

Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

הוועד הפועל של
יהודי אוסטרליה

The Representative Organisation of Australian Jewry

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31 October 2011

Senator the Hon Joseph Ludwig
Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: joe.ludwig@maff.gov.au

Dear Minister

Both personally and on behalf of the Australian Jewish community I write to thank you and your State Ministerial colleagues for your wise decision at the Primary Industries Ministerial Council last Friday to maintain the current legality of kosher religious slaughter of livestock (*shechita*) in Australia and to continue discussions with religious communities in order to settle an applicable risk management framework.

No expert contests the proposition that *shechita* is a humane method of slaughter. We have all been appalled by the horrific scenes of cruelty to animals in other countries on our television screens but this has absolutely nothing to do with *shechita*. Animal slaughter in Australia, including kosher slaughter, is closely monitored and regulated, and the standards of *shechita* itself, which forbid the mistreatment of the animal in any way, are very exacting. We are always happy to discuss with your scientific officers whether advances in science and technology make it possible to improve existing methods without violating Jewish religious law.

Kosher slaughter has always been legally permitted in Australia and the introduction of any prohibition of what has been a lawful practice for over 200 years should not be countenanced in the absence of the most compelling and incontestable of reasons. It was gratifying that the members of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council share our view that no such reasons exist.

Yours sincerely

Dr Danny Lamm
President