



MEDIA RELEASE

Report backs farmers facing risks from animal rights activism

A report tabled in Parliament today by the Legislative Council’s Economy and Infrastructure Committee has expressed support for Victoria’s animal agriculture industry and criticised the illegal actions of animal rights activists.

The report on the inquiry into the impact of animal rights activism on Victorian agriculture has made 15 recommendations focused on building confidence in existing animal agriculture standards, modernising the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and ensuring reports of animal cruelty are addressed appropriately.

In the report the Committee expresses concern about the level of misinformation spread by activists regarding animal agriculture practices. It considers Agriculture Victoria ideally placed to correct this misinformation, allowing Victorians to be better informed in these matters.

“Our recommendations address the problems raised with us by people across the state and will help to build public confidence in an industry that is vital to Victoria and that has high standards of animal welfare. Public confidence is a key weapon against the misinformation spread by some activists,” Committee Chair, Nazih Elasmr said.

“Those animal rights activists who are engaging in illegal behaviour must stop. They can make their point, but they must do so without harassing and frightening farmers and their families and staff,” he said.

The report has also recommended strengthening Victoria’s biosecurity laws to address the risk of animal rights activists spreading pests and diseases at agriculture businesses. It has recommended the creation of a new biosecurity offence requiring any person entering an animal agriculture business to adhere to the property’s biosecurity management plan, with those who fail to comply receiving an on-the-spot fine.

“The Committee has determined that animal rights activism poses a significant biosecurity risk to animal agriculture businesses and to our economy,” Mr Elasmr said.

“Fortunately, we have avoided an outbreak of disease linked to activists entering Victorian farms. To avoid an outbreak in the future the Committee has recommended all Victorian commercial farms and abattoirs have a biosecurity management plan in place and that visitors who fail to comply with those plans be penalised,” he said.

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Economy and Infrastructure Committee



The Committee received more than 500 written submissions and conducted seven public hearings in Melbourne and regional Victoria with 57 witnesses giving evidence. They included farmers, abattoir owners, transport operators, animal rights activists, regulators and Victoria Police.

“This inquiry gathered and considered evidence in a detailed and balanced way. This report is a clear statement to Parliament from our Committee that we must support farmers and others in the agricultural industry conducting their lawful business,” Mr Elasmr said.

The report is available on the Committee’s [website](#).

Media queries

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