



Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee

Hearing Date: 13 March 2024

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: SunPork Group

Received Date: 26/03/2024

1. **Renee HEATH, page 39**

Question Asked to Robert Van Barneveld

Renee HEATH: Somebody mentioned that you have roughly 550,000 pigs under your care at any given time. How many out of that amount do have to be euthanised using blunt force trauma?

Edison ALVARES: I think it was Dr van Barneveld.

Robert van BARNEVELD: Yes. SunPork has 550,000 pigs under our care at any point in time, so that results in 1.1 million pigs being produced every year. Kenton Shaw may be able to give an exact number. It is a very, very low proportion of pigs that are actually produced that have to be subjected to blunt force trauma when you look at that volume. But if Kenton does not have an exact number, we can take that question on notice.

Response: ~0.1%

2. **John Berger, page 45**

Question Asked to Kate Plush

John BERGER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, everybody, for your appearance at today's hearing. My question is in relation to global best practice. I am getting a little bit confused in terms of what is the global best practice. I hear some of your submissions today that you do not do ear notching or teeth clipping. I just wonder, was that part of global best practice some time ago? If it was or if it was not, when did it cease, and why is there a difference between your operation and others?

Robert van BARNEVELD: I will start. We have certainly got others on the line that can answer this question better than I can. As I said in my opening statement, we do what we believe is in the best interests of the animal and we look at the animal's responses to ascertain that. We do not do things because we have to, and there are lots of legacy things that are in place that fit into existing standards. We do not look at them per se. We are always trying to operate above them. So the fact that we have removed teeth clipping and ear notching is because we can do that without

compromising the animal or the production system in any way. In fact we think it is a better practice, otherwise we would not do it. We did not just eliminate it. Kate, you are probably really well placed to expand on this.

Kate PLUSH: Thanks, Rob. Yes, I guess we are constantly looking to see what happens around the world with regard to animal welfare legislation, and we actually published a review in the internationally regarded, peer-reviewed scientific journal *Animal* last year that compared our use of sow confinement as well as boar confinement to the rest of the world and where we sit. If you actually go and have a look at that review, in terms of the level of confinement that we use currently, we are well under most pork producing countries. There are countries – ones that do not produce pork – that do have better standards, but that is for obvious reasons. We are more than happy to share that review and take that on notice. In terms of what we do, we are constantly benchmarking ourselves against what happens in the world, and we have undertaken these review processes as part of our standards and guidelines review process that we are hoping to push through soon.

Response: Please find attached the *Animal* review by Plush et al (2023): Towards truly stall-free pork production?