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To whom it may concern.

Submission to the Productivity Commission: Safeguards Inquiry into the Import of Pigmeat.

We are a farming family at Koorawatha in central west NSW. Our farming business on 1012 hectares consists of sheep, cropping and a 200 sow piggery. Approximately half our income is derived from the piggery. We have run a successful piggery for the last 30 years but the current situation is untenable. The effect of imports on pig prices, combined with the devastating drought has created a situation where we are unsure if we can continue in pig farming which will affect the future viability of the farm. Already because of drought we have lost one labour (a 25 year old son) unit which creates a heavy burden on we 58 year olds. There will be no young people on farms in the near future.

Following the latest debacle with the quarantine breakdown with shuttle stallions and equine influenza entering the country so easily, I am concerned at the risk that the importation of Pigmeat poses to Australia's disease free status. If these diseases entered this country the losses both in pig deaths and dollars would be huge. We would also lose access to our export markets in Singapore and New Zealand. The E.I. outbreak shows that the quarantine rules here are a joke. What if it was foot and mouth not E.I?

In this area alone there was about 25 piggeries averaging 150 sows. Most of these have closed or are contemplating closure. This will have a huge impact on small villages where locals rely on farming businesses such as piggeries for their employment. Most of these piggeries would have employed 2 to 3 people. There is not alternate employment in small rural villages.

Normally in the November, December period pig prices are in the vicinity of \$2.80-\$3.00 per kg due to higher demand over the Christmas period. This year prices are only \$2.40 because processors freezers are full of imported subsidised product. Normally our cost of production is around \$2.20 per kg but with the inflated grain prices as a result of drought it is now \$3.00 - \$3.20 per kg. The effect of imports on pig prices is such that the pig price and the cost of production are completely disjointed. We do not receive pig meat prices that reflect our cost of production.

If politicians jeopardize our income to support Bush and his cronies with free trade agreements I think all farmers should unite to import cheap subsidized politicians. This way politicians would be more in the real world when their pay was slashed by 50% or more!!!!!!

We urge you to introduce safeguards to protect our industry while it still survives.

Yours sincerely



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