

Commercial Egg Producers' Association of Victoria

CENTRAL COUNCIL

BRANCHES:—
BENDIGO
SOUTH BENDIGO
BALLARAT
WEDDERBURN
MURRABIT
EUROA

Telephone: 054395316

Postal Address:
Strathfieldsaye Road,
STRATHFIELDSAYE. 3551

24th June, 1986.

Mr. John Cain, M.P.,
Premier of Victoria,
Parliament House,
Spring Street,
MELBOURNE. 3000

Dear Mr. Cain,

I am writing to you as a result of a conversation between yourself and Mr. Ron Robins, President of the Commercial Egg Producers Association of Victoria at The All Seasons Motor Inn, when you visited Bendigo on the 19th June, 1986; where you suggested this Association lodge a written submission to you.

The conversation related to a decision of the Victorian Egg Board to charge country egg producers cartage on eggs after they have been delivered to Egg Board Depots and Grading Floors to point of sale or for products at Keysborough. This charge has always been paid for by all producers and last year the charge amounted to 1.4 cents per dozen.

When the Board first came up with the proposal, the Minister for Agriculture suggested that the Board should try to take into account the special circumstances of the egg industry in the Bendigo area. The Board's reply was to phase the scheme in over 4 years instead of the original 3 years. We think this is a poor concession and would make little difference to the final cost.

Using Egg Board figures, the average number of eggs per hen is 21 dozen annually, the Mildura rate of 3.99 cents per dozen or 84 cents per hen per year. Bendigo's rate of 3.64 cents per dozen or 76.44 cents per hen per year.

A 10,000 bird egg farm in Mildura or Murrayville will have to pay \$8,400 annually. The same size farm in Bendigo will pay \$7.644 annually, while Metropolitan egg producers with Producer Agent Licenses pay nothing.

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- 2 -

Most Melbourne egg producers have Producers Agent Licenses to sell to shops and Farm Pack License to sell direct to distributors or deliver to the Board. Bendigo egg producers are not allowed these privilages.

Most Northern Victorian eggs go to the Crystal Egg Co., for grading and are delivered to larger supermarkets in Melbourne.

With the Hen Quota System we produce eggs for the Victorian market only and no matter where eggs are produced, they are required for use in this State.

This latest V.E.B. decision discriminates against country egg producers and with costs inflating and compounding, will force most country egg producers out of business. The only farmers who can survive long term are producers granted Producer Agent Licenses. We don't think the action taken by the Board is consistant with Labour Party Policy.

When Eric Kent was Minister for Agriculture he legislated to keep country hen quota in the country.

When our representatives spoke to you, you were of the opinion that nobody should be disadvantaged because of distance.

The Commercial Egg Producers Association represent egg producers from Murrayville to Euroa and Ballarat to Swan Hill.

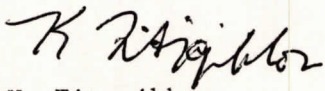
We have had a deputation to the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Evan Walker who was reluctant to interfere in Egg Board matters and two deputation to the Egg Marketing Board who are determined that country producers should pay freight. When a similar scheme was introduced into N.S.W. last year 125 egg producers left the industry.

Country producers who have no representation on the Egg Board would be most grateful if you could resolve this problem.

I am enclosing copies of correspondence for your information which you may find helpful in understanding our plight.

If you require any further information please contact me on 054395316, or Ron Robins on 054742371.

Yours sincerely,


K. Fitzgibbon,
SECRETARY