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Brief: PETA

PETA steps up Arab campaign

AN advertising campaign against Australian live exports has been launched directly at Middle East consumers.

Animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) launched the campaign via a print media advertisement in Kuwait.

The advert shows sheep and reads: "before they're cooked in yoghurt and spices, they're marinated in urine and faeces".

The PETA advert claimed that live sheep imports from Australia were cruel and unsanitary, according to the Animal Activist Watch newsletter published for the Australian livestock industry.

"Crowding tens of thousands of animals on ships amid their own waste for weeks on end should be unacceptable to halal Muslims who believe that an act of cruelty to a beast is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being," it said.

PETA will also release the advert in Jordan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

However, Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) livestock exports general manager Mike Hayward said PETA campaigns in the Middle East have had little impact so far on consumer demand for Australian live sheep exports.

Mr Hayward said the Australian livestock industry took threats against it seriously and would continue to counter all false claims made by PETA.

MLA has appointed a local public relations agency to counter false claims against the Australian livestock industry.

"We cannot be complacent; PETA is a radical animal rights group who is committed to shutting down our industry," Mr Hayward said.

According to MLA, PETA campaigns had gained little Arabic newspaper coverage.