



# LIVESTOCK EXPORTS: SURVEY RESULTS MAY 2024

## ABOUT THIS PROJECT

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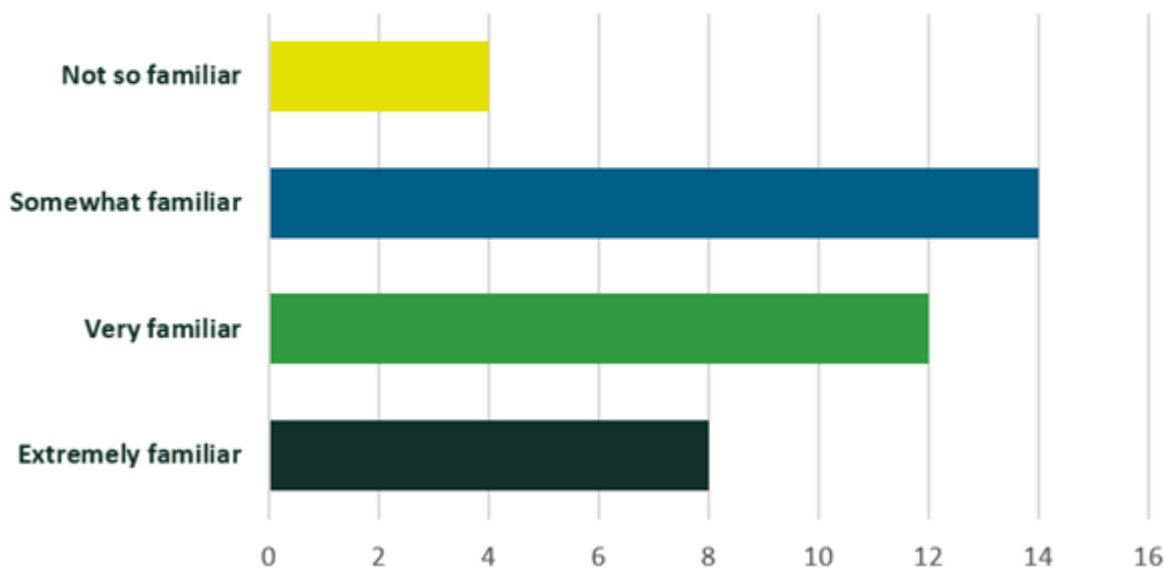
He Tātai Rangahua – Food and Fibre Youth Network (FFYN) is a network of over 300 young people working in the Aotearoa food and fibre sector. A survey was undertaken of network members to gain a youth perspective on livestock animal exports by sea. This is polarising topic for a raft of reasons – once again front of mind with the lifting of the ban under the current government. FFYN had 33 members engaged in the survey in April 2024, with the results highlighted below:

## HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOUTH WITH LIVESTOCK EXPORTS?

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Familiarity of the concept of live exports was mixed bag. Overall, most respondents were familiar – but to varying degrees as illustrated in the graph below.

How familiar are you with the concept of livestock animal exports by sea?

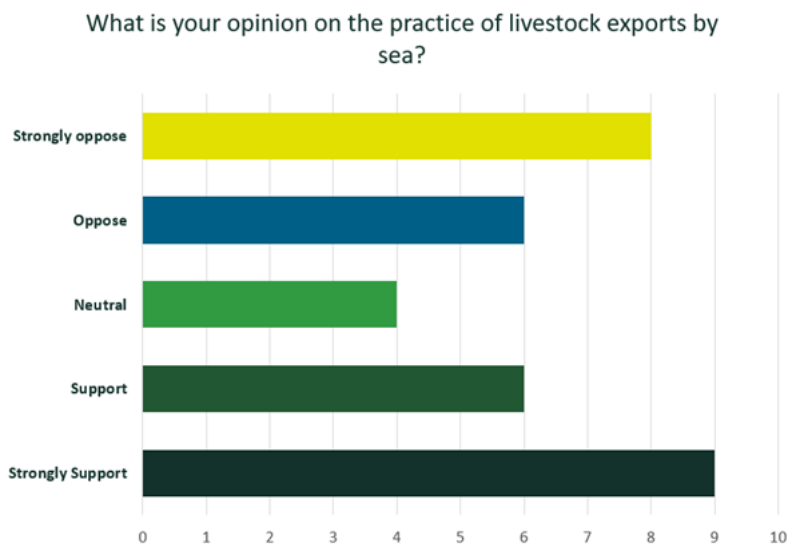




## WHAT DO YOUTH THINK ABOUT LIVESTOCK EXPORTS?

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Any initial hypothesis of more liberal or conservative trends from a younger cohort were dispelled. With results again, providing a mixed bag. The relatively even split across supporting the practice, opposing it and being on the fence illustrates that the topic divides even segmented age cohorts.



