



Australian Pork

NEWSPAPER



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The Tails CRC-P conference was an opportunity to share outcomes to date of the three-year investigation and receive valuable feedback from industry stakeholders. Photo: Australian Pork Limited

Unravelling complexity of tail biting

Insights from Tails CRC-P conference

AFTER three years of extensive research, the Tails Cooperative Research Centres Project is beginning to understand some of the causes behind a puzzling and costly problem – tail biting in pigs.

This destructive behaviour – where one pig will manipulate, chew and bite down on the tails of pen mates – can result in injury, infection and extensive tail damage within a group.

The Tails CRC-P conference, held on February 11 and 12 at the Novatel Melbourne Airport, was an opportunity to share outcomes to date of the three-year investigation and receive valuable feedback from industry stakeholders.

Representatives from across the industry, including producers, veterinarians, geneticists and nutritionists, generously gave up their time to join the research team in assessing and discussing the results.

Their insights will help shape the ongoing extension of this research and ensure recommendations are practical and applicable to producers.

The project received financial support from the Federal Government, as well as key industry organisations including Australian Pork Limited, Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited, PIC Australasia Pty Ltd, Rivalea Australia JBS Pork Division, RSPCA Australia, SunPork

Group, University of New England, the University of Melbourne and the University of Queensland.

The level of collaboration highlights Australia's recognition of tail biting as a critical issue, both economically and from an animal welfare perspective.

SunPork Group executive general manager and Tails CRC-P Project Management Committee chair Dr Darryl D'Souza praised the collaborative efforts in conducting one of the largest studies on tail biting in the world to date.

A key component of the research involved tracking 79,552 pigs from birth throughout their life to identify

continued P2

Reflecting on five years of industry growth

AS we approach the conclusion of our 2020-2025 strategic plan, I'm proud to share the remarkable achievements our industry has accomplished.

Our ambitious goals set in 2020 were not only met, they were exceeded, thanks to a combination of focus, resilience, innovation and collaboration from the entire industry.

We've surpassed our "big hairy audacious goal" with an extraordinary growth of \$1.59 billion in industry value – as at September 2024.

Our total economic contribution to Australia's gross domestic product has also risen from \$5.2 billion to \$6 billion.

Operationally, we've shown robust growth across all key areas.

Total pig slaughters increased by 12 percent to 5,799 million, and total pork production lifted 16 percent to 468,433 tonnes, to June 2024.

We achieved this while the industry maintained strong farm gate prices, with retail prices remaining competitive despite inflationary pressures.

Exports were particularly strong, with a 53 percent increase in supply, adding 24,369 tonnes to reach 70,290 tonnes,



Point of View

by MARGO ANDRAE
CEO



hot standard carcass weight equivalent, to June 2024.

This achievement reflects the appeal and competitiveness of fresh Australian pork overseas – the quality, taste and consistent high standard that the brand promises.

In marketing, our 'Get some pork on your fork' line now enjoys recognition among 90 percent of the Australian population, 18 years and over, and our return on investment ratio has been calculated by independent experts to be an incremental \$13 farm gate value generated from every \$1 invested in media.

The recent 'Por que' iteration of the campaign helped us reach our target of 10.5kg fresh pork consumption per capita, up from 10.35kg in June 2024.

We've also strengthened our relationships across the value chain.

Our partnerships with major retailers

have deepened, leading to product developments and improved category performance.

The implementation of our new consumer mark and use of on-pack stickers has made it easier for consumers to identify Australian pork and cook delicious meals.

Our ongoing engagement with the food service community has helped lift our 'pork on menu' score to an all-time high of 67 percent of menus, as at December 2024.

Our industry has continued to navigate a complex operating and regulatory environment over the past few years, and our producers have demonstrated resilience in the face of ongoing challenges across sustainability, biosecurity and animal welfare.

We have seen opportunities to highlight the traceability capability held by the industry through our PigPass system, demonstrating our

commitment to biosecurity.

While many of our producers have continued to face disruptions from activists, they have held their heads high and demonstrated the integrity and commitment to animal welfare that sets our industry apart.

Our commitment to research and innovation to reduce costs, increase sustainability and drive profitability for our producers and processors has also contributed to our success as an industry over the past five years.

Looking ahead, we are currently working with the board to develop Australian Pork Limited's 2025-2030 strategic plan.

It will be an evolution, not revolution, to build on these strong foundations, while adapting to emerging challenges and opportunities.

We are undertaking a comprehensive industry consultation to ensure our five-year strategy is once again informed by the collective wisdom and ambition of our sector.

We will be reaching out to stakeholders across the supply chain – from producers to processors, retailers to exporters – to gather insights

continued P2



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**Pork Industry
Calendar of Events**

2025

MAR 24-26 – 2025 National Feral Pig Conference – Gold Coast, QLD. <https://feralpigs.com.au/>

MAR 25-26 – London Swine Conference – London, Ontario. <https://www.londonswineconference.ca/>

APR 8-9 – Animal AgTech Innovation Summit – Dallas, USA. <https://animalagtech.com/>

JUN 4-5 – World Pork Expo – Des Moines, Iowa, USA. <https://www.worldpork.org/>

JUN 18-19 – Ontario Pork Congress – Ontario, Canada. <https://www.porkcongress.on.ca/>

AUG 15-16 – Kingaroy BaconFest – Kingaroy, Australia. <https://www.kingaroybaconfest.com.au/>

SEP 20-23 – Allen D. Leman Swine Conference – Minnesota, USA. <https://lemanconference.umn.edu/>

NOV 17-19 – APSA Conference – Melbourne, Australia. <https://www.apsa.asn.au/>

How to supply event details:
Send all details to **Australian Pork Newspaper, PO Box 162, Wynnum, Qld 4178, call 07 3286 1833 or email design@collins.media**

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Reflecting on five years of industry growth

from P1 and perspectives that will shape the plan.

Our achievements of the past five years demonstrate what we can accomplish when we work with shared purpose and direction, and take full advantage of our integration of policy, research and marketing in the one organisation.

I invite all industry stakeholders to participate in the 2025-2030

consultation opportunities.

Your input will be invaluable in crafting a strategic plan that addresses the evolving needs of our industry and consumers in domestic and international markets.

I am confident that the Australian pork industry's continued hard work, agility and collaborative approach will continue to deliver a very bright future. 🐷



The author with APL staff at EvokeAg 2025.

Tail biting - insights from Tails CRC-P conference

from P1 genetic and non-genetic factors linked to tail biting events.

A smaller observational study led by Dr Megan Lucas focused on the behaviours leading up to a tail-biting event using a population of pigs with intact tails.

Conducted as a postdoc position with the University of Melbourne, Megan's observations suggest low-tail postures, repetitive nosing and manipulative behaviours are all signs correlated to an impending biting event.

Another study within the Tails CRC-P found that when pigs were housed at the minimum stocking density, tail biting was more likely

to occur if there was a considerable variation in body weights within a penned group.

This finding is important for housing management as it indicates that even when following minimum

stocking guidelines, more attention may need to be given to grouping pigs into similar weight classes at finisher stage to reduce the likelihood of tail biting.

Additional research

efforts were expected to emerge after the project's completion on March 31, 2025, with APRIL providing ongoing extension and development of a decision support tool to help assist producers

with understanding project data.

The aim being to provide producers with relevant information surrounding tail-biting risk in ways that help guide the mitigation of tail biting on farm. 🐷



Dr Darryl D'Souza guiding the Tails CRC-P project panel, including PhD candidate Rutu Galea and Dr Lauren Hemsworth, both from the University of Melbourne, Dr Susanne Hermesch from the University of New England, Dr Kate Plush from Sunpork Group, Dr Megan Lucas, also from the University of Melbourne, and Dr Charles Rikard-Bell from APRIL.

