

Submission
No 374

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 30 September 2019

Partially
Confidential

My submission is made with a simple request - for fairness and decency during discussions around the proposed bill "right to farm". This issue, and any issues regarding animals, always becomes fraught and nasty, but I believe we should always come back to the simple premise of "how would you like to be treated?". This philosophy, for many people, includes all sentient beings - animals who can feel fear, pain, loneliness, comfort, joy, contentment. For many people, the way in which a person or an organisation (like a farm or a country) with power treats those with less power, defines the true value of that person or organisation. It is our greatest test. With this in mind, I would like to submit that during the NSW inquiry into the "right to farm" legislation, that all those involved truly and with an open mind and heart, consider not only the human side - those who stand to make more or less money or those who have just always been there, but to truly keep in mind the actual animals - or just a single animal if it is easier to imagine - that will be affected by new laws that make it harder and harder to uncover cruelty towards animals.

I lived in a rural area for just one year, but during that time I saw things that totally changed my perspective on how humans can choose kindness, indifference or brutality. People can be so good and achieve so much, but often they choose or learn to be brutal. It is only fair and reasonable that animals born onto farms are treated with care and kindness - this would seem obvious to almost all people. Most Australians believe we live in a country of high welfare standards - but I wonder if they really know what goes on inside a factory farm? I have had the misfortune to visit several piggeries and I wouldn't have believed people would allow other creatures to live like that if I hadn't seen it for myself. (I went as an invited visitor, not an 'activist').

It is therefore so incredibly important that people who work in intensive farming situations are held accountable for their treatment of the animals who they are paid to look after. It is what the community expect. The community expect that standards are high, that people who are cruel to animals are punished, that cruelty to animals is not an inherent part of the system. This is not just what "radical vegans" want, it is what virtually everyone wants.

How can farmworkers be kept accountable if no one is checking on them? Even with the so called "threat" of animal activists secretly filming (and animal activists are, let's face it, just by the very nature of what they stand for, the most unlikely people to physically harm anyone), even with this "threat", abhorrent things have been found to be happening on farms time and time again over decades and decades. If harsher laws are introduced, who will be able to expose what goes on in these farms? The RSPCA is not adequate, as evidenced by the vast amount of footage from farms around Australia where the RSPCA have clearly had no effect.

Lastly, and if nothing else I have said makes a difference or is of interest, I would at the very least like to ask this question: IF THERE IS NOTHING BAD GOING ON, WHY CANT PEOPLE FILM IT?