



Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**


**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Beef 2021**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.26 pm): Beef Week is just 10 days away. For those people who have not been to Beef Week, it is like the Brisbane Ekka on steroids. Beef Australia is held in Australia's beef capital of Rockhampton every three years and is the largest event of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, and I am proud that the Palaszczuk Labor government has committed \$1 million towards this event.

At the last sitting week Beef Australia Chairman, Bryce Camm, spoke highly of our government's recognition and endorsement of the beef sector and the significance it plays for the Queensland economy, particularly in jobs creation. He even made the comment that our farmers' friend, Minister Furner, should be the 'minister for beef'. I support that. He is a good guy. This funding will drive confidence in the industry and will ensure Beef Australia 2021 delivers an economic windfall to Rockhampton and Central Queensland.

COVID has made it more challenging this year. We will not see the international visitors, but I still think we will see 100,000 visitors through the gate from all around Australia, and I encourage them to come and experience this magnificent event. Beef Australia is a great way to showcase what is great about regional Queensland and once again highlight Rockhampton's international reputation as Australia's leader in the beef industry. There will be more than 5,000 cattle from over 30 breeds; a trade fair promoting more than 500 businesses; a symposium; seminars and property tours to deliver new research information to producers; restaurants; celebrity chefs; cooking demonstrations for visitors to appreciate the quality and flavour of Australian beef; and so much more.

For Central Queensland, agriculture is worth about \$200 million to our local economy and beef remains the biggest component of that by some margin. We are now looking to supercharge that with the construction of Rookwood Weir, which will provide a secure water supply for primary producers. We are seeing demand growing for CQ beef, especially in Asia, and I believe we need to keep looking for ways to grow that market, not just in terms of volume but in terms of value as well. One of my dreams is to see the Rockhampton Airport upgraded with coldroom storage facilities so that we can start shipping prime cuts of beef straight into major cities overseas, at premium prices of course!