



17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

National Beef Association  
Concorde House  
Warwick New Road  
Leamington Spa  
CV31 5JG

Phil Urban  
CEO, Mitchells & Butlers PLC  
27 Fleet Street  
Birmingham  
B3 1JP

Dear Mr Urban,

I read with dismay and incredulous disbelief the latest Miller & Carter advert on social media, which is promoting “50 day dry aged grass-fed Australian Sirloin 12oz” steak. As a British company which has its 120-year old foundations in the heart of our country, and at a time when climate change and environmental responsibility is at the top of the agenda, it seems incredibly crass – and more than a little short-sighted - to be promoting beef that has been flown half way round the planet.

We fully appreciate that the ongoing pandemic has been nothing short of brutal for your industry. Our members, the UK beef industry, have worked as tirelessly as ever through the pandemic, stepping up to ensure a stable supply of food is available to our consumers. There have been no grants and no furlough for farmers; our taxes are being paid in full to help Government pay the furlough costs of your staff! In return, at the first available opportunity, you choose to buy your beef from Australia.

UK beef is produced to the highest health and welfare standards, and is fully traceable to the farm from which it came. Can you guarantee to us that that the product you are importing is fully traceable? The use of growth promoters continues to be openly acceptable in Australian beef production, a practice which is banned in the UK; this is an area of concern. Can you guarantee that the product you are advertising is free from growth promoters?

UK beef production is continually working towards raising the already high standards in animal health and welfare, transparency in traceability and accepting environmental changes. It's hard to understand how transporting beef with lower health and welfare standards from the other side of the globe fits in with the image of food quality and environmental responsibility a company like Mitchells & Butlers would want to portray to its customers.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss what our UK-based producers can deliver, and the merit of a British company supporting their own producers. We note in December last year, you asked the Government for greater support for your industry. We ask the same of you. UK farming needs all the patriotic support it can muster; please don't gamble with the future of farming in the UK.

Neil Shand - CEO, National Beef Association