

Submission
No 3

**INQUIRY INTO PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
AMENDMENT (RESTRICTIONS ON STOCK ANIMAL
PROCEDURES) BILL 2019**

Organisation: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

Date Received: 27 July 2020



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Australia

PO Box 20308
World Square
Sydney NSW 2002

08 8556 5828
PETA.org.au

**Submission To
the Inquiry Into the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment
(Restrictions on Stock Animal Procedures) Bill 2019**

27 July 2020

All correspondence regarding this submission should be directed to:

Laura Weyman-Jones
PETA Australia

Affiliates

- PETA US
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (UK)

A. About PETA Australia

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) Australia is the local affiliate of PETA US, the world's largest animal rights organisation with more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide. PETA is dedicated to establishing and protecting the rights of all animals.

PETA Australia works through public education, cruelty investigations, research, lobbying, celebrity involvement, and protest campaigns to focus international attention on the exploitation and abuse of animals for experiments, food, clothing, entertainment, or in any other way.

B. General comments on the scope of PETA's responses to the terms of reference

1. The NSW Legislative Council's Portfolio Committee No. 4 - Industry has invited a submission from PETA and is seeking submissions from the public on the proposed Bill.
2. PETA supports the passage and implementation of the Bill. Our expanded comments follow.

C. PETA's comments on the proposals of the Bill

1. This Bill seeks to phase out mulesing, a barbaric procedure in which lambs' legs are restrained and chunks of flesh are cut from their backside, sometimes without any pain relief.

This mutilation is extremely painful for lambs, causing them to experience elevated blood cortisol and β -endorphin concentrations for two days.¹ The bloody wounds it creates can take up to seven weeks to heal.²

Sheep have good memories and have been known to avoid the individual who mulesed them, which is why most mulesing is done by contractors rather than their regular handlers.³

2. Australia is the only country in the world that cuts the backsides off sheep, as New Zealand made the practice illegal in 2018.⁴ Many producers have long used other methods, such as breeding for bare breech. Meanwhile, governments are not the only force for change in the industry. Many fashion labels – including H&M, adidas, HUGO BOSS,⁵ Country Road, and David Jones⁶ – have already banned or are in the process of banning wool from sheep who've been mulesed. Clearly, this legislation is necessary in order to keep up with international animal welfare standards and consumer demand.

¹LR Fell and DA Shutt, 'Behavioural and hormonal responses to acute surgical stress in sheep'. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, vol 22, April 1989, pp 283-294.

²RSPCA, 'What is the RSPCA's view on mulesing and flystrike prevention in sheep?' *RSPCA Knowledgebase*. April 2020, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/what-is-the-rspcas-view-on-mulesing-and-flystrike-prevention-in-sheep/>

³Fell and Shutt.

⁴T Sim, 'New Zealand to ban mulesing as Australian option is commercialised', *Sheep Central*. September 2018, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://www.sheepcentral.com/new-zealand-to-ban-mulesing-as-alternative-enters-commercialisation/>

⁵J Sneddon, 'How the wool industry has undercut itself on mulesing', *The Conversation*. May 2011, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://theconversation.com/how-the-wool-industry-has-undercut-itself-on-mulesing-956>

⁶T Lee, 'Wool growers turn to freezing as retailers go cold on controversial mulesing', *ABC Landline*. August 2019, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-01/freezing-alternative-to-mulesing-winning-over-wool-growers/11465632>

3. PETA also supports the Bill's inclusion of the administration of pain relief as a necessary element of a defence to a charge of cruelty that would otherwise be brought against those inflicting ear-notching, branding, castration, dehorning, and tail-docking on animals. It's beyond dispute that animals can feel pain, so to subject them to such procedures without providing them with any pain relief is barbaric. Reducing their pain, even if only partially, really is the very least that should be done.

D. Concluding remarks

Wool producers in New South Wales have had ample time to prepare for the end of mulesing, and this Bill graciously gives them until 2022 to phase it out. It's been over 15 years since PETA US first exposed the painful practice to the world⁷ and over a decade since the Australian wool industry abandoned its promise to ban it.⁸

Mulesing is an archaic, crude tradition which has no place in modern farming. It hurts not only sheep but also Australia's international reputation on animal welfare matters. The wool industry clearly has no ability to self-regulate on this issue, since it has already missed its previous 2010 deadline to phase out mulesing. A strategy to do away with this archaic procedure must be written into law.

For these reasons, we strongly support the passage of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Restrictions on Stock Animal Procedures) Bill 2019 into law in New South Wales.

⁷C Munro, 'Blood on our wool', *The Age*. January 2005, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://www.theage.com.au/national/blood-on-our-wool-20050130-gdzgn0.html>

⁸D Gray, 'Mulesing deadline abandoned', *The Sydney Morning Herald*. July 2009, viewed on 22 July 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/mulesing-deadline-abandoned-20090727-dytm.html>