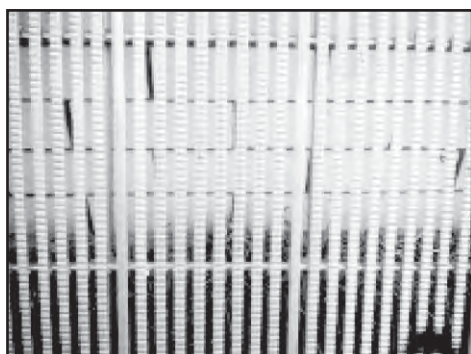
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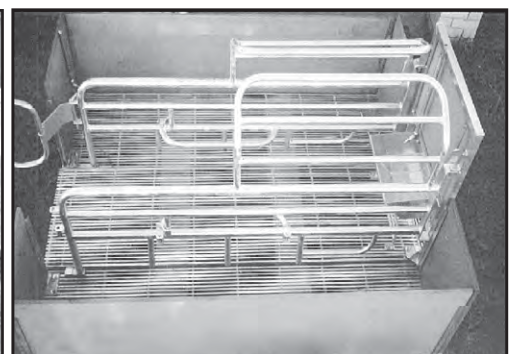
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The Australasian Pig Science Association is pleased to announce that the 2025 APSA Biennial Conference will be held at the RACV City Club, Melbourne VIC, Australia

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Submissions Now Open



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www.apsa.asn.au



APSA
Australasian Pig
Science Association



Biosecurity Queensland urges all pig keepers to take preventative action to prevent the spread of JEV. Photo: Giulia Botan

Japanese encephalitis virus detected in pigs in Queensland

JAPANESE encephalitis virus has been detected at two piggeries in southern Queensland.

There have also been recent detections in NSW and Victoria.

JEV is a zoonotic disease spread by mosquitoes that can cause reproductive issues in pigs and neurological signs in horses, such as lack of coordination, difficulty swallowing and impaired vision.

These are the first detections of JEV in animals in Queensland since July 2022.

JEV is considered established in mainland Australia, so the detections are not unexpected.

Biosecurity Queensland urges all pig keepers and horse owners to take preventative action to prevent the spread of JEV, monitor susceptible animals for any signs of disease and report any suspected cases to your local veterinarian.

In rare cases, JEV can cause disease in humans.

Reducing exposure to infected mosquitoes is the key to avoiding JEV for yourself and your animals.

Advice for pig owners
People working with pigs, including those who may have a small herd or pet, should take steps to control mosquitoes, as well as continue to use effective biosecurity measures.

You can help protect your animals from JEV by including mosquito management in your biosecurity plan.

The most common clinical signs in pigs are abortions, mummified or malformed fetuses and stillborn or weak piglets.

Pig owners are asked to be vigilant for signs

of this disease and investigate unexplained abortions or stillbirths.

People who work or live near pigs, both domesticated and feral, are being urged to get vaccinated against JEV.

To protect yourself and your staff, mosquito control measures need to be implemented in piggeries:

- Cover-up with a loose-fitting long-sleeved shirt and long pants when outside or in naturally ventilated sheds

- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET or picaridin on all exposed skin, re-apply repellent according to label recommendations

- Ensure mosquito control measures occur regularly on your property, including treating or removing potential mosquito breeding sites.

Contact your herd veterinarian or the national Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888, if you suspect JEV infection on your farm.

JEV and humans

JEV cannot be ac-

quired by eating the meat of an infected animal and does not spread directly between people.

SunPork Group chief executive officer and managing director Professor Robert van Barneveld said at least one piggery was JEV positive but that he expected animal health and business impacts to be minimal.

Adding that the effects on pigs is sporadic, intermittent and generally short lived, and pigs are only one potential host, which also includes humans and horses.

“But the reality is that if a human gets bitten by a mosquito in a region where there’s JEV, one of the consequences is serious – it could be death,” Prof van Barneveld said.

“You need to take precautions to ensure that your mosquito control and your vaccinations are up to date.”

The first locally acquired human case of Japanese encephalitis virus since 2022 was detected in Queensland in January.

Recently, JEV was detected in mosquito populations in Goondiwindi, Inglewood and Monto, as well as in mosquito and feral pig populations in NSW.

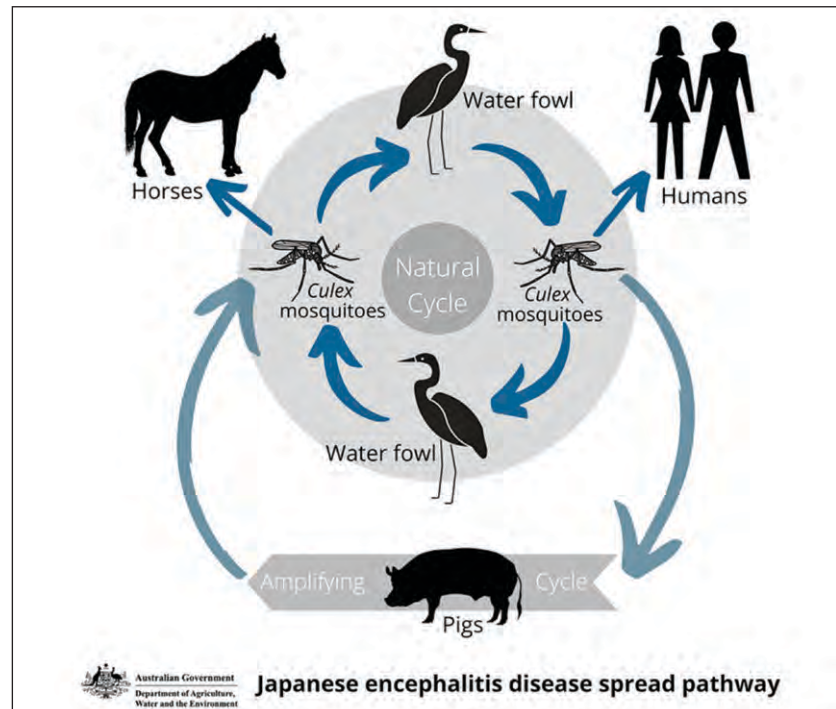
Queensland Health chief health officer Heidi Carroll said notifications of mosquito-borne illnesses typically started to rise in February as mosquito populations increased.

JEV infections in people usually cause no symptoms, however some infected people experience an illness with fever, headache and vomiting, neck stiffness, disorientation, tremors or other serious neurological disorders.

If you experience any of these symptoms immediately seek medical attention.

In 2022, Australia experienced a deadly outbreak of JEV in domestic pigs, with detections in more than 80 piggeries in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

Seven people died after contracting the virus.



The spread pathway of Japanese encephalitis virus.



