



## Support Red Meat Australia, I Think Not?

A new Nuffield research report into farmer advocacy body membership engagement has put the spotlight on how different agriculture groups, around the world, are structured and represented in order to advance the interests of farmers on the political, social and economic stage.

The Nuffield report states that rural advocacy bodies really only work if their directors are elected by farmers and those directors physically engage with their grassroots members. The Nuffield report also found that successful advocacy farmer bodies were those that provided for grassroots members to set policy and objective performance and value targets.

It appears there are many ways that producers can be represented. It would seem that the more members there are, and the more that the members are engaged with their Peak Industry Council, the more influential any Peak Industry Council can be.

Australia's State Farmer Organisations (SFO's) and Peak Industry Councils have been losing members for years, and at least in the case of the cattle producer, Cattle Council of Australia and their own consultants have concluded, that they no longer truly represent Australia's grass-fed cattle producers.

The whole red meat industry has now accepted that its organisational structures are no longer delivering for them. Consequently, Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC) commissioned a Red Meat MoU Review, that has published a White Paper calling for a new overarching structure to take over the whole red meat industry, through a rebadged, renamed organisation to replace RMAC and will call itself, Red Meat Australia.

A monolithic body, with an appointed board that will receive control and direct all the red meat industry levies, from each sector.

The SFO base and other red meat Peak Industry Councils, will each get to appoint a board member to Red Meat Australia, and a selection committee will be appointed, to select three director boffins and a boffin chair to also serve on the RMA board.

Not exactly a structure with a board elected by farmers, or a structure where grassroots members set the policy objectives, performance and value targets.

Will Australia's grassroots farmers support the proposed new monolithic Red Meat Australia? I think not!

More particularly, I hope not, because otherwise the reformed red meat industry organisational structures, will be even more dysfunctional than the current outdated structures.

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