

9<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Quarantine and Biosecurity Reviews,  
G.P.O. Box 858  
Canberra A.C.T. 2601

My name is John Anthony Parkin, Farmer of  
"Oakbank" Bungaree Vic 3352.

As a farmer I believe quarantine is an essential  
tool in the continued viability of our operation.

As regards to this I congratulate the Minister on  
instituting this inquiry.

Australia has a very real advantage in  
preserving the health of our plant and animal industries  
as we are an island continent surrounded by sea,  
without any land borders with our country. The  
only way disease or undesirable species can get in  
is if we allow them to.

For this reason I disagree with the terms of reference  
that our protection be of very low but not zero risk.  
Why? The risk of our quarantine being breached by a  
tourist bringing in one contaminated item, which can  
be contained by our border quarantine officials, compared  
to container loads of contaminated produce. Australia  
can have zero risk from at-risk plant and animal  
imports by banning such imports.

To say we cannot expect other nations to buy our  
exports if we do not buy their imports is false. The  
World Trade Organisation specifies that quarantine is  
not a trade issue; a country can exercise as high or as  
low a quarantine regime as it chooses.

Conversely Australia has a better and safer

export opportunities, if our importing nations see us as a safe source of such imports e.g. the success of our "lean green" selling point. The only countries, which will discriminate against us will be those, who have the pests and diseases we do not have.

The recent Equine influenza scare was a real "wake-up" call. We were indeed fortunate that it was not a more serious disease, such as foot and mouth etc, which could have devastated our livestock industry and really destroyed our export industries.

It is to be hoped that this inquiry will bring in the strictest protocol with meaningful penalties for any breaches. The welfare of our industries and country demand nothing less.

Yours sincerely  
John Parkin

P.S. I wish to reserve the right to appear at any public hearing

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