



## **Statement on Senate Inquiry into Definitions of Meat and Other Animal Products**

The Alternative Proteins Council (APC) looks forward to working with the Commonwealth Government and industry stakeholders on the Senate Inquiry into *Definitions of Meat and Other Animal Products*.

To ensure it is fair and evidence-based, the Inquiry must avoid mischaracterising this matter as “conventional proteins versus new proteins”, as this suggests that new protein industries will grow at the expense of more conventional industries.

The success of both industries will be necessary to meet the clear challenge ahead: to feed a world of 10 billion people by 2050 with finite resources.

There is overwhelming evidence to show that the diversification of global protein supply is necessary and inevitable to meet rising protein demands, according to the world’s top food systems, sustainability and economic development authorities.<sup>1</sup> This opens up new opportunities for the thousands of Australian farmers and regional communities who stand to benefit from the growth of the plant-based protein sector.

Cropping accounts for more than half (53.2%) of the value of Australia’s agricultural production<sup>2</sup> – or \$35B – which new protein industries will help grow.

Rising investment in plant proteins also generates opportunities for legume and grain growers, as well as those farmers with mixed livestock and cropping operations. These investments are already bringing jobs to regional Australia but our nation has yet to harness the full potential of these industries.<sup>3,4</sup>

Globally, demand for meat is projected to rise 73% by 2050,<sup>5</sup> driven largely by the Asia Pacific region, the key destination for Australia’s premium agri-food products. In markets like China and Thailand, demand for plant-based meat products is also projected to rise 200% by 2025.<sup>6</sup>

As a net exporter, Australia can capitalise on growth in both sectors as populations, prosperity and protein consumption in our region continue to rise.

### **Plant-based product labelling**

The APC is yet to see any evidence which justifies the broad concerns regarding plant-based product labelling and looks forward to presenting the Inquiry with evidence to the contrary.

We agree with the Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation that the current regulations for labelling via the Food Standards Code and Australian Consumer Law are fit-for-purpose. Companies producing plant-based alternatives use terms like ‘sausages’ to describe their product’s format and utility, along with clear

qualifiers like 'plant-based' to clearly communicate its ingredients; it's a common-sense and evidence-based approach.

Plant-based product branding continues to meet labelling requirements, demonstrating that existing frameworks are serving consumers as intended. To restrict the use of commonly understood format terms on plant-based products would instead generate confusion amongst consumers.

The Inquiry suggests it also intends to review the health implications of consuming plant-based products, including additives. Prior evidence-based nutritional analysis of nearly 100 products in the category, when compared like-for-like with the conventional meat sausages, burgers and bacon to which they are an alternative, has demonstrated plant-based meat products are on average nutritionally comparable or superior. Many of the common food additives used in plant-based products are the exact same additives used to create conventional processed meat products.

### ***New protein industries are essential to reach our \$100B Ag2030 goal***

The APC believes that there is an urgent need for a national discussion on how the Australian agri-food sector can collectively seize the opportunity presented by new protein sectors.

Australia, as a food exporting powerhouse, can and should leverage existing trade channels and the strength of our premium brand to increase the overall volume and value of our protein exports with new protein categories.

Plant-based meat products alone are projected to generate nearly \$3B in domestic consumer sales by 2030 and 6000 full-time jobs, contributing to the government's industry-led goal of achieving a \$100B food and fibre sector by 2030.

It's time to have an evidence-based conversation about the opportunity emerging protein sectors present to Australian farmers, and the important choice the category presents for consumers.

The APC will provide the Senate Inquiry with the suite of growing evidence for the value of new protein industries to Australia's agri-food sector and economy to inform the Committee's deliberations.

#### About The Alternative Proteins Council

The Alternative Proteins Council (APC), founded in March 2021, is the representative group for Australia's alternative proteins sector. The APC provides a collective voice for the sector, and a platform to discuss shared issues and opportunities. The council works to ensure the voice of the sector remains unified and impactful on key issues. The APC engages at a national level on policy issues, enabling the sector's shared vision and continuing to serve Australians who enjoy alternative protein products.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Food and Agriculture Organization - World Livestock 2011: Livestock in food security (2011); Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - Special Report: Climate Change and Land; Chapter Five: Food Security (2019); Oxford Martin School - Analysis and valuation of the health and climate change cobenefits of dietary change (2016); World Economic Forum - Meat: The Future A Roadmap for Delivering 21st-Century Protein (2019)

<sup>2</sup> ABARES Forecast 2020-21: Agricultural commodities: March quarter 2021 - Commodities.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/agricultural-outlook/data#agricultural-commodities>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.graincentral.com/news/bunge-buys-into-australian-plant-proteins/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://which-50.com/v2food-confirms-20m-wodonga-factory-investment/>

<sup>5</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. World Livestock 2011 - Livestock in food security. [Internet] Rome: FAO. 2011 Dec [cited 14 Mar 2021]. Available from: <http://www.fao.org/3/i2373e/i2373e00.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Plant-based meat alternatives set to thrive in the next five years [Internet]. UK: DuPont Nutrition & Biosciences; 2020 Dec 16 [cited 2021 Feb 18]. Available from: <https://www.dupontnutritionandbiosciences.com/news/plant-based-meat-alternatives-set-to-thrive-in-the-next-fiveyears.html>