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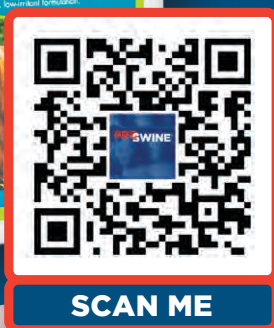
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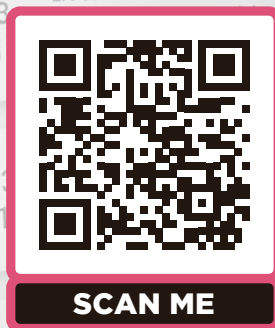
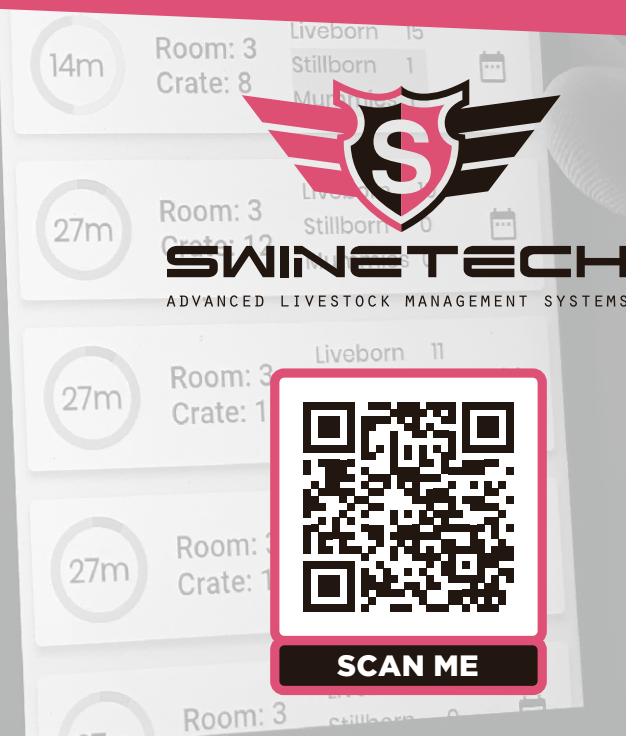


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Slow-cooked takeaway pork belly at \$39.99/kg from Gilbert's Fresh Markets in Hilton is an occasional take-home treat after a long day when time at the stove or oven seems just too hard. They do it well there too. Tender, juicy and succulent with a crispy but not too chewy skin.



The author's friend Jamie, a butcher and talented keen home chef, loves his meat. No surprise therefore that his preparation for this pork and beef loaf was spot on.



Enjoyed at Cottesloe restaurant Vans, this pork hock was magically matched with spicy noodles and greens.



Layers of D'Orsogna bacon on Jamie's pork and beef loaf complemented the D'Orsogna bone-in leg ham at our Christmas 2024 lunch table.



Jamie's pork and beef loaf, topped with lashings of smoky D'Orsogna bacon rashers, cooked up a treat. Four eggs lay underneath, along with sage, pistachio and cranberry.

Just saying, meat matters to me

SEEMS like I have a pork 'hangover' every year post-Christmas.

I can't get enough and keep chasing pork dishes down when out and about, well into February.

If not ready, willing and able to cook pork at home, I'll go out of my way to buy take-away.

Slow-cooked pork belly is a good example.

When cooked well,

Cant
Comment
by BRENDON CANT



it's a perfect take-home meal.

I also am lucky to have good friend Jamie, who – having handed his knives in as a butcher long ago – loves nothing better than putting together pork dishes, and beef for that matter, whenever we catch up.

Whether it's on the barbecue or in the oven, what he plates up is always prepared and cooked to perfection.

Both liking our steaks medium rare has continuously given us common ground too.

A keen surfer back in the day, he spent a couple of weeks in Hawaii over summer, but interestingly came home disappointed with the waves and the food.

While the waves were regular, they were on the small side.

And the steaks, while on the big side, were too chewy and typically served with greasy chips.

If plated up with salad, they were covered in tacky dressing.

Speaking of meat in all its glory, I recently I attended a Perth festival event titled 'Killa: Pindan to Plate' and delighted in an eight-course menu focused on meat.

Killa refers to bush cattle or fresh meat.

In the Kimberley, when someone says 'killa', the local Indigenous folk all know what that means.

To them it means beef that tastes better than shop meat – it's cheaper, bought station direct and they all know where it comes from.

They can feed several

families and can access cuts of meat not available at the shop.

Effectively, it was a west Kimberley salt-water story told over dinner.

Seated at an opulent long table set with custom designs by regional Indigenous Western Australian artists and surrounded by a monumental video installation, it was a unique nose-to-tail dining experience.

As we enjoyed our meal, the whole journey of the 'killa' – Kimberley cattle taken straight from the bush and shared among families – came to life in cultural narratives and life experiences from the west Kimberley coast.

While the filmed preparation of the animal unfolded in the projections around us, eight very special dishes – prepared by head chef of The Rechabite Double Rainbow Eating House kitchen – told the story of Aboriginal food cultures and how introduced species have become part of the Kimberley diet.

Created with a team

from the Kimberley, Killa: Pindan to Plate was a literal visual feast.

Here's a sample of some of the meat dishes enjoyed that night, with matching drinks:

- Kidney, heart and soy skewer – thinly sliced beef heart and kidney marinated in tare sauce (soy, mirin, sake, sugar), wood-fire grilled, finished with sesame seeds and chives

- Smoked brisket pastrami – smoked brisket pastrami thinly sliced, finished with olive oil and mustard with boab powder

- Camp-oven oxtail stew – slow braised oxtail with carrots and shallots finished with a red wine and thyme sauce

- Beef rib, beef cap and wild garlic – 24-hour slow-cooked beef ribs finished on the wood fire and glazed with wild mushroom jus, beef striploin cap grilled medium rare roasted whole and sliced and wild garlic shoots grilled in embers.

At \$300 a head, it was not cheap, but an unforgettable cultural and dining experience.

Unfortunately, no pork was on the menu, but I am sure the salt-water people of the west Kimberley would be happy if it was available and accessible.

Meanwhile, beefing it up was good enough.

Created with a team




Pork cutlet with lentils at Manuka Wood Fire Kitchen in Fremantle just had to be shared. The author's dining friend, who happened to be a chef, did a good job of separating it three ways.

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No more blockages for western Sydney meatworks after Gorman-Rupp pump upgrade

HYDRO Innovations were approached by Western Sydney Meat Worx and SJ Plumbing Industries to provide a pump solution to replace the existing submersible pump operating in the abattoir's wastewater (green and red lines) collection pit.

The problem

The existing submersible pump was continually blocking due to the large quantities of paunch, stomach linings, grit and other foreign materials ending up in the pit.

As a result of these blockages, constant vigilance of the submersible pump was required to ensure its continuous operation.

With each blockage and stoppage, the submersible pump was lifted from the pit, the impeller/suction end dismantled to remove the offending material, re-assembled and returned to operation – an often lengthy, messy and difficult exercise.

The solution

Hydro Innovations NSW regional manager Phil Rothheudt attended the site and quickly realised this was a perfect

situation for a Gorman Rupp self-priming pump.

The Gorman Rupp self-priming pump would sit at the surface of the pit, not submersed, where instant safe access to the pump's internals and the blockage would be available to the operators and, due to the easy access, regular service and maintenance are also simplified, carried out at the surface.

As the Gorman Rupp self-priming pump requires no foot valve (to block or leak), an open suction pipe into the liquid is all that's required – the result is a very easy pump to install, operate and maintain.

Mr Rothheudt also recommended the pump be fitted with the Gorman Rupp Eradicator Solids Management System – to deal with the often-stringy intestines, tough gut linings, undigested hay or any material that might find its way into the pump that could result in blocking, jamming or wrapping around the impeller.

Gorman Rupp self-priming pumps fitted with the eradicator system have been de-

ployed in many abattoir sites and municipal sewerage treatment plants around Australia with excellent results.

The abattoir decided to proceed with the purchase of a Gorman Rupp Super T3C60SC-B fitted with the solids management system.

The results

The result was almost instant.

Within a day of operation, the waste material that had built-up in and around the pit was steadily being pumped to the separator screen.

