



Speech by

Hon. HENRY PALASZCZUK

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Overseas Game Meat Export Company; Carnival of Flowers

Hon. H. PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities) (10.14 a.m.): Red meat consumption in Australia has almost halved over the last 20 years, with growing sales of pork and chicken over that time. While export restrictions apply in many of our major beef markets, such as the US and Japan, overseas demand for Australian red meat continues to grow. As a government we have worked hard with industry to increase those export sales and open up new opportunities for our producers. However, like industry, we recognise the importance of strong domestic support for our produce.

Therefore, I am very pleased to be able to invite members to attend a barbecue on the Speaker's Green with a distinct Australian flavour. The barbecue will be supplied by the Overseas Game Meat Export Company of Nerang and kangaroo meat will be served. I can also confirm that Australian tennis champion Pat Cash will be attending this barbecue in his capacity as a supporter of the Australian Foundation for Health, Nutrition and Environment. The Overseas Game Meat Export Company was awarded the Queensland government's Regional Exporter of the Year Award in 2002.

OGME is a father and son venture that processes and exports kangaroo meat, wild boar meat and bush tucker herbs and spices from a modern processing facility at Nerang. The company's directors, James Harwood and son Craig, have seen their business grow from four to 50 full-time equivalent employees over the past six years. OGME expects sales to increase as the firm expands its product lines and markets and brings a new Ipswich plant into full operation by the end of the year, creating up to 90 new jobs.

In terms of exports, Queensland's kangaroo meat sales increased from \$4.5 million in 1998-99 to more than \$10.7 million, with most sales in Russia, followed by Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium-Luxembourg and France. Kangaroo meat is lean and healthy, with less than two per cent fat. It is quality assured and a totally Australian product.

While I am on my feet, I would also like to draw all honourable members' attention to the forthcoming Carnival of Flowers in Toowoomba. I visited Toowoomba on Monday and I must say that the city looks magnificent. I had the honour of officially launching the carnival parade last year. This year, Ian Macfarlane will be doing that honour. But I will be there again this year. Once again, Toowoomba has presented itself as a picture postcard. If ever anyone needed an example of what Queensland lifestyle horticulture is all about, they would see that Toowoomba has it all. We certainly know when a city event becomes part of the must see of the Australian landscape when Macca brings his program to a city. Ian MacNamara will broadcast *Australia All Over* from Queens Park. Like thousands of others, I will be there on Sunday morning, sitting on a blanket on the grass listening to his broadcast and certainly enjoying it.