exports lead the world in standards of animal care.

The report was commissioned from a leading agricultural research body, Alliance Resource Economics, by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and LiveCorp.

animal care are among the best in the world," he said.

"We're committed to continuing to work with our trading partners to push for better practices overseas.

"That includes spending valuable resources upgrading abattoirs at overseas ports and guaranteeing better training for stockmen charged with handling animals," Mr Bray said.

## New spray set to ease 'cruelty' of mulesing

**NARELLE MORSE looks at a new technique that allows farmers to mules lambs more effectively and less painfully**

IT WAS the very vocal and powerful American lobby group People for the Ethical Treatment of

"In the 18 years during which I was in paediatric surgery I developed extensive skills in the management of pain in children undergoing surgery as well as the treatment of traumatic injuries," Dr Sheil told those gathered at Merryville Merino Stud Field Day last September.

"Then when I married and we ran superfine merinos as well as other livestock and I wit-



# IMPORTANCE AT NATIONAL

**LEVEL - GENERAL**  
Over 80% of Australians either have or will have responsibility for a pet animal during their lives

- Historically, animals have iconic relation to the perceived 'Australian' identity :
  - the drovers dog
  - Simpson's donkey
  - 'Galahs', the Wallabies, the Kangaroos, the Kookaburras
- Our unique wildlife is a major drawcard – over half the international tourists who visit include visits to wildlife parks or zoos to view native fauna
- Even Winnie the Pooh has an Australian connection – Roo and Kanga!



# IMPORTANCE AT NATIONAL

## ~~Animal Production first step in *international* Animal-derived Food Production Chain - NOT isolated~~ **LIVESTOCK**

- Also NOT unique – are alternative protein sources
- **Animal Welfare is linked to meat quality and food safety outcomes at production end of chain**
- **Consumers - limited understanding of farming and meat production but media can leverage 'concerns'**
- **Animal Rights Groups - uninterested in objective discussion - a 'moral' issue**
  - 'Meat is Murder' – emotive
- **Commercial interests further along chain and some importing countries prescribing it as Market Maintenance requirement ('McWelfare')**



# AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S ROLE 1

**Constitutional responsibilities include Quarantine,  
international and interstate trade including live exports**

**In the OECD Australia's economy is the most reliant on export  
of agricultural products: 67 – 75% of primary production is  
for export**

**'Good Government' therefore includes steps to protect market  
access for regional communities**



# AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S ROLE 2

**How to guarantee fair market access for agricultural industries?**

- 1 Support multi-lateral international free trading network (bipartisan)**
- 2 Work within the rules to ensure Australian producers are not otherwise disadvantaged**



# WHAT ARE INTERNATIONAL ‘RULES’?

**WTO agreements govern tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade (NTBs)**

**Animal Welfare NOT issue that can be used to justify imposition of trade restrictions**

- therefore countries can't impose tariffs OR 'technical barriers to trade' (TBTs)
- IS entirely a matter for commercial agreements between commercial players

**BUT - - Lawyers are involved!**



# HOW DO THE INTERNATIONAL

Some countries view farming as a cultural heritage

## RULES WORK?

- require farms keep 'cultural values'

- in these cases subsidise farms for regulatory costs

**NOT EFFICIENT – globally less competitive**

Technically **SHOULDN'T** distort free trade unless maintaining long-term cultural values

**BUT - - Lawyers are involved!**



# RESPONSE BY COMMERCIAL AND TRADING PARTNERS

**Consumers/Importers – food & fibre from 'welfare considerate' production**

**Europe - 'push' for welfare to be accepted as NTB to trade**

- EU consumer survey to justify 'welfare labelling'
- EU Vet Agreements include welfare in trade
- 'Rules based' approach to animal welfare

**USA - Corporations (eg McDonalds) - set minimum standards for USA from all suppliers – including internationally. RESPONSE TO PROTECT MARKETS**