In fact, the initial start-up was so successful that an excavator was deployed to get down in to dig and loosen the heavy settled material in

the bottom of the well, mixing it with the incoming flow, the pump then sending the mixture to the separator screen.

If the pump ever did block or jam, it was simple to open the suction-end inspection cover, remove the offending blockage and the operators were quickly able to get back to work.

For further information regarding the extensive range of Gorman Rupp self-priming pumps and the services that Hydro Innovations can offer to remedy your wastewater, sewerage, aeration and pump issues, visit the very informative website at hydroinnovations.com or phone 02 9898 1800.



Within a day of operation, the Gorman Rupp Super T3C60SC-B, fitted with the solids management system, had waste material pumping steadily to the separator screen.

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Financial assistance available for north Queensland floods

FINANCIAL assistance is now available to primary producers affected by high rainfall and flooding in north and far north Queensland.

Financial assistance available includes:

- Exceptional Disaster Recovery Assistance Grants, up to \$25,000
- Concessional loans up to \$250,000
- Essential working capital loans up to \$100,000
- Freight subsidies of up to \$5000
- Coordinated emergency fodder support package.

Support is available. Information on grants and loans eligibility requirements can be found on QRIDA's website – qrda.qld.gov.au/primary-producers

Check regularly for updates on shire extensions or funding.

For the most current information related to your circumstances contact QRIDA on 1800 623 946.

For information on freight subsidies and fodder support, visit the Business Queensland website by scanning the QR code below.

The Rural Financial Counselling Service can help you apply for

government financial assistance and other rural financial counselling advice on 07 4652 5669.

A primary production industry support package has also been announced to support the sector's medium to long term recovery and help build resilience.

Support includes funding for specialised industry recovery and resilience officers, financial counsellors, wellness coaches, psychologists and a specialised agronomist.

A coordinated emergency fodder support package is also available to assist with the cost of purchasing and transporting emergency fodder to primary producers in areas worst impacted by the event.

Visit the Business Queensland for information on how to look after your crops, pasture, machinery and animals after a disaster.



Scan for the Business Queensland website.

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Breakthrough pig disease testing

IN support of building industry credentials and to address regulatory demands to reduce antimicrobial use, Australian Pork Limited embarked on a project titled 'Novel genome-based markers for antimicrobial resistance profiling of swine mycoplasma pathogens', project number 2021/0025.

The recently completed study by the University of Adelaide has delivered promising news for pig producers while advancing Australia's antimicrobial stewardship efforts.

The two-year project – led by Associate Professor Farhid Hemmatzadeh's team, Professor Darren Trott, Assoc Prof Kiro Petrovski and PhD candidate Dr Razi Jafari Jozani – developed an innovative method

to isolate and grow mycoplasma bacteria, a major respiratory pathogen impacting pig herds worldwide.

Dr Jozani, who spearheaded the laboratory work, created a groundbreaking technique that achieves 100 percent survival rates when preserving mycoplasma samples, compared to only 20 percent with traditional methods.

This advancement has major implications for vaccine development and disease monitoring.

The research focused on mycoplasma hyopneumoniae, which causes widespread respiratory illness in pigs.

While rarely fatal, the disease can significantly impact herd health and production, especially when combined with other respiratory pathogens.

Importantly, the

study revealed encouraging news about antimicrobial resistance.

Testing showed that mycoplasma bacteria in Australian pig herds remains largely susceptible to current treatments, suggesting the sector's responsible antimicrobial use practices are proving effective.

The team's analysis found limited genetic diversity among Australian mycoplasma isolates and an absence of antimicrobial resistance genes, supporting the effectiveness of current treatment approaches.

This research marks a significant step forward in managing pig respiratory diseases, while supporting the industry's commitment to responsible antimicrobial use.

Dr Raymond Chia
APL Program
Manager Health
and Biosecurity

JEV vaccine free in Queensland

THE Japanese encephalitis virus vaccine is available for humans at over 100 vaccination providers across Queensland, including selected general practitioners, pharmacies and community immunisation providers.

Some providers may charge a consultation fee, however the vaccine itself is free for those in the state who

meet the criteria.

More than 18,000 eligible Queenslanders have been vaccinated against JEV since 2022, yet there is still no animal vaccine registered for use in Australia to protect pigs from the mosquito-borne disease.

Australian Pork Limited chief executive officer Margo Andrae said the large-scale JEV

outbreak of 2022 had a significant impact on "our animals and the people who care for them."

She added that APL had been collaborating with the University of Queensland to develop a vaccine for pigs and was working with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority to make it available to farmers

as soon as possible.

Apim Animal Health's ACE Laboratory Services was also developing a vaccine for pigs in Australia, with managing director Chris Richards pushing for an emergency permit to trial it at more piggeries.

The vaccine was trialled at six farms, yet an additional 89,000 doses of the trial vaccine were ready to be shared, permission pending.

"Those 89,000 doses could vaccinate every sow in Victoria over the next four weeks," Mr Richards said.

University of Queensland researchers were also looking to trial their vaccine at more locations.

Associate Professor Jody Peters said the university was waiting on regulatory approvals to further progress testing.

"I would love for a vaccine to be available to our farmers at the end of this mosquito season," Dr Peters said.

Australian Pig Veterinarians Group president Sandy Adsett said she supported the development of a safe and effective vaccine.

"Given the devastating effects – and the difficulty in detecting its presence until the virus manifests in farrowing sows and their piglets – the Australian Pig Vets strongly supports the development and registration of any safe and effective vaccine candidate for use in pigs," Dr Adsett said.

Ms Andrae said APL was working closely with the government to try fast-tracking the vaccine process.

APL was seeking permits for other products, including a vaccine from Japan, that could help protect pigs from JEV and manage mosquito populations.

"Every opportunity to prevent something that causes harm to our animals, we will absolutely push for it," Ms Andrae said.

Adding that, given the work researchers had been doing since the 2022 JEV outbreak, the Australian pork industry had hoped to have a domestic animal vaccine by now, yet that it was imperative to work together to protect animal and human health.

"The best approach at the moment is making sure staff are accessing the human vaccines to keep them protected, covering up and controlling mosquitoes and, where possible, reducing water lying around your property," she said.



Jody Peters examined cells used for vaccines with Jessica Harrison. Photo: University of Queensland



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Fibre's role in post-weaning diets

UNLIKE energy and nutrients, there are no firm recommendations of fibre inclusion in nursery diets.

Here's a look at the role fibre can play in ameliorating post-weaning diarrhoea authored by researchers at the Kansas State University.

Diets rich in dietary fibre generally have lower nutritive value for nursery pigs because digestive enzymes are not suited for degrading fibre.

However, dietary fibre components seem to have beneficial effects on gut health and development, particularly to help reduce post-weaning gut disorders.

Fibre is classified as soluble or insoluble based on fibre solubility in water.

The fibre characteristics relevant to swine nutrition include fermentability, viscosity and hydration.

Natural fibrous feed ingredients are usually composed of both soluble and insoluble fibre.

In general, in the immediate post-weaning period, the use of ingredients with concentrations mainly of insoluble fibre – wheat middlings, wheat bran or oat hulls – are preferred over ingredients with main concentrations of soluble fibre, such as sugar beet pulp,

but in later nursery the use of soluble fibre in diets might be beneficial to promote gut health and development.

Insoluble fibre

The use of insoluble fibre – resistant to fermentation – is recommended in post-weaning diets as it increases the passage rate, prevents harmful bacterial growth and improves intestinal morphology and microbial balance in the intestine.

