

## Tony Piccolo MP

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### **Back Our Australian Farmers Coles Supermarkets, says SA Parliament**

**The South Australian Labor Government and the Liberal Opposition joined forces in the House of Assembly yesterday [Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October] to send a strong message to Coles Supermarkets to work alongside the Australian Pork Industry in its campaign to improve animal welfare.**

In a strong show of solidarity for South Australian farmers members of the Labor and Liberal parties voted to call on Coles Supermarkets “to support rural and regional communities by investing in research that will improve animal husbandry practices and the productivity of the animal related industries”.

The motion by Labor Member for Light Tony Piccolo MP and seconded by the Liberal Member for Hammond Mr Adrian Pederick MP called on Coles supermarkets to “apply the same welfare standard to all its pork products and not just Australian grown pork”.

During the debate Coles Supermarkets came under strong attack for their unilateral decision to stop purchasing Australian pork from producers who do not phase out gestation stalls by 2014.

Mr Piccolo said on the face of it the decision appeared to be more of a marketing ploy than a real concern for animal welfare.

“Coles' claim that this is about animal welfare is just nonsense,” said Mr Piccolo.

“What we could end up with is a decimated industry, where we end up importing all our pork products, with no net benefit to animal welfare across the globe.”

“It would be a tragedy if a country such as ours, which has so many resources and is able to feed its own people, ends up importing food,” Mr Piccolo stressed.

“What this motion seeks to do is to ensure that we have a level playing field in this industry,” he said.

Mr Pederick told Parliament “while Coles claim that animal welfare is the driver of this decision, it appears more commercial than altruistic.”

He went on to say “the move is seen by many as an attempt to catch up to Woollies, which grabbed a niche market share months before with a similar demand on some growers.”

“ If Coles were truly concerned about animal welfare it would acknowledge that all pork-based smallgoods are made from fresh pork wherever it is grown, whether it is pigs from Denmark, USA or Canada (from where almost all our pork imports emanate), and should be entitled to the same consideration, “said Mr Pederick.

“Coles should apply the same demands on processed pork imports. It would certainly be ironic if we had to finish up trying to import fresh pork from countries using sow stalls.”

Mr Pederick stated that it is interesting to note that in April 2007 the Primary Industries Ministerial Council endorsed a revised Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals—Pigs, which was developed by a panel of experts including industry, government, animal welfare groups and the RSPCA and was acceptable to all.

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