

Tiger Brands



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MEDIA STATEMENT: TIGER BRANDS RESPONDS TO CRIMINAL CHARGE LAID AGAINST PORK PACKERS BY NSPCA

Tiger Brands confirms that the NSPCA has laid a criminal charge against Pork Packers for allegedly operating “an inhumane facility”.

While Pork Packers understands the role that NSPCA plays, the NSPCA is not the regulatory authority for meat products and its demands of the company, and criminal charge laid against Pork Packers, are neither valid, rational nor in the interest of the animals.

Tiger Brands’ CO2 stunning process and slaughtering protocol are approved and authorised by the relevant regulatory bodies.

The regulatory body in this regard is DAFF and Pork Packers has confirmed with the Ministry that its method is current best practice. It was also confirmed in recent meetings that Pork Packers is complying with all protocols.

According to Andrew Cocks, Managing Executive responsible for Pork Packers “we believe that it is necessary to employ measures to avoid pain and minimise the distress and suffering of animals during the slaughtering process. In so doing, we take into account the best practices in the field and the methods permitted under the regulations.”

The NSPCA at first requested Pork Packers to use Argon gas (referencing a report by Dr B Marock), which would be an international first, and in spite of the fact that it is well known that Argon gas does not render animals insensible enough for long enough to complete the slaughtering process. Use of it in stunning would mean reverting to dealing with the animals individually, something

TIGER BRANDS LIMITED Registration No. 1944/017881/06

Directors

Non Executive: A C Parker (Chairman), B L Sibiya (Deputy Chairman), M O Ajukwu, S L Botha, M J Bowman, M P Nyama, M Makanjee, K D K Mokhele, R D Nisbet, Y G H Suleman

Executive: N P Doyle (Acting Chief Executive Officer), O Ighodaro (Chief Financial Officer), C F H Vaux

Company Secretary: T Naidoo

which causes stress and anxiety to the pigs. In researching Argon as an alternative, it has been found that there are significant negative health and safety risks to humans and hence there has been no commercially viable Argon solutions developed to date.

Internationally, the two most common methods for commercial pre-slaughter stunning of pigs are electrical stunning and CO2 anaesthetisation. While the industry acknowledges that all methods cause stress, the use of CO2 anaesthetisation offers the least stress in the slaughter process. This method provides less stress for the pigs and is preferred by animal welfare specialists globally. Further, is used by over 800 authorised abattoirs internationally. To date, worldwide, numerous tests and comprehensive research have been conducted, but no alternatives to this method are currently commercially available.

The company's abattoir is regularly audited by the Department of Agriculture and has receiving top ratings for the operation. Pork Packers has three independent part-time vets who visit the site daily to check on the procedure.

"Pork Packers has engaged constructively over many years and co-operated with a number of animal welfare agencies and the Department of Agriculture. Pork Packers interacted with the NSPCA with regard to its use of CO2. In fact, this method was given the full support of the Department of Agriculture and NSPCA as being reflective of international best practice when it was introduced six years ago" says Cocks. "An audit by the Livestock Animal Welfare Association in 2014 approved the process and was complimentary on the "all round high standard being maintained at the premises".

The company has requested the national DAFF to facilitate a workshop which includes all industry players, DAFF Gauteng and NSPCA to discuss the issues and a way forward.

ENDS

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