Multiple research studies have concluded that use of insoluble fibre in piglets challenged with e coli decreased the cases of diarrhoea due to the reduced ability of e coli adhesion to the small intestine.

Insoluble fibres are relatively resistant to fermentation in the hindgut and do not contribute much to production of volatile fatty acids.

The presence of insoluble fibres increases faecal bulkiness and accelerates digesta passage rate, which prevents proliferation and colonisation of pathogens.

Insoluble fibres include cellulose and hemicellulose.

Feed ingredients such as wheat middlings, wheat bran, rice hulls, oat hulls and distillers dried grains with solubles have predominantly insoluble fibre concentrations.

Soluble fibre

Soluble fibres are more rapidly fermented in the hindgut and produce more volatile fatty acids, such as acetate, propionate and butyrate, which are used as sources of energy to promote gut development.

Soluble fibres also promote a prebiotic effect by enhancing beneficial bacteria fermentation and production of volatile fatty acids while reducing gut pH to eliminate pathogens.

The presence of soluble fibres increases digesta viscosity, which delays digesta passage rate, interferes with nutrient digestion and predisposes proliferation and colonisation of pathogens.

However, soluble fibres have better solubility,

swelling capacity, water holding capacity and water-binding capacity that are important for digestion.

Soluble fibres include pectins, gums and β -glucans.

Feed ingredients such as sugar beet pulp and citrus pulp have predominantly soluble fibre.

Ongoing research is being conducted to determine the ideal insoluble:soluble ratio at different time points post-weaning.

Application of how both commonly available fibre-rich ingredients and specialty manufactured fibre ingredients can be practically and economically used to increase faecal dryness without reducing nursery pig performance is on-going.



Diets rich in dietary fibre generally have lower nutritive value for nursery pigs because digestive enzymes are not suited for degrading fibre. Photo: the US National Pork Board and Pork Checkoff

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Incoming Pork Processors Referral Group chair Darryl D'Souza.

New PPRG chair

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited is excited to announce Dr Darryl D'Souza's appointment as the new chair of the Pork Processors Referral Group.

Darryl is the executive general manager, technical services with the SunPork Group.

The Pork Processors Referral Group provides advice and recommendations on issues and strategies related to the Australian pork industry's processing sector.

The PPRG comprises key representatives from all seven export abattoirs and APL staff.

Other stakeholders, such as government representatives or industry experts, are invited to discuss sub-

ject-specific matters.

The PPRG acts as a communication channel between APL and the pork processing industry.

It advises APL on research and development priorities, particularly in areas directly impacting pork processing, such as animal welfare, biosecurity, food safety and traceability.

The PPRG also contributes to the development of industry policies and positions on matters affecting processors.

We thank Aaron Murphy from JBS pork division for his contributions to the PPRG as a former chair and wish him well.

Australian Pork Limited



The choice of sampling device plays a critical role in ensuring accurate sampling. Photo: Pixabay



Toxins pose significant health risks to livestock, leading to reduced productivity, reproductive issues and, in severe cases, mortality. Photo: Barbara Barbosa



Proper sampling minimises errors, allowing analyses to reflect the true condition of the feed. Photo: Barbara Olsen

DSM-Firmenich shares feedstuffs sampling methods and significance

ENSURING the quality and safety of animal feed is crucial for the agricultural sector, impacting both producers and consumers.

Accurate feed sampling is fundamental to this process, providing critical data on the feed's composition, safety and quality.

Proper sampling minimises errors, allowing analyses to reflect the true condition of the feed.

This article explores key methodologies, challenges and best practices for effective feed sampling.

Why proper sampling matters

The main objective of feed sampling is to obtain a representative sample of the entire feed batch.

A representative sample is crucial because it reflects the overall quality of the feed, allowing for accurate analysis of essential nutrients, potential contaminants and other key parameters.

If the sample does not accurately represent the batch, the test results can lead to incorrect assessments, which may result in the acceptance of substandard feed or the rejection of high-quality feed.

It is particularly important when testing for contaminants such as mycotoxins, which may be distributed un-

evenly within the feed batch.

Sampling and mycotoxin testing

Mycotoxins are toxic compounds produced by fungi that can contaminate feed ingredients.

These toxins pose significant health risks to livestock, leading to reduced productivity, reproductive issues and, in severe cases, mortality.

Ensuring feed safety through mycotoxin analysis is a crucial part of feed management and proper sampling is the first step.

A primary challenge in mycotoxin testing is the uneven distribution of these toxins in feed ingredients.

Mycotoxins may not be uniformly spread throughout a lot – some sections may have high concentrations, while others may have little to none.

Therefore, representative sampling is essential to detect and quantify mycotoxins' presence accurately.

If the sampling procedure is flawed, it could result in false negatives, leading to the unintentional use of contaminated feed.

Challenges in feed sampling

Sampling errors are the largest source of inaccuracy in mycotoxin analysis, accounting for about 75 percent of the total uncertainty.

One of the main challenges is the inhomogeneous distribution of mycotoxins in feed batches.

Different parts of a lot may contain varying concentrations of contaminants, leading to potential underestimation or overestimation of the mycotoxin levels if the sampling is not done correctly.

To minimise errors, it is critical to increase the number of samples collected.

This helps to ensure that the analysis reflects the true mycotoxin content of the batch.

The sampling error can be reduced by proper equipment selection and by collecting samples from various locations in the lot, particularly when the feed is in motion.

Types of sampling methods

Manual sampling

Grain probes or triers – these tools are used to extract samples from static lots, such as grain heaps or silos.

The probe should be long enough to reach the bottom of the container, ensuring that the sample represents the entire depth of the feed batch.

Pelican grain sampler – this tool is used to collect samples from a falling stream of bulk feed.

It is particularly effective during the transfer

of grain and can collect multiple samples as the feed moves through the system.

Automatic sampling

Cross-cut samplers – these devices are used when the feed is in motion, such as on a conveyor belt.

They operate by cutting through the product stream and collecting small amounts of feed at regular intervals.

Automatic samplers are useful for continuous monitoring of feed quality and ensure that the samples are collected uniformly, reducing the chance of bias.

Sampling equipment selection

The choice of sampling device plays a critical role in ensuring accurate sampling.

Some common tools include:

- Grain probes or triers – effective for penetrating static batches

- Automatic samplers – ideal for continuous processes where feed is in motion

- Scoop samplers – these are used to take samples from bulk feed during transfer or storage.

Each tool has its specific use case and selecting the right tool depends on factors such as the type of feed, particle size and the size of the lot.

Automatic samplers, for instance, are beneficial in facilities with high throughput as they can consistently collect samples without interrupting the production process.

Best practices for proper feed sampling

Regular sampling

Samples should be collected regularly, especially with every new batch of feed.

This helps in identifying any variations in feed quality, which can be attributed to factors such as raw material differences, changes in production processes or storage conditions.

Sampling when receiving

Collecting small incremental samples from different areas helps obtain a more accurate representation of the entire feed batch.

This method is particularly useful when sampling from bulk storage or during feed transfer.

Clean equipment

Sampling equipment must be clean and dry to prevent contamination.

Residue from previous samples can affect the integrity of the current sample, leading to misleading results.

Proper maintenance

of sampling tools is also important to ensure they remain in good working condition.

Proper storage of samples

After collection, samples should be stored in containers that prevent any alteration of the feed's properties.

For dry samples, paper bags are recommended to avoid moisture buildup and mould growth.

For moist or silage samples, airtight containers that can be vacuum-packed are preferable to maintain sample integrity.

Labelling and record-keeping

Accurate labelling is crucial for tracking the origin and handling of the sample.

