

**Wednesday 18 October 2017**

## **AUSTRALIA IS A RED MEAT NATION: INAUGURAL INDUSTRY REPORT**

Australia is the leading supplier of red meat to the world and Australians eat more red meat than anyone else according to a report being released today.

The Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC) today released *State of the Industry 2017*, the first-ever snapshot of the value of red meat industry to the Australian economy and community.

In 2016 Australia was the largest exporter of beef and the second largest exporter of sheepmeat; and the world's third largest livestock exporter.

Not only does Australia lead the world in selling meat, Australians are some of the highest consumers of red meat in the world, eating four times the average amount of beef and six times the amount of sheep meat compared to the global average.

RMAC Independent Chair, Don Mackay, said the *State of the Industry 2017* demonstrates for the first time the key part red meat plays in the Australian economic success story, from our plates, to our jobs and our businesses.

"No industry has a more important place in society than an industry that feeds its people and sustains and improves their way of life."

"We have achieved turnover growth of 11 percent, contributed \$18 billion to Australian GDP, sustain 405,000 direct and indirect jobs and feed 24 million Australians day in and day out," Mr Mackay said.

"Our industry continues to work for our rural and regional jobs, accounting for almost a quarter of agrifood jobs in Australia."

The report shows the value of Australian red meat and livestock exports increased by almost \$6b over the past five years from \$9.2b in 2011-12 to \$15.1b in 2015-16.

It also showed that a once niche industry in goat meat has experienced a significant boom with Australia now a leading supplier of global goat meat, enjoying a recent price increase of 177 per cent and exporting over 27, 000 tonnes of goat in 2016 alone.

Mr Mackay said the *State of the Industry 2017* demonstrated the need for government to show leadership in food and farming policy.

"Our industry's success is Australia's success. As an industry, we are responsible for far too many Australian businesses and Australian jobs for government to be cavalier about our industry."

Mr Mackay said inaction and conflict with government in the red meat sector was costing the Australian economy money and jobs.

"We've seen recent examples of the Australian red meat industry being damaged by attacks from crusading politicians who are more interested in making a name for themselves than protecting Australian jobs."

"The reality is despite an incredibly challenging environment out there, we've seen a five percent growth in businesses across the chain, there are more processing businesses now than four years ago and we've seen a 48 percent rise in saleyard prices."

“We know the key, tangible outcomes that government can deliver that help us be a bigger and better red meat nation for businesses and workers alike.”

According to Mr Mackay getting trade and infrastructure right is critical in order to become an attractive place for global and Australian investors into the industry.

“To attract much needed capital investment into our market we need urgent reform into our policy settings. We must tactically reduce our 3-billion-dollar technical trade barrier bill, optimise our supply chains which will add \$750 million and up to 4, 000 jobs to our bottom line and make all agricultural policy with a commercial and agribusiness focus.”

Glenn Carmody, Consumer and Industrial Products Market Segment Leader, EY said that the report demonstrates the significance of the industry within the Australian economy.

“The red meat and livestock industry is a key contributor to the nation’s employment, noting a large number of jobs are in rural and regional areas.”

Mr Carmody highlighted the strong performance of the industry in recent years, with increases in turnover, value add and employment and high livestock prices.

“The report also demonstrates the industry’s significance within the global marketplace – in 2015 Australia was the world’s largest exporter of beef, and second largest exporter of sheep meat.”

“The most recent data in relation to goat meat shows that in 2013, Australia was the largest goat meat exporter,” said Mr Carmody.

The State of the Industry 2017 was commissioned by Meat & Livestock Australia at the request of RMAC and our member councils; and compiled by Ernst & Young (EY). The full report is available at: <http://rmac.com.au/state-industry-2017/>

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