

Re: Armidale Forum

We have had many discussions over the last 6 months about our union's position in relation to lack of government support and ensuring a level playing field for meat processors in AUSTRALIA. Attached is a brief statement from our organisation seeing I cannot attend in person on our position.

Our position is:

The Australian Meat Industry Employees Union has lobbied every Federal Government for the last 30 years on assurances of livestock for processing.

Both sides of politics have listened with deaf ears over this period and have ignored our concerns watching 40,000 meatworkers lose their jobs in regional Australia.

The Greens and Democrats are the only parties that have supported our position.

Some 150 meat processing plants have closed indefinitely as a consequence of increased live animal exports.

On the issue of meat imports, our organisation opposes all meat imports. The collapse of the pork processing industry over the last 10 years is a key example of this with the introduction of subsidised pork meat from overseas.

It is time for the Rudd Government to show leadership on this issue and even up the playing field for access to livestock to protect the 10s of thousands of our members and their family livelihoods in regional Australia.

The Rudd Government should also revisit it's decision to allow beef imports from BSE affected countries to protect our clean, green image internationally.

Regards,

Grant Courtney
Federal President
AMIEU

Mobile: 0417 118 945

E-mail: meatas@bigpond.net.au