- AUSTRALIA's INTERNATIONAL APPROACH
- Animal Welfare important but free trade helps poorer nations develop
- Improvements through building capacity and expertise BUT oppose the EU 'push' with like-minded countries
  - disagree with subsidies for inefficient farming systems
  - disagree with 'welfare labelling' as Government requirement - is purely a commercial matter
- Significant work on International OIE guidelines for animal welfare & extension work
- Hallmark of our involvement - OIE guidelines outcomes focused AND science based
  - NOT prescriptive



# BUT – OUR LOCAL APPROACH AIN'T BROKE SO DON'T FIX IT!

**WRONG**

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!

## PETA out to kill off exports

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**exports  
are the  
industry's  
lifeblood**



# SO - Why did the Australian Government fund the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (\$6 million over 4 years)?

**Australians care about animals**

**Animal welfare, health and production are closely linked**

- **Changing demands from domestic & international markets**
- **Changing attitudes in Australian society**



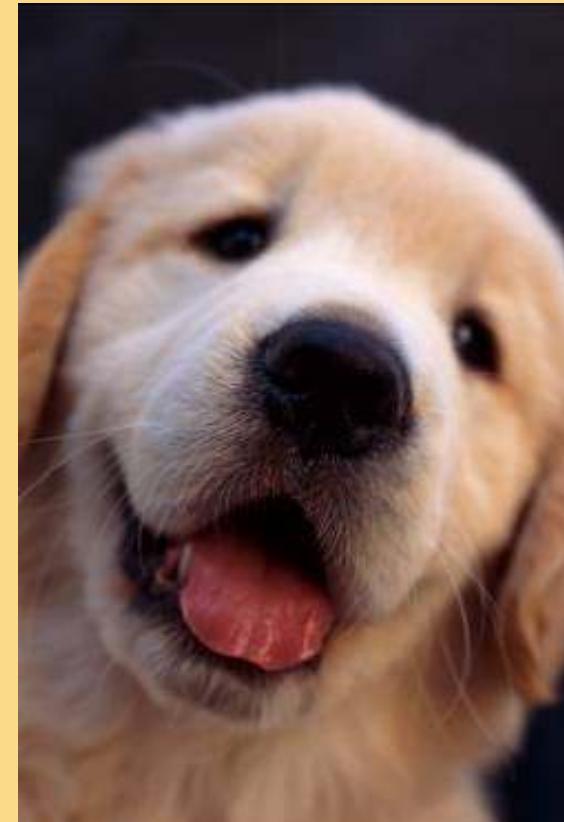
# Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

## Blueprint for ongoing approach to improve animal welfare outcomes

To build from current strong foundations

To achieve positive animal welfare outcomes

- Developed by inclusive process
- Endorsed in 2004 by all Australian Governments



# THE INCLUSIVE STRATEGY

## Hallmark of Australia's Approach

- **Extensive consultation – 5 years!**
- **Partnership between industry in all sectors, all levels of Government and the community**
- **By the Australian Government and the National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare**



# WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

education

culture

# AAWS

values

ethics

Policies

Legislation

Regulation

Co-regulation

farm animals

aquatic animals

research/teaching

animals in the wild

companion animals

sport/recreation animals

Awareness

Communication

Skills

Understanding

awareness

science

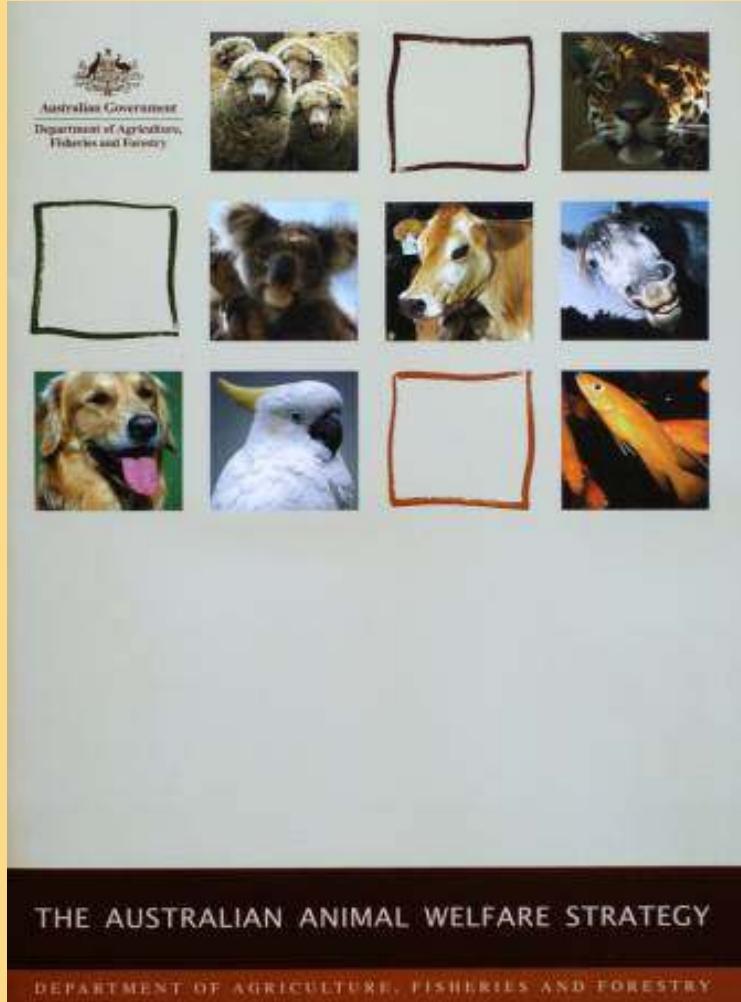
innovation

international

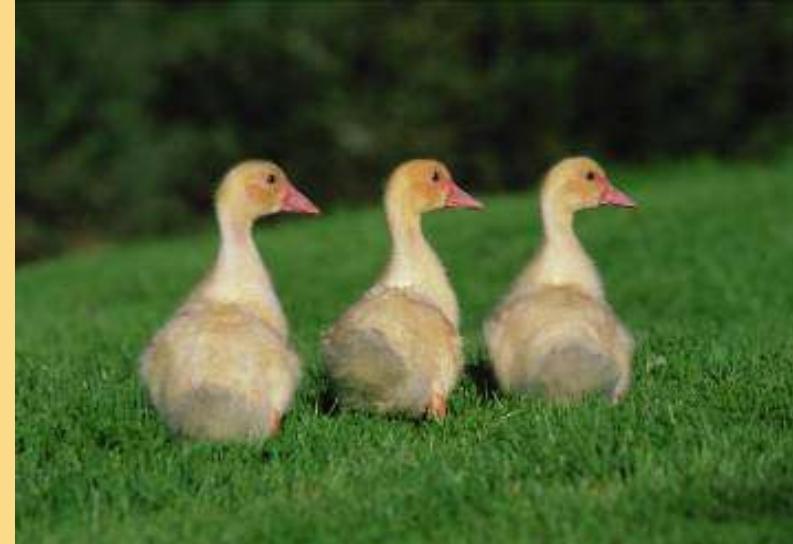
# action plans



# SIMPLIFY – WHAT IS THE AAWS - Vision



**"The welfare of all animals in Australia is promoted and protected by the development and adoption of sound animal welfare standards and practices"**



## **WHY 'all animals'?**

**Q: Who is the strategy for? A: ALL Australians**

**Australians own all types of animals BUT never had a framework that enabled a 'national' approach to animal welfare across the board**

**In 2004 the Government accepted advice from Primary Industries Ministerial Council that DAFF should take a comprehensive enabling approach to animal welfare by application of the AAWS**

