

It needs to be an election issue
By KATE GAFFNEY & LAURIE BULLOCK,
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Leigh Belbeck from Bindaree Beef said the problems in the beef industry need to be made into an election issue.

"We need to see which party is going to offer the best deal to the industry heading into the federal election," she told The Inverell Times.

"Alan Jones discussed many issues, it was amazing, he had done his research on export markets and how the domestic market was being ignored," she said.

"He said if the governing body of the industry was doing the right thing we wouldn't be in Armidale, we would all be having the day off."

She said the banks are walking away from businesses like Bindaree and a development bank was needed.

"When you can't access finance you just shrivel away," Mrs Belbeck said.

"Banks are putting pressure on the agricultural industry because it's struggling.

"We've got to get the cost burden taken off the industry.

Mrs Belbeck said the domestic beef market needed attention.

"We need to focus on the domestic market and get the consumer confidence back by introducing a grading system.

"Consumers need confidence they are buying a consistent product.

"Once a grading system is in place we then need to market it and educate the consumer to increase consumption," she said.

"From here we will form a task force from right around Australia with about nine members to meet with (agriculture minister) Tony Burke and (opposition leader) Tony Abbott.

CourtesyThe Inverell Times