




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Beef 2021

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.04 am): In just six weeks the eyes of the world's cattle community will be firmly focused on the great Queensland city of Rockhampton. As the Premier said earlier in her ministerial statement, the city will host Beef 2021, and I cannot think of a better place to celebrate all things beef.

Ms Palaszczuk: You're going to be there all week, aren't you?

Mr FURNER: Absolutely. Rockhampton is Australia's beef capital. Beef is the heart of our great state and is our largest agricultural commodity. Beef processing directly provides 10,000 Queensland jobs and supports a further 8,000 jobs, and beef exports are worth \$6.22 billion to our economy. It is little wonder that agriculture, and in particular the beef industry, is such a key part of our regional plan for economic recovery.

More than 100,000 people attended Beef 2018 in Rockhampton, delivering substantial economic benefits to the region. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$1 million of support to this year's edition. I was there in 2018 when the Premier's commitment went from half a million dollars to a million dollars, so it is great to see the support of the Palaszczuk government for Beef 2021.

We are focused on economic recovery from COVID in regional Queensland, and events like this in Australia's beef capital will help. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is leading state government engagement with organiser Beef Australia Ltd and regional staff are pitching in to make sure that the event is another success. This year there will be an increased focus on agtech and DAF will host an agtech and innovation hub at the Ken Coombe yards which will showcase existing and world-first emerging technologies that impact the beef industry supply chain from conception through to consumption. More than 5,000 head of cattle will be on display, so to make sure there are no disease issues there will be a range of preventive actions for event organisers and exhibitors to undertake and the health of livestock will be monitored throughout the event.

Last night I hosted a gathering of key organisers of Beef 2021, supporters and sponsors as well as Opera Queensland and others who are all part of the event for this year. The Premier was there and is 100 per cent behind this event. The Palaszczuk government is already committed and so many senior ministers and MPs right across the divide were present, showing their support for this event and this industry. Of course, our hardworking members for Rockhampton and Keppel were there as well. It was terrific to receive the support of Beef Australia on the night. I am quite used to being known as 'Furner the farmer's friend' as I travel around the state, but last night it was quite a humbling experience when chair Bryce Camm suggested that I be known as the 'minister for beef' during Beef 2021 in May.

Beef 2021 is an important event and rightly puts the focus on regional Queensland and the economic powerhouse it will continue to be for our state and our nation. Given its many businesses and its many thousands of jobs, it is a critical pillar in Queensland's plan for our regional economic recovery. Queensland produces the best beef in the world and Beef 2021 is a wonderful opportunity to show the rest of Australia and the world that we produce from paddock to plate.