**DAFF's core role still agriculture but empowers other animal sectors through collaboration**



# AAWS Position – Importance for DAFF & Australian Animal Industries



# SIX SECTORS COVER ALL

## • **ANIMALS**

- **Livestock/production animals**
- **Animals used for work, sport, recreation or display**
- **Companion animals**
- **Animals in the wild**
- **Aquatic animals**
- **Animals used in research and teaching**



# What is the Strategy about?

## **Enhancing animal welfare outcomes**

- **Improvements made in:**
  - **Legislation, regulations & standards**
  - **Education & training**
  - **Research & development**
  - **International awareness of Australia's approach**
  - **Community awareness**



# HOW WILL THE STRATEGY

- **RECOGNISES animal welfare roles and responsibilities at all levels – particularly animal owners/carers/handlers**

– - the ONLY people who can deliver a difference!

- **STARTS by building from Australia's current world-class framework**
- **AIMS for nationally consistent outcomes**

**EVOLUTION NOT REVOLUTION**

**EMPOWER NOT CONTROL**



## AAWS GOALS 1

- Enhanced national approach EVOLUTION
- Commitment to high standard animal welfare outcomes
- Sustainable improvements based on national and international benchmarks – Australia already a world leader



## AAWS GOALS 2

- **Effective communication, education & training to build whole-of-community understanding**
- **Scientific evaluation and research informs our practices but decision making takes into account whole-of-community views**
- **Improve understanding of animal welfare in Australia**
  - **FOR Australians**
  - **FOR trading partners**



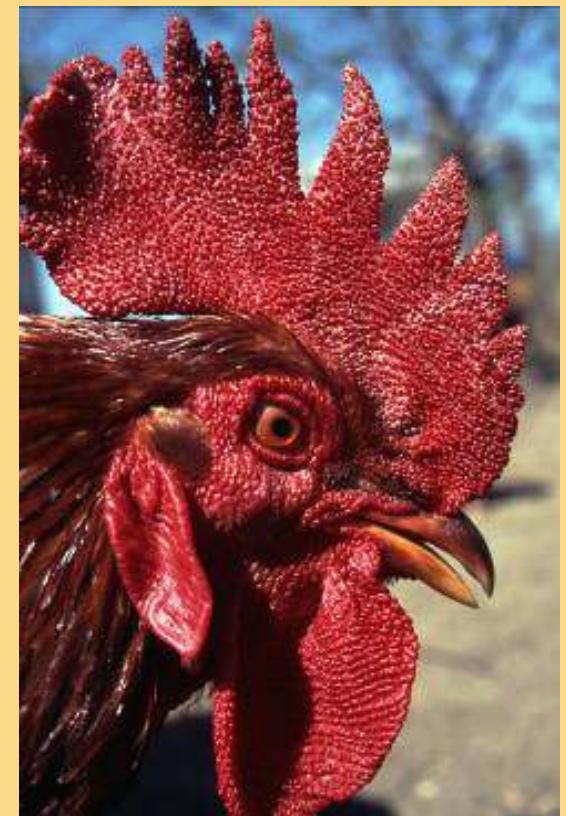
## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

- Australian Government providing \$6 million 'seed' money over 4 years to June 2009:
  - provide national leadership
  - leverage other funding to drive implementation process
- Expert Advisory Committee is overseeing implementation driven by working groups
- Key stakeholders and State and Territory governments are providing further resources and co-ordinating their programs with AAWS



# AAWS IMPLEMENTATION – PLAN

- **National Implementation Plan (NIP) endorsed by all Agriculture Ministers in April 2006**
- **2 National planning workshops held**
  - Priority actions agreed &
  - National priority projects started
- **Six sectoral working groups (~100 stakeholders) set up to progress:**
  - the strategy's implementation
  - 'action plans' for each sector



# Working Groups

- Each group developed sectoral ‘action plan’ with implementation priorities
- A stocktake of each sector carried out and gaps identified
- Priorities for sectoral activities established and work underway
- Additional resources to complete these activities essential