Labels should include details such as the date of sampling, the origin of the feed, the size of the lot and a brief description of the sampling procedure.

Proper record-keeping helps in tracing back any issues to specific batches, facilitating quick and effective quality control actions.

Standard operating procedures

Proper sampling requires a thorough understanding of methodologies and protocols.

Personnel must be trained in correct sampling techniques, equipment usage and safety precautions.

Organisations must establish standard operating procedures to ensure consistent sampling practices.

These SOPs should detail the steps for sampling, specify the equipment to be used and provide clear protocols for labelling and storage.

Adherence to these standardised procedures is essential for maintaining the reliability of sample analysis.

Conclusion

Proper sampling of feedstuffs is essential for effective feed management and safety.

Accurate assessment of nutritional content and detection of contaminants, such as mycotoxins, rely on standardised sampling procedures.

Improper sampling can lead to inaccurate analysis, posing health risks to livestock and causing economic losses for farmers and producers.

By adhering to standardised methods, using suitable tools and ensuring proper personnel training, the accuracy and reliability of feed testing are significantly enhanced.

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Aussie Pumps latest six-inch pump success

AUSSIE Pumps is a leading supplier of pumps capable of handling large volumes of effluent at the most economical cost.

The business' latest venture was to upgrade its big 6" model B6XR-A.

That is a large self-priming centrifugal cast-iron pump made to Aussie's standards in northern Italy.

The machines are available in either a 11 or 15kW close-coupled two-pole heavy-duty motor, with a capacity of slightly over 4000LPM.

The pump is a low head but high volume, ideal for moving liquid waste as well as serving as a very handy liquid aeration system.

Like all of Aussie's GMP self-primers, the machine is equipped with a big open clean-out port that enables chokes to be cleared without disassembling pipework.

Aussie Pumps product manager Chamará Fernando said: "That's a huge advantage over conventional end-suction pumps, often found in piggery applications."

The big heavy-duty cast-iron pumps are also designed to be more efficient, with major savings in op-

Aussie Pumps

erations in terms of reliability and power consumption.

"These pumps are made to our specific requirements based on research we've done with piggeries across Australia," Mr Fernando said.

"Talking to the people involved has been a revelation, enabling us to better understand the application and to come up with informed ideas for long term reliability and longevity of the products."

The big 6" pump is only one of Aussie Pumps range, where the products start at only 1 1/2" and 2" semi-trash pumps.

They go all the way to big 8" pumps.

The 8" B8XR-A version will handle 8300LPM.

It is powered by a 37kW two-pole motor.

That pump will handle huge volumes of effluent, proving itself to be an essential aid to any high production piggery.

New stainless-steel impeller

Having had some negative experiences with cavitation and, to some extent, corrosion in some of the 6" pump installations,

the company decided to produce a version with a 316 stainless-steel impeller.

Adding to that, it now offers a tungsten carbide mechanical seal to extend seal life.

"We know it's a tough job pumping piggery waste, especially for the long hours required," Mr Fernando said.

"Our idea is to not only put a top-quality product on the market at a great price, but also to provide modifications as we go.

"Those models are

based on experiences of working with piggery operators in the field."

For further information on the complete range, refer to Aussie's *Pump Smart 9* catalogue.

There are also top deals available in the agricultural *Summer Sizzlers* catalogue.

Products are available from Aussie Pumps distributors all over Australia at special reduced prices for end of summer deals.

Visit aussiepumps.com.au or contact the Industrial Pump division for more in-depth information on 02 8865 3500.



This big 6" 4000LPM self-priming pump will soon come with a 316 stainless-steel impeller.

APL Board changes

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited recently announced the appointment of two new board directors.

Dr Cherie Collins filled a casual elected director vacancy after Edison Alvares, a producer director, stepped down last year.

The APL Constitution requires the APL Board to fill the casual vacancy.

The APL Board resolved to appoint Dr Cherie Collins to fill the casual vacancy.

Cherie is the general manager pig operations for Rivalea Australia, with 20 year's experience in the Australian pork industry in various research and production roles.

Last year, Tony Lowings was farewellled from the APL Board.

Tony filled the role of a specialist

director, having an extensive career in marketing.

Suzanne Douglas, an experienced executive, joins APL from the tuna industry and previously worked for HJ Heinz for seven years.

Suzanne brings a strong record of developing business, building and delivering strategies for growth, particularly through innovation across both new and existing consumer focused brands and categories in first-class fast-moving consumer goods businesses in Australia, the UK and Asia.

APL thanks both Tony and Edison for their contributions to the Australian pork industry and wishes them both well.

Australian Pork Limited

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zoetis



Dr Pedro Urriola presented on the effects of zinc supplementation throughout the lifetime of pigs.

Zinc essential yet finite resource

AS an essential nutrient, zinc is required by all living organisms.

Yet, excess zinc is toxic to pigs, plants and other organisms in the environment.

Finding a balance requires a systems approach.

Hosted by Aarhus University in Denmark in mid-February, University of Minnesota Assistant Professor and research lead for the Real Pork Trust Consortium Pedro E Urriola – alongside Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Danyel Bueno Dalto and Aarhus University's Mihai-Victor Curtasu – presented a series of talks about zinc supplementation to pigs and sows.

Effects of zinc supplementation on lifetime events of pigs

Dr Pedro Urriola commenced the seminar with a thought-provoking presenta-

tion on the effects of zinc supplementation throughout the lifetime of pigs.

He explored various facets, including the impact of zinc supplementation to gestating sows on pre-weaning mortality of light birth-weight pigs, the influence of different sources of zinc on post-weaning pig growth and the association between tissue zinc concentration and clinical outcomes in pigs infected with mycoplasma hyopneumoniae, a common swine respiratory disease.

Insights into zinc absorption and trace minerals metabolism

Dr Danyel Bueno Dalto described results on the net intestinal absorption of zinc and copper using the 'portal vein net appearance approach'.

Additionally, he shared findings on the effects of levels of dietary zinc on trace min-

erals metabolism in the post-weaning period, shedding light on crucial aspects of mineral nutrition in pigs and the need to study these trace minerals in conjunction.

Metabolomics response to dietary interventions

Dr Mihai-Victor Curtasu concluded the seminar series with an intriguing discussion on the analysis of biochemical markers of pigs' response to vitamin D supplementation while infected with porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome.

He also shared insights into the metabolomics profile and microbiome response in pigs fed different levels of zinc, in collaboration with Elham Assadi Soumei from Queensland University, providing valuable insights into the complex interactions between diet, metabolism and health in pigs.

Open discussion and knowledge exchange

The seminar culminated in an engaging open discussion, where participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas, ask questions and deepen their understanding of the topics presented.

This collaborative forum fostered knowledge sharing and laid the groundwork for future research endeavours in pig production.

In conclusion, the seminar provided a comprehensive overview of the latest advancements in zinc supplementation and metabolomics research in pig production.

By leveraging interdisciplinary expertise and cutting-edge methodologies, researchers are unravelling the complexities of pig nutrition and health, paving the way for improved management practices and enhanced productivity in the swine industry.

Drive change with a 2026 Nuffield scholarship

NUFFIELD Australia has opened applications for its 2026 scholarships, calling on the next crop of Australian agriculturalists to be curious, drive change and help their industry thrive.

Farmers and those working in the agriculture industry are encouraged to seize the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by applying for a scholarship for 15 weeks of overseas study.

Nuffield Australia chief executive officer and 2013 Nuffield scholar Jodie Redcliffe said Nuffield scholarships were recognised as the pinnacle of industry-based, experiential learning for primary producers.

