



AgForce Queensland Industrial Union of Employers

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GM/MA/GG087

31 August 2015

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
State of California
State Capitol, Room 4164
Sacramento CA 95814
United States of America

Dear Assembly Member Gipson

Re: Agforce Queensland's Support for Continued Kangaroo Product Importation into California Support for California Assembly Bill 1188 (Gipson)

AgForce Queensland (AgForce) is the peak lobby group representing the majority of beef, sheep and wool, and grain producers in Queensland, Australia. AgForce represents around 5,000 members and exists to ensure the long term growth, viability, competitiveness and profitability of these industries. Our members provide high quality food and fibre products to Australian and overseas consumers, manage a significant proportion of Queensland's natural resources and contribute to the social fabric of rural and remote communities.

As you are aware, some years ago, Californian Legislation prohibiting the sale of kangaroo products was overturned, thus allowing the Californian market to become the largest single market for kangaroo derived leather goods in the world.

It has recently come to AgForce's attention that the above-mentioned legislation was written with a 'sunset clause' stipulating the expiry of this Legislation at the end of 2015. At that time, Californian Legislation will revert back to the pre-2009 legislative practices, therefore once again placing a ban on the importation of kangaroo product into California.

The Californian market is essential to Australia's kangaroo industry valued at approximately \$174 million¹ with 1,800 employment positions that currently exist along the supply chain.

However greater risk exists to the management of Australia's rangeland environment and ecology systems. Without the existence of a viable commercial kangaroo market in Australia, there will no longer be any economic way to sustainably manage kangaroo populations to maintain balance within the Australian environment.

As an example, over the period where California has allowed the importation of kangaroo product, the estimated population of commercially accepted kangaroo species for harvest purposes within Queensland alone has increased from 12,172,807² in 2010 to 27,159,850³ in 2014, peaking at 32,803,900⁴ in 2013.

¹ Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia (KIAA)

² Australian Government Kangaroo Population Estimates 2001 – 2011

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-trade/natives/wild-harvest/kangaroo-wallaby-statistics/kangaroo-population>

Without sustainably managing kangaroo species, population numbers are likely to increase exponentially, demonstrated by the above-mentioned figures. This has significant animal welfare implications given the variability of Australia's climatic conditions, for both the kangaroo species themselves and livestock grazed in these rangelands.

Without the commercial kangaroo industry, the viability of Australia's prime agricultural industries, worth in excess of \$20.45 billion⁵ and \$8.3 billion⁶ for Australia's beef cattle and sheep and wool industries respectively, faces significant risk of decline, subsequently leading to the decline in the number of Australian family farming businesses.

Supporting the commercial kangaroo industry means support for the welfare of kangaroo populations in Australia, enhanced sustainability of Australia's natural environment and ecology systems and the continued viability of Australia's commercial kangaroo and livestock production industries.

A managed population is a sustainable one.

AgForce urges the Californian Government to allow continued importation of kangaroo products into California.

Your favourable consideration to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely



Grant Maudsley
General President

³ Queensland Government "2015 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland" <http://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/wildlife-permits/macropods-quotas/>

⁴ Queensland Government "2014 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland" http://pan.search.qld.gov.au/s/search.html?form=simple-adv&query=2014+Quota+Submission+for+Commercially+Harvested+Macropods+in+Queensland+&num_ranks=10&tiers=off&collection=qld-gov&profile=qld

⁵ Meat & Livestock Australia "Industry Overview" information <http://www.mla.com.au/About-MLA/Cattle-sheep-goat-industries/Industry-overview>

⁶ Meat & Livestock Australia "Industry Overview" information <http://www.mla.com.au/About-MLA/Cattle-sheep-goat-industries/Industry-overview>; and National Farmers Federation <http://www.nff.org.au/commodities-wool.html>