Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper Submission

Date submitted

09/12/2014

Name of Organisation/Individual

Moon Lee

What are the top policies from the Green Paper that the Government should focus on in the White Paper and why?

Top policy that government should focus on is Research, Development and Extension (RDE) into meat analogues.

Food scientist at Beyond Meat and Hampton Creek in the US is developing a completely new model of food. It requires heat and pressure to turn plants into food that looks and taste just like meat and eggs. In the words of Amol Deshpande, CEO and founder of Farmers Business Network and serves on the Board of Directors for Beyond Meat, "this form of meat analogue will be a perfect substitute in every sensory way". Creating meat analogues from plants uses less freshwater, especially for red meat. It resolves many of the environmental problems associated with rearing livestock. It is a big tick for animal welfare and potentially a healthier option than eating real meat, as the harmful animal protein and saturated fat is removed. Most importantly, meat analogue factories in the future may severely harm our livestock exports and our Australian agriculture industry. Currently, investment into meat analogues is being funded by the likes of Microsoft founder, Bill Gates. Click here for more information: http://beyondmeat.com/beyond-meat-the-bill-gates-backed-company-thats-reinventing-meat/ and http://www.gatesnotes.com/About-Bill-Gates/Future-of-Food . Australia needs to keep up with this technology to remain competitive.

Meat analogues when perfected and mass produced are a real threat to the Australian meat and live export industry. It will undermine one of the five pillars of the economy. The Ministry for Agriculture should consider this threat and address this in the Green Paper. It's not a question of if, but when.

With the threat of climate change, decreasing rainfall and scarcity of freshwater and more frequent and severe drought, it will cost more to produce meat from livestock. It is soon to be an out dated, uncompetitive, highly inefficient and increasingly controversial method of food production. A new, efficient, humane, competitive and lucrative method needs to be considered. The Australian agricultural policy key objective will be achieved if it invests RDE into producing and perfecting meat analogues.

Australian farmers will stand to win. The only difference is the product line will change.

What policies from the Green Paper don't you support and why?

Policies that I do not support are:

-        Australian Government handing over responsibility for the delivery of animal welfare to the States and Territories. The Federal Government should use its Constitutional powers to legislate for positive law reform to animal welfare. All forms of intensive factory farming should be abolished. There is a growing demand for ethically derived produce by Australian consumers.

-        Australian government advocating for tougher laws to be adopted by States and Territories against animal activist. Surveillance footage has exposed animal cruelty practices in the past where individuals and corporations have been prosecuted and charged for breaching animal protection laws. With growing demand for ethically derived produce, Australian consumers would like to have confidence in a system that exposes animal cruelty in food production.

General Comment