

# COUNTRY ALLIANCE

RURAL - REGIONAL - RECREATIONAL

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## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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## **No fries with this, please!**

Victoria's newest political party, Country Alliance, has thrown its support behind Monday's convoy of farmers headed to Canberra to protest against McDonalds' decision to buy its potatoes from New Zealand instead of Tasmanian farmers.

Country Alliance spokesman, Russell Bate, said that McDonalds' decision is outrageous.

"McDonalds is making enough profit without having to undermine regional communities such as those around Burnie by buying potatoes for its Australian stores from New Zealand.

"I congratulate Tasmanian federal Liberal Mark Baker for standing up for Australia's farmers and carrying the fight to Canberra on their behalf.

"As Mr Baker says, if McDonalds can buy potatoes for \$225 a tonne and sell them for \$18,200 as French fries it can afford to buy its potatoes in Australia.

"It is up to the Federal Government to heed the message of Mr. Baker and to stop McDonalds from turning it back on Australian farmers.

Mr. Bate said that if McDonalds got away with this it would be the thin end of the wedge.

"It was only a few years ago that Australian citrus growers were fighting the importation of foreign juice concentrates. At that time they enjoyed strong consumer support in their campaign to boycott juice products using imported concentrates," he said

"Perhaps it is time that Australian consumers once again demonstrated their support of Australian producers by boycotting McDonalds, or at the very least, their fries.

“Coles and Woolworths already have demonstrated their willingness to squeeze Australia’s farmers and now they are turning their sights on food processors by increasing the number of own brand items on their shelves.”

Mr. Bate said that Coles and Woolworths are not guaranteeing that home brand goods will be Australian produce.

“I have no doubt that if they get half a chance they will follow McDonalds lead and do anything to get an extra dollar even though they are already making good profits.”

Mr Bate said that Country Alliance also supported Mr. Baker’s call for all produce sold in Australia to have visible and uniform country of origin labelling.

“Canberra has a choice. It can either stand up for farmers and regional communities or side with big business and multinationals as they increase their profits at the expense of average Australians and small business.”