

Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper – Submission IP34
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With the rise of social networking sites such as facebook and Twitter, etc, I believe there needs to be a suite of safeguards designed to protect primary industry from the increasing risk of metropolitan based environmental, animal activist, and animal rights groups curbing the rights of legitimate primary producers. The agricultural sector needs to be protected from idealist groups who, through the increasing power of social media, vilify primary producers and their end product. As has been seen in the recent past, the collective power of such groups can lead to premature and indecisive action where political pressure is exerted heavily. Such incidents are illustrated by the temporary ban on exporting livestock from Australia in 2011.

Ideally the scope of such safeguards would include focus on the relationships between lobby groups and supermarket chains where collaboration against various primary industries has become common place. There is a considerable risk that market evolution at the influence of metropolitan lobby groups may be forced beyond the reach and chronological ability of industry to conform. Such risk may see the rise of premature demand for imported commodities, irrational political pressure placed on government bodies (such as the 2011 live export ban), and the irrationally designed evolution of otherwise productive and legitimate industries and commodities.

While it is not in the best interest of industry to protect the maintenance of dated and unethical procedures, it must be the prerogative of industry itself to make that determination.