

## **COROWA SHIRE COUNCIL**

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REFERENCE: BJC:MTH - 160 & 194 2004/1265  
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30 September 2004

Australian Pigmeat Industry Inquiry  
Productivity Commission LB 2 Collins Street East  
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

Dear Sir

Corowa Shire Council thanks you for the opportunity to make the following comments in respect to the Australian Pigmeat Industry Inquiry being undertaken by Commissioner Dr Neil Byron.

Corowa Shire is the location of QAF, one of the largest piggery developments in the Southern Hemisphere.

To this end Council is most concerned at the Biosecurity Australia Australia's new quarantine regime for the importation of pigmeat into Australia and the impacts that this will have on the Australian pig industry.

For many years Australia has had rigid quarantine systems to protect against foreign plant and animal diseases being imported into Australia.

The Biosecurity Australia's recent decision to relax quarantine regulations to allow imported pigmeat into Australia has the high probability of introducing exotic pig diseases into Australia.

The decision means that within 10 years there is a 95 - 99% likelihood Australia's pig herd will be devastated by such diseases as Post Weaning Multisystemic Wasting Syndrome (PMWS) and Australia's superior health status will be gone forever.

This disease has cost the pig industry in Europe \$A1.5 billion and killed 8 million pigs. In the United States, PMWS cost the pig industry \$US600 million per year.

The decision by Biosecurity Australia appears to be made under the pressure of the Free Trade Agreement at the expense of quarantine issues. There is no way the Australian Pork Industry can absorb the costs of a PMWS outbreak which would see an estimated 15% cost resulting in a \$55.3 million loss in productivity and a \$189 million fall in gross domestic produce annually.

Council believes the decisions of Biosecurity Australia provides a huge threat to the Australian pigmeat industry and requests that you take Council's comments into consideration as part of the Australian Pigmeat Industry Inquiry.

Yours faithfully

BJ CORCORAN

**GENERAL MANAGER**