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AACO boss criticises MLA and LiveCorp over animal welfare

Story Added : 10th June 2011

Updated: 1 minute ago

The head of Australia's biggest cattle company says he wants animal welfare problems in Indonesian abattoirs fixed as quickly as possible.

CEO of the Australian Agricultural Company, David Farley, says he's more concerned about fixing the problems quickly, than he is about the economic impact on his company a result of Australia's ban on live cattle to Indonesia.

"This is not about commerce or logistics, it's about addressing animal welfare problems in Indonesia."

Shares in AACo dropped 4 cents to \$1.42 in the hours before the ban was announced, another two cents after a trading halt was lifted yesterday, and recovered slightly overnight.

"We've dropped our forecast earnings from \$60-65 million EBIT to \$50-60 million," Mr Farley said.

But he denies the company's long-term profits will be slashed if the ban drags on.

"Live cattle are an important part of our business, accounting for a third of our revenue, but our other businesses are good and profitable as well."

Mr Farley says the performance of industry bodies like Meat and Livestock Australia and LiveCorp has been "found wanting" on the animal welfare issue.

"Lyn White and RSPCA arrive in these countries on very low budgets, film, and put our industry in disgrace in every living room across Australia. We need to sit back and reflect where have our dollars be spent, why have they been spent this way and why have we been caught embarrassed?"

"I've heard what Don Heatley (MLA chairman) has said on radio and TV, but I still have imprinted in my mind what I saw on the Four Corners program and it's not acceptable.

"The problem was exposed through the inadequacies of our representative bodies".

Mr Farley maintains AAco was unaware its cattle were being mistreated and tortured in Indonesian slaughterhouses.

"No, that was news to us; that was horrific and barbaric. We've watched out cattle go through many other abattoirs in Indonesia and been quite happy with them."



Story Added by ABC.
Date Added : 10th June 2011

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