

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Sheep and Goat industries disappointed by inconsistent approach to national traceability**

The Australian sheep and goat industries are extremely disappointed with the Victorian Government's announcement that it will require all sheep and goats born in Victoria after 1 January 2017 to have an electronic ear tag.

Sheepmeat Council of Australia President Jeff Murray stated: "As national representative bodies, we reiterate the importance of a nationally consistent and effective traceability system. Our current system is world leading and one that is simple, effective and suitable for Australian production and conditions. What is particularly disappointing is the fact that this decision will have national ramifications, yet little or no national consultation has taken place."

Mr Richard Halliday, President of Woolproducers added "Victoria having one system while neighbouring states operate under another is neither practical nor advantageous in any regard and sends a poor message to our trading partners. While the Victorian government has indicated it will initially subsidise the cost of implementing the system, ultimately the cost of infrastructure upgrades and the cost of tags in the long term will be passed to producers."

"As an industry we always welcome improvements to our traceability systems and we constantly examine how we can improve. In no way are our organisations opposed to the use of electronic identification if it is appropriate for their businesses. However, we must have a system that is appropriate for all sheep and goat productions systems across the country." said Goat Industry Council of Australia President Rick Gates.

SCA President Jeff Murray concluded by stating, "Industry and all jurisdictions that partner to administer this system must now urgently convene to consider the practical implications of this decision nationally. We commit to engage in the Victorian Government's consultation process and work towards ensuring the best possible outcome for sheep and goat producers."

ENDS

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