



The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP  
Treasurer of Australia  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

18 March 2020

Dear Mr Frydenberg,

Hello from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). I hope this letter finds you well. As the government plans to direct the budget surplus towards efforts to combat the economic impact of the novel coronavirus and ease the pressure on our health-care system, I'm writing to urge you again to consider introducing a meat tax. This move would encourage Australians to reduce their meat consumption, lightening the health-care burden by reducing the incidence of preventable diseases such as heart disease and cancer.

The [World Health Organization](#) has classified the consumption of processed meat as "carcinogenic to humans", meaning that, just like smoking cigarettes, eating bacon, ham, or sausages is incontrovertibly harmful to human health. Cancer Council Australia has stated that consuming just 700 grams of red meat per week carries an increased risk for colorectal cancer – the third leading cause of death in Australians aged 45 to 64.

A study published last month concluded that eating two servings of red meat, processed meat, or poultry per week was linked to a 3% to 7% higher risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease. Heart disease is our nation's number one killer, but it needn't be. A review published in the journal *Progress in Cardiovascular Disease* found that a plant-based diet reduced the risk of death from cardiovascular disease by 40% and partially or fully unblocked arteries in up to 91% of patients.

And of course, animals raised for their flesh suffer immensely, so I'm sure you'll agree that any step that reduces this harm is a positive one. From protecting our health to limiting the effects of climate change and ending the horrific slaughter of over half a billion sentient beings each year, Australia needs to end its love affair with meat.

As the coronavirus pandemic – ironically, born out of humankind's obsession with eating animals – turns the government's focus to the economy and health care, it's simply logical to introduce a meat tax.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Rice  
PETA Australia

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