"Scholars have a unique opportunity to visit, learn from and collaborate with not only other scholars but with agribusiness leaders around the world," Ms Redcliffe said.

"By fostering a culture of curiosity and excellence, we challenge scholars to step beyond their comfort zones, exploring groundbreaking ideas and solutions that

can reshape Australian agriculture.

"The journey is transformative – offering life-changing experiences that empower individuals to lead with focus.

"From paddocks to boardrooms, Nuffield scholars ensure Australian agriculture will thrive in a changing world," she said.

The organisation awards around 20 scholarships each year, enabling the sharing of knowledge that creates a sustainable and profitable food and fibre industry.

Some of these scholarships target specific agricultural industries, while others are open to a wider range.

Nuffield Australia, which this year celebrates its seventy-fifth year of scholarships, will again offer up to five drought resilience-specific scholarships, supported by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

Soon-to-be-released research commissioned by Nuffield Australia shows its alumni overwhelmingly say their scholarship was an in-

credibly rich and diverse experience, which had a profound impact on their life.

Claire Catford from Hoyleton in South Australia was awarded a scholarship last year.

"The most wonderful and surprising thing has been the welcoming and supportive network that opens up when you're awarded the scholarship," Ms Catford said.

She said initially it was a daunting prospect, "Going outside your comfort zone is where amazing things happen and I'm seeing that clearly already.

"In planning my travels, I've been astounded at the opportunities that've opened because of the Nuffield network.

"I can only imagine where this is all going to lead over the next 12 to 18 months, and no doubt

beyond that time as well.

"I urge anyone who's on the fence about applying to just go for it – there's never a perfect time for these things but taking the leap could help you discover something you might never have imagined."

Nuffield Australia encourages applications for research topics relevant to any or all industries in the Australian agricultural sector.

Applications close on Friday May 16, 2025.

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed during June, with a final round of interviews in July.

Successful recipients will be announced at the Nuffield Australia National Conference in Adelaide from September 8-10, 2025.

Find out more at nuffield.com.au/how-to-apply

National Feral Pig Conference 2025

THE National Feral Pig Conference 2025 is March 24-26 and there is still time to register to attend.

The conference will officially commence with the Welcome to Country and an address by Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Julie Collins at 5pm on Monday March 24.

And Queensland Minister for Primary Industries Anthony Perrett will address delegates on Tuesday March 25.

A diverse and comprehensive program has been assembled to address the theme of 'Getting the fundamentals right'.

Professor Jim Hone will deliver his keynote presentation immediately following the conference opening on Monday March 24.

Presentations from nine invited speakers will then address the

four sub-themes, supported by presentations from submitted abstracts over the following two days.

Two discussion panels, comprising regional and state feral pig coordinators and land managers, have also been incorporated into the program.

Thanks are extended to the conference sponsors for their generous support, particularly gold sponsor PigBaitta and silver sponsor Australian Trapping Systems.

Pigbaitta, a feral pig specific feeding system, was developed by Got a Bug to make free feeding and baiting of feral pigs simpler, safer and less time consuming.

It enables whole groups of feral pigs to be baited at the same time.

As feral pigs are the only animal able to access the free feed in

the Pigbaitta feeder, wastage is minimised.

With Pigbaitta units available with 100kg and 250kg hoppers, time spent free feeding can be better managed.

The feeder has also been designed to provide land managers with options of the type of bait that can be used – Hoggone, Pig-Out Econobait or grain/pellets treated with 1080 – without any risks to off-target species.

Pigbaitta can also be used when trapping to attract feral pigs into the trap.

Australian Trapping Systems is an Australian family owned business that operates from the Hunter Valley in NSW.

ATS understands the issues that farmers, landowners and land managers face due to damage caused by feral animals to property and assets.

ATS wants to help

you protect your assets from feral pests so you can focus on what you do best.

ATS partners with global leaders in animal trapping to offer premium products to Australian land managers – these include Hogeye, Big Pig Trap and Pig Brig, as well as their own Australian-made panel and box traps.

See you at the National Feral Pig Conference 2025 in Surfers Paradise – register here: kamevents.curlinda.com/register/event/1307



Scan the QR code for more information on the National Feral Pig Conference 2025.

NFF appoints new chief executive

THE National Farmers' Federation recently announced Troy Williams' appointment as its new chief executive, effective March 3, 2025.

Mr Williams' leadership will focus on delivering measurable outcomes for the agricultural sector and NFF's member organisations, ensuring farmers remain at the forefront of national policy and reform.

NFF president David Jochinke said, "Troy is recognised for his exceptional ability to bring stakeholders together, negotiating with senior government officials, politicians and industry leaders."

"This will allow him to work with the NFF Board and member organisations to create an environment in which agriculture can thrive sustainably."

With the NFF Roadmap setting out an ambitious target for farm gate output to exceed \$100 billion by 2030, Troy's proven expertise in policy advocacy and navigating complex regulatory environments positions him to deliver results that matter to NFF members.

"Over more than two decades, Troy has been a champion for

businesses in highly regulated and trade-exposed industries, addressing issues ranging from product regulation and international trade agreements to workforce planning and skills development," Mr Jochinke said.

"These are exactly the challenges faced by the businesses our members represent, and Troy's experience will be invaluable in addressing them."

As the peak national body representing farmers and the broader agricultural sector, the NFF's priority is delivering real outcomes for its members.

Mr Jochinke and Mr Williams emphasised the importance of working closely with member organisations to tackle critical issues impacting farmers.

Mr Williams said, "It's an honour to be appointed as the NFF chief executive, an organisation with a rich legacy."

"I'm looking forward to strengthening the NFF's connection with its members to ensure their priorities are at the heart of our advocacy."

"Whether it is advancing trade opportunities, addressing labour shortages or

advocating for sustainable farming practices, our activity must build upon the great work that's already been undertaken to deliver practical results that empower farmers."

With a federal election looming, Mr Williams' appointment comes at a crucial time for farm advocacy.

"I'm eager to engage with stakeholders – from Parliament to the paddock – to ensure agriculture is not only heard but prioritised in the national policy debate," Mr Williams said.

"This year will be pivotal in shaping policies that secure the future of Australian farming and rural communities."

Troy takes over from Tony Mahar, who served as NFF chief executive officer from 2016 to late 2024 and now serves as Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.



New NFF chief executive Troy Williams.

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THE Albanese Labor Government's UOMO will require mobile carriers to provide access to mobile voice and SMS almost everywhere across Australia.



Minister for Communications Michelle Rowland.

Albanese Labor Government building Australia's mobile future

THE Albanese Labor Government recently announced a major world-first reform to provide basic universal outdoor mobile coverage across Australia.

Labor's Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation will require mobile carriers to provide access to mobile voice and SMS almost everywhere across Australia.

UOMO will ensure up to 5 million sq km of new competitive outdoor mobile coverage across Australia, including over 37,000km on regional roads.

Whether it's in national parks, hiking trails or out on the farm, outdoor coverage will be accessible almost anywhere where Australians can see the sky.

The Albanese Government's policy objectives are to:

- Expand Triple Zero access for Australians across the nation
- Expand outdoor voice and SMS coverage into

existing mobile black spots

- Improve the availability of mobile signals during disasters and power outages.

This reform is only possible due to the transformative global innovations in Low Earth Orbit Satellites and the arrival of Direct to Device technology, which enables signals from space direct to mobile devices.

The government will consult and introduce legislation in 2025 to expand the universal service framework to incorporate mobile coverage for the first time.

Implementation of outdoor SMS and voice will be expected by late 2027, with many Australians likely to obtain access before then.