# AAWS ACHIEVEMENTS –

## • CURRENT WORK Review of Consistency of Livestock Animal Welfare Legislation, regulations & standards

- Improved animal welfare education & training at all levels
- Review of Animal Welfare R & D arrangements
- Better Communication
- Sectoral Projects



# AAWS PROGRESS 1

- **Need for consistency in State and Territory implementation of national Model Codes for Livestock**
  - state and territory legislation for implementation and enforcement has been reviewed by industries & regulators
  - Aim - enhanced consistency of animal welfare outcomes through application of 'standards' for national industries

## RECOMMENDATIONS PREPARED FOR PIMC

- **Need for consistent enforcement of Livestock Animal Welfare across nation**
  - 'codes' to become directly enforceable 'standards' AHA's **PROCESS IS FUNDED BY DAFF THROUGH AAWS**



# AAWS PROGRESS 2

- **Industries are improving well developed thru-chain quality assurance (QA) systems linked to best practice guidelines**
  - On-farm QA – pigs, layer hens, feedlots, dairy, sheep
  - Truckcare QA for animal transporters
  - Saleyard QA scheme
  - Aim is to link EACH STEP up to and including slaughter
  - In accord with AT LEAST government requirements
- **Need to develop clear and recordable benchmarks**
  - KPIs being developed by livestock working group
- **Animal Welfare Indicators - animals in Research & Teaching**

**WORK UNDERWAY BY AWSC & WORKING GROUP**



# AAWS PROGRESS 3

- **Need to improve animal welfare Education and Training**

## **OVERARCHING EDUCATION AND TRAINING GROUP ESTABLISHED**

- Inclusive expert group to advise on APPROPRIATE content of training packages AND educational curriculum – K – 89!

- **Need for improved and strategic approach to animal welfare R&D**

## **NATIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE R&D ADVISORY GROUP ESTABLISHED AND WORK IS COMPLETE**

- report on how to best co-ordinate animal welfare R&D nationally for Workshop
  - Each sector still to prioritise future R&D
  - ‘gap analysis’ of research has been performed



# AAWS PROGRESS – further activities

## **INTERNATIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE – AUG-SEP 2008**

- Being arranged by steering committee

## **ENGAGEMENT IN OIE ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE IN CAIRO, DECEMBER 2008**

## **WORKING WITH ASIA-PACIFIC AND OCEANIA REGIONAL COMMISSION OF OIE - DEVELOP REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR OIE GUIDELINES**



# AAWS COMMUNICATION - Getting the message to stakeholders...

- **Important to identify stakeholders**
- **Using a national approach to implement an overarching communication strategy that:**
  - **engages government, industry & community groups**
  - **encourages ownership**
  - **establishes framework for**
  - **stakeholders' own activities**
  - **has consistent messages**



# AAWS Communications

## Ongoing activities include:

- Speaking engagements
- Events/trade stalls
- Publications
- Website ([www.daff.gov.au/aaws](http://www.daff.gov.au/aaws))
- Media liaison
  
