



Creating a compassionate world

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06 May 2013

Animal Welfare Standards Public Consultation
Locked Bag 3006
DEAKIN WEST ACT 2600

By email to: publicconscattle@animalwelfarestandards.net.au,
publicconssheep@animalwelfarestandards.net.au
CC: admin@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to appraise the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines – Cattle and Sheep (the Standards).

Animal Liberation Qld (ALQ) welcomes progress in the formulation of enforceable standards for these industries and we urge you to consider the comments and incorporate the recommendations set out herein in your review of the Standards in the expectation that the revised Standards will lead to improved welfare standards for Australian cattle and sheep, at a national level.

Overview

ALQ believes that the introduction of clear and consistent animal welfare standards for cattle and sheep provides an opportunity for real improvement to be made for the future living conditions of these animals. Improving welfare by mandating strong national standards for the treatment of cattle and sheep will help satisfy community and international expectations.

ALQ is however disappointed that the Standards are currently worded ambiguously and neglect many basic requirements that are necessary to ensure the welfare of cattle and sheep. The ambiguity of the Standards provides opportunity for avoidance of the consequences of negligent or cruel actions.

The possibility that the AAWS may at some future time mandate national competency standards for food animals should be taken into consideration during the formulation of the Standards. At the moment, there is only vague reference to “relevant training or experience” and “under direct supervision” but no mention of competency or what that might entail. This constitutes a significant weakness in these drafts.



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Critical areas for review

ALQ's major concern about the Standards relate to the obviously painful practices that will continue and a decision-making process that effectively accepts industry arguments that change is not possible or affordable. The review process to date has failed to give due regard to community and international animal welfare standards.

Critically, in their current form, the Standards do not require **food and water** to be available to animals daily, and do not require **shade or shelter** to be provided to animals at all times. These practices represent issues of increasing community and international concern and complaint.

As it is important to ensure input from animal advocacy organisations, please find attached the ALQ submission to this review.

ALQ looks forward to receiving your reply and seeing our concerns addressed in the final version of the Standards.

If any additional information or clarification is required please do not hesitate to contact us on info@alq.org.au.

Yours sincerely

Mr Chay Neal
President