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PGA labels Fitzgibbon's live sheep comments as "irresponsible"

West Australian sheep meat producers have labelled comments from Labor Shadow Federal Agriculture Minister Joel Fitzgibbon's recent comments in the Northern Territory on the live sheep trade as reckless and irresponsible.

Pastoralists & Graziers' Association President Tony Seabrook said that Mr Fitzgibbon's claim that unlike cattle exports, the live sheep trade "relies upon a model which I think is fundamentally broken" shows that Labor have no understanding of the importance of the live export trade to the WA regional economy.

"It is clear that the Labor Party have little, if no understanding of the value of the live export industry to regional Australia, let alone of the ESCAS regime they brought in following their reckless decision to suspend live cattle exports to Indonesia in 2011," Mr Seabrook said.

"Live exports, regardless whether it is sheep, cattle, goats, or camels rely on the same regulatory model, and for the Shadow Federal Agricultural Minister to imply that sheep exports are 'broken' is just plain ridiculous.

"Thousands of animals are exported from Australia each year, legally, without incident, and to imply otherwise is a slap in the face to all producers, regardless of what animal they raise.

"It is time for Mr Fitzgibbon and Labor to stop trying to secure inner city votes to the detriment of regional families." said Mr Seabrook.

(ends)...

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