Participants were asked to share what informed their opinions on livestock exports.

Key themes for supporting exports included:

- Benefits and opportunity for the New Zealand economy,
- Benefits for genetic improvement and breeding choice, and
- The practice being an avenue for facilitating trade and for farmers to diversify income.

Key themes opposing exports included:

- The animal welfare both on the boat and the destination country,
- Economic gain for a small proportion of farmers with big risk for reputation and animal welfare, and
- The practice being an animal rights issue.

This followed on with a direct question of whether livestock exports by sea was 'unethical', i.e., not morally correct. While most answered no, a large proportion answered yes – with a couple stating they were unsure. This highlights that although some respondents supported the ban, they are uncertain as to whether it is on a moral basis or not.



## HOW DO YOUTH FEEL ABOUT THE CURRENT BAN?

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An almost 50/50 split on overall support of the ban shows that consultation of youth on this topic is key as regardless of outcome, a large proportion of the group would oppose.

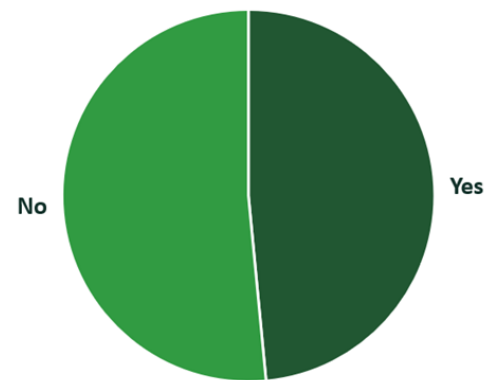
## WHAT FACTORS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN DISCUSSING LIVESTOCK EXPORTS BY SEA?

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Key factors to consider when discussing livestock exports by sea practices included:

- Animal health and welfare including food, water, length at sea, space, etc.
- Economic viability and sustainability of the practice – getting value for our products.
- Global perceptions of the ban – is this progressive or prohibitive to trade?
- Financial implications for farmers.
- Pros and cons of sharing genetics.
- Biosecurity risks.

Do you support the current ban on livestock exports by sea (which came into effect in April 2023)?



## WHAT ABOUT IF LIVESTOCK EXPORTS RESTART?

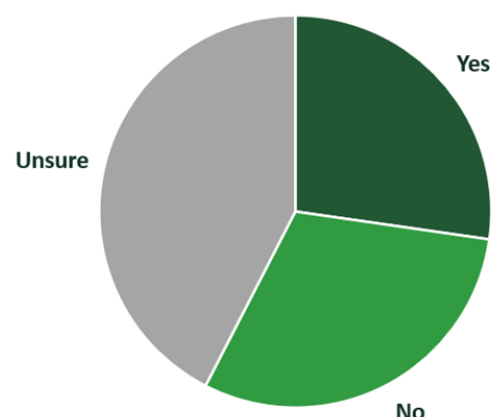
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The graph shows that although many people feel strongly about the prospect of live animal exports, they are less confident in the specific details of the regulation. It indicates that there is potential for further education in the process of live animal exports, allowing people to make more informed decisions.

Participants were asked should the practice start again, what other measures could be considered to ensure the welfare of livestock, while still facilitating international trade. Key themes included:

- Having a regulated control scheme for the practice under an Act (for example, Animal Products Act).

Do you believe that current regulations adequately address the welfare and ethical considerations of livestock export by sea?





## **WHAT ABOUT IF LIVESTOCK EXPORTS RESTART? (Continued)**

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- Ensuring minimum conditions of animals prior to transit and implementing real time monitoring systems with mandatory reporting during transit. This reporting should be public to increase transparency and accountability in the industry.
- Ensure qualified veterinarians and animal welfare experts are involved during transit and provide training to crew looking after animals.
- More stables on transport ships.
- Ensuring animal standards in destination countries are maintained to the same degree as New Zealand.
- Exploring logistical strategies to shorten transit times.
- Investigating alternative trade models (e.g., exporting genetic material) to reduce the need for live animal exports.

## **SO, WHERE TO NEXT?**

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To summarise, our survey indicates that:

- Despite the differences of opinion on the topic, there are constructive conversations to be had around animal welfare, investigating alternatives, financial implications, and economic viability of the practice.
- There is potential here for further education which would allow people to make more informed decisions moving forward.
- Youth want to be involved in the discussion moving forward, with many respondents writing significant, well-grounded responses.

## **FIND OUT MORE**

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Please feel free to get in touch to discuss further:



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