

**Submission  
No 345**

**INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FARM  
BILL 2019**

**Name:** Mr Paul Obern  
**Date Received:** 29 September 2019

---

I am writing to express my opposition to the "Right to Farm" legislation that is shortly to come before the NSW parliament.

For too long the animal agribusiness industry has been hiding poor husbandry methods and often animal cruelty involved in food production. The role of activists and whistle blowers in putting pictures of these practices before the public has been both courageous and illuminating.

Whilst activists may trespass onto farm premises they do not threaten people living or working therein, nor has their goal been to damage farm property but merely to publicise animal abuses taking place within those premises.

Were transgressions to take place they are adequately covered in law by the same rules that protect the rest of the populace, it is not necessary to have a draconian law for the protection of one sector of society, why should the premises of animal agribusiness be considered to be worthy of greater protection than the home or workplace of any other citizen?

If the NSW parliament is serious about stopping activists from entering farm property to film and document cases of animal abuse, then the law that should be before parliament is one of full disclosure. Producers and processors of animal products should be compelled to have surveillance cameras documenting the conditions in which farmed animals are kept and transported, also monitoring the behaviour of staff. This live footage should be accessible to any member of the public at any time on a NSW state government website. Were such a system as this implemented there would be far less likelihood of animal abuse taking place and the paying consumer would be able to purchase the end product fully informed as to the production methods employed. The necessity of individuals trespassing onto animal agribusiness premises to document animal abuse would be removed as the same could be achieved simply by logging onto the website.

Rather than sanctioning poor practice with a "what the public can't see, they can't object to" law, the NSW parliament should be promoting transparency within the animal agribusiness industry, thus engendering consumer confidence that NSW animal products are produced to the highest standard. Failure to do so leaves the industry open to criticism; with no proof of concern for animal welfare the suspicion will always be that facts are suppressed in favour of poor practice, at best for financial gain and at worse for the amusement of bored staff doing a repetitive job.

If the animal farming industry hopes to stem the tide of consumers abandoning their product in favour of a vegetarian diet, then ongoing incontrovertible proof of the highest standard of concern for animal welfare has to be available. The proposed law does nothing other than heighten concern that there is much to hide.

Yours sincerely

Paul Obern