Basic mobile data will be considered in the future as technology roadmaps and capacity considerations develop.

The government will work with stakeholders and industry to get the

legislation right, including flexibility where warranted by supply, spectrum and other factors.

The Albanese Government will also engage with industry and examine incentives and removal of barriers to support public interest objectives and competition outcomes.

Only the Albanese Labor Government has a plan to build Australia's future, including delivering \$3 billion to complete the building of the fibre national broadband network.

Minister for Communications Michelle Rowland said, "Labor governments have a proven record of expanding universal access to essential services, and the Albanese Government is forging another step forward."

"The Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation will improve public safety, increase resilience during natural disasters

and provide an extra layer of coverage in areas previously thought too difficult or costly to reach.

"The experience will be different to land mobile networks but the benefits transformative, particularly for a large continent such as ours.

"Building our mobile future with the latest technology is a vital element of Labor's plan to make Australia the most connected continent by 2030."



With global industry expected to launch D2D messaging this year, the government is moving to ensure this technology becomes an addition to a modernised and expanded voice Universal Service Obligation, including maintaining free access to Triple Zero.

To ensure consumers are informed about device compatibility and experience, the government will work with industry and the University of Technology Sydney to expand handset testing.

The policy has been informed by engagement with the LEOSat working group, advice by the Australian Communications and Media Authority on radiocommunications spectrum, the findings of the Regional Telecommunications Review and extensive feedback from regional and remote stakeholders and consumers about the need for multiple connectivity paths.

The government remains committed and will continue to evolve its existing co-investment programs such as the Mobile Black Spot Program and Mobile Network Hardening Program to expand terrestrial mobile coverage, resilience and capacity.

Further reforms to the longstanding universal services framework will be announced as the government considers recommendations from the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review.

 TABLE 1. AusScan Early Harvest Report  Australasian Pork Research Institute Ltd APRIL																											
Protein Moisture and Energy Values for Cereal Grains																											
January 2025																											
Barley																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
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NSW1	10.0	1.29	8.2	14.1	11.1	0.77	10.0	14.7	13.2	0.11	13.0	13.7	10.4	0.18	10.0	11.4	0.79	0.77	0.83	11.8	0.24	11.3	12.3	68.0	2.5	62.1	73.4
QLD	10.9	1.40	7.4	13.8	11.6	0.71	9.7	13.5	12.6	0.35	12.0	14.5	10.2	0.52	9.4	12.6	0.81	0.78	0.87	12.1	0.49	11.2	15.1				
QLD1	11.2	0.99	8.8	13.3	11.1	0.86	9.3	12.6	12.5	0.21	12.2	13.5	10.2	0.50	9.4	11.3	0.82	0.77	0.84	11.8	0.40	11.2	13.0				
SA1	11.3	1.16	9.0	13.6	10.8	1.33	8.2	14.3	13.2	0.14	12.9	13.5	10.7	0.20	10.2	11.1	0.81	0.79	0.82	12.3	0.28	11.5	12.9	67.0	2.3	62.5	71.7
SA2	11.4	1.12	9.9	14.2	10.8	1.18	9.6	14.8	13.3	0.09	13.1	13.4	10.8	0.18	10.4	11.0	0.81	0.79	0.82	12.1	0.31	11.3	12.6	65.8	2.1	61.7	68.3
VIC	10.7	1.05	7.5	12.6	10.0	0.86	8.8	12.4	12.4	0.24	12.0	12.9	9.8	0.25	9.1	10.1	0.79	0.76	0.78	11.4	0.27	10.9	12.1				
VIC 1	11.0	1.20	8.8	12.8	9.6	0.41	8.7	10.4	12.4	0.17	12.1	12.7	10.5	0.81	9.4	12.7	0.84	0.78	0.99	11.4	0.29	10.8	12.0				
VIC 2	11.4	1.26	8.2	13.6	10.5	0.68	8.9	11.6	12.5	0.16	12.2	12.8	10.6	0.42	9.8	11.9	0.85	0.80	0.93	11.6	0.27	10.8	12.2				
VIC 3	10.5	1.40	6.0	13.5	10.1	0.94	8.6	13.1	12.5	0.24	12.2	13.3	10.7	0.48	10.1	12.2	0.86	0.83	0.92	11.6	0.50	10.9	13.7				
Sorghum																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
QLD	9.7	0.78	7.8	11.4	13.0	0.72	10.7	14.2	14.3	0.23	13.4	14.8	11.8	0.53	10.3	13.2	0.83	0.77	0.89	14.7	0.36	13.4	15.4				
QLD1	9.1	0.77	8.6	10.3	12.6	0.46	12.0	13.2	14.5	0.17	14.2	14.6	11.5	0.17	11.3	11.8	0.79	0.80	0.81	14.6	0.17	14.3	14.8				
Wheat																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
NSW1	11.9	0.76	10.6	13.1	11.3	0.45	10.3	13.2	13.9	0.12	13.3	14.1	12.0	0.25	10.5	12.4	0.86	0.79	0.88	12.7	0.21	11.7	13.1	76.5	2.1	66.5	80.1
QLD	12.7	1.73	7.9	20.8	11.4	1.06	8.7	16.7	13.8	0.21	12.6	15.3	12.0	0.50	10.3	17.3	0.87	0.82	1.13	13.0	0.69	11.6	19.8				
QLD1	13.1	1.39	10.4	15.1	10.9	1.11	8.8	12.5	13.8	0.10	13.5	13.9	11.9	0.19	11.4	12.2	0.86	0.84	0.88	12.8	0.33	12.1	13.4				
SA	13.0	2.23	11.2	20.1	10.3	1.11	8.6	12.3	13.8	0.29	13.6	14.9	11.9	0.35	11.5	13.1	0.86	0.84	0.88	12.8	0.59	12.1	14.9				
SA1	13.0	1.83	10.2	17.9	10.2	1.22	7.9	13.1	13.9	0.11	13.2	14.2	12.2	0.25	10.7	12.7	0.88	0.81	0.90					75.1	2.3	66.9	80.2
SA2	12.5	1.31	9.6	16.2	11.2	1.52	8.6	14.7	13.9	0.07	13.7	14.0	12.3	0.15	12.0	12.6	0.89	0.87	0.90					74.9	2.4	70.1	79.5
VIC	12.2	1.06	9.8	15.1	10.3	0.93	8.6	12.3	13.7	0.06	13.5	13.9	11.9	0.14	11.4	12.2	0.86	0.84	0.88	12.6	0.24	12.0	13.0				
VIC 1	12.6	1.49	8.9	16.9	10.6	1.13	8.2	14.1	13.7	0.08	13.4	14.0	12.0	0.36	9.1	12.8	0.88	0.68	0.91	12.8	0.38	8.4	13.7				
VIC 2	12.4	1.39	9.4	16.2	10.4	1.14	8.4	13.0	13.8	0.06	13.6	14.0	12.0	0.20	11.5	12.5	0.87	0.84	0.89	12.7	0.32	12.0	13.6				
VIC 3	12.1	1.21	9.8	16.9	10.3	0.98	8.3	12.8	13.8	0.06	13.5	14.0	12.1	0.17	11.6	12.7	0.88	0.85	0.91	12.6	0.27	11.9	13.6				

* Each row represents a Feed Mill in the Region, for example QLD and QLD1 represent different feed mill companies within the state.

National Food Strategy tops NFF's election wish list

THE National Farmers' Federation is calling for a National Food Security Preparedness Strategy, ahead of the federal election.

NFF president David Jochinke said the impending election would