



# Lynn MacLaren MLC

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Legislative Council Western Australia

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Animal Health Australia  
Suite 15  
26 – 28 Napier Close  
Deakin ACT 2600

Dear Sirs

**Re: Submission on proposed animal welfare standard for transportation of bobby calves**

As the Greens WA Member of Parliament with spokesperson responsibility in the portfolio area of Animals, I am extremely concerned that the Australian Government is considering the new “animal welfare” standard proposed by the Dairy Industry that would legalise bobby calves being deprived of liquid feed during the last 30 hours prior to slaughter.

Clause 5.11.2 of the existing Code of Practice for Cattle provides that bobby calves being transported or awaiting sale or slaughter should not be deprived of appropriate liquid feed or water for more than 10 hours. The Code is not legally enforceable and existing industry practice is that most unwanted calves are transported to saleyards at the age of about 5 days. From there they are taken to abattoirs, where they are held overnight without food or bedding to be killed the following day. They are fed prior to departure from the point of origin and are not fed again prior to slaughter.

The proposed new standard would legalise this practice provided that the time without feed did not exceed 30 hours and would replace the (unenforceable) provision in the existing Code.

Although the new standard has recently received media attention, it has not been widely publicised by Government or the industries involved and insufficient time has been allowed for public consultation.

As consumers of milk the public are key stakeholders in dairy welfare issues but are generally not well informed about those issues. They should be given adequate time to become informed and have their say about the proposed new standard. In particular a public survey should be conducted to determine whether consumers would support an increase in the cost of milk if it would alleviate the suffering of the animals involved in the process.

In a humane and ethical society, money and convenience should not be the only drivers in relation to our treatment of animals. The Greens policy on this issue is that we have a duty to minimize cruelty to animals and should legislate to protect the welfare of agricultural animals. This proposed standard is a retrograde step which we strongly oppose. I call on the Government to do the same.

Yours sincerely

Hon Lynn MacLaren MLC  
Member for South Metropolitan Region

3 February 2011