- THAT'S WHY I'M HERE



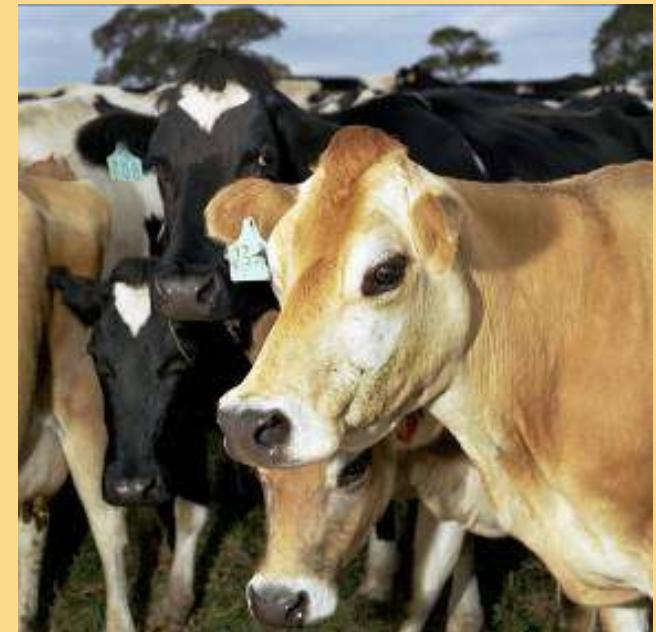
# AAWS Communications research

- ***Stakeholder Analysis* – who are the stakeholders and how we reach them**
- ***Communications research***
  - Knowledge and attitudes of key stakeholders
  - most effective messages
  - how to best present message
- ***Communications strategy* – how do we get the message to key stakeholders**



# WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

- **Intensive production industries may have to change over time unless they can demonstrate to the public the animal welfare and public health benefits of current practice**
  - Sow stalls for pregnant sows
  - Cages for layer hens
  - Need the science
- **Traditional husbandry practices may need refinement**
  - Mulesing
  - Tail Docking of Dairy Cows
  - Sale of Bobby Calves



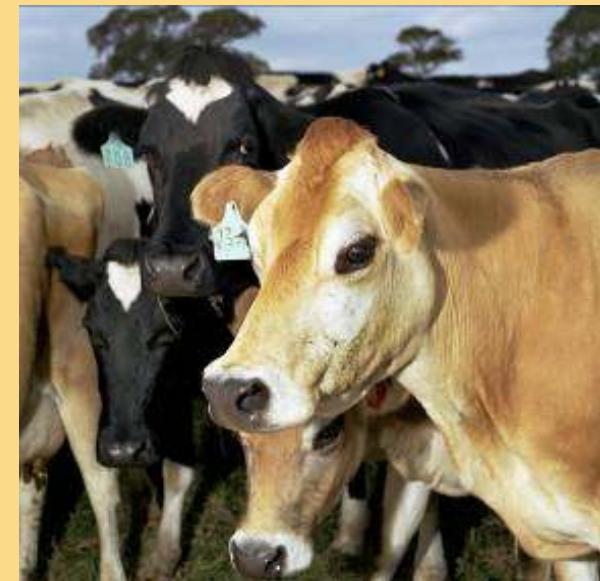
# BUT – ANIMALS WILL STILL GO

## • FOR SLAUGHTER NO MATTER

- Transport and bruising
- Transport times and Salmonella
- Production and E coli (US esp)
- Meat quality - dehydration/electrolytes (eg Mg)
- Metabolic problems

## • Thru-chain arrangements need to link in effective way

- Improve outcomes, not just hit the hip pocket
- Ensure consumer confidence
- Act to underpin government verification – INDUSTRY CONTROL



# Conclusion

- **AAWS is for all animals and all Australians**
- **Inclusive process to implement the Strategy**
- **Aims for continued improvement in animal welfare**
- **Successful implementation requires shared responsibility**



# Some other topical welfare issues

## Live Animal Exports

- New Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock

- Working with Middle Eastern trading partners to assist them implement the OIE guidelines for Animal Welfare in their countries**

## Deliberate Illegal and Disruptive Activities

- Review of Laws that may be used to control damaging activities



# Some other topical welfare issues

## **Long Distance Transport**

- New Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Transport of Livestock
- World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) campaign to start in March 2008**

## **Intensive Animal Industries**

- Review of Pig Code recently completed and being implemented and the 2000 decision on Battery Hens to be in place by start of 2008



# AAWS CONTACT – FOR FURTHER

**INFO Australian Animal Welfare Unit  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Email: animalwelfare@daff.gov.au**

**Telephone: 02 6272 5291**

**OR VISIT: [www.daff.gov.au/aaws](http://www.daff.gov.au/aaws)**



# THANK YOU

