

..... looking after the welfare of **Animals**

Animals are sentient beings, deserving of respect and protection from inhumane treatment. They have a worth beyond their usefulness to humans. We should not allow base instincts or material gain to dictate our treatment of them. Yet governments turn a blind eye to so much obvious cruelty, and in some cases even encourage it.

Around the country, animal cruelty cases are prosecuted by the RSPCA rather than the Police. It is inappropriate to have a charity undertaking police work, particularly when they are up against large corporate interests which can hire large teams of lawyers to defeat the cases.

Exporting of live animals for slaughter in other countries results in suffering and death in transport, and lack of control of their welfare when they arrive in the country of destination.

Polls show that over 90% of the public support the removal of battery hens from cages, yet this practice is allowed to continue. The Australian Democrats want to see the end of cruel practices in farming and we believe consumers should be assisted in making informed choices via labels which identifies the method of production.

The connection between animal abuse and violence against humans is well documented, and if we can avert cruelty to animals it is clear that we will have a more humane society in general.

## Our Plan

- Work towards a **UN Declaration on Animal Welfare**
- Halt **live animal exports**. Instead, abattoirs in Australia should have the facilities to allow animals to be killed as humanely as possible to suit halal or kosher standards, frozen and then exported. This would still allow farmers to make a living, would provide the meat that is wanted by middle-eastern countries, and would value-add in Australia with the creation of jobs
- A national **food labelling** system which identifies the production system for animal-derived food and provides mandatory standards for the labeling of vegetarian and vegan suitable products
- Long term national planning for animal **population control** and support non-lethal options such as relocation and sterilisation of the animals concerned wherever possible, with strictly limited, environmentally sensitive and humane culling a last resort
- Establish a national database on **animal experimentation**
- Support alternatives to animal use in scientific and educational **research and experimentation**
- Improve and increase frequency of monitoring and review of all organisations and facilities using animals for research and experimentation