

**Submission
No 20**

**PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT (VIRTUAL STOCK
FENCING) BILL 2024**

Name: Mr Scott Hurrell

Date Received: 1 May 2024

Dear Ministers,

I am writing to urge your support for the implementation of virtual fencing technology, particularly within the dairy industry, as a critical step towards improving safety, animal welfare, and sustainability in Australian agriculture.

The dairy industry plays a vital role in Australia's food security, yet it faces numerous challenges that threaten its viability and competitiveness. As you are aware, our country is increasingly reliant on imports to meet the growing demand for dairy products, highlighting the urgent need for innovation and efficiency within our domestic dairy sector.

Virtual fencing technology offers a multifaceted solution to the challenges facing dairy farmers. Firstly, it enhances safety on farms by considerably reducing the need for intensive ATV usage (one of the leading causes of injury on Australian farms), thereby mitigating the risks associated with farm accidents and injuries. Additionally, virtual fencing promotes better animal welfare by utilising a data-driven approach to grazing management, ultimately reducing stress and improving overall welfare outcomes through constant availability of information relating to animal health and welfare.

Moreover, virtual fencing technology contributes to better environmental outcomes by minimising the use of fuel and fertilisers through targeted distribution of animal waste. By reducing carbon emissions and conserving natural resources, virtual fencing aligns with our nation's commitment to sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship.

Furthermore, the adoption of virtual fencing technology enhances the efficiency and competitiveness of Australian dairy businesses on a global scale. With countries already permitting the use of this technology gaining a competitive edge, it is imperative that we support our farmers in adopting innovative solutions to remain globally competitive and meet the demands of the modern market.

Dairy farming is an important part of the economy in our state with multiple business and employment stakeholders throughout the value chain, not just at the farm level - your prompt support for this technology will directly affect the viability of local farms and the sustainability of local jobs and businesses.

In conclusion, I urge you to prioritise the support and investment in virtual fencing technology, recognising its significant potential to revolutionise the dairy industry and secure the future of Australian agriculture.

Your advocacy and bipartisan support on this issue is crucial in ensuring the prosperity and sustainability of our dairy sector.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your support and leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Scott Hurrell
Farmer, Comboyne NSW

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/apr/22/australia-milk-production-food-security-national-dairy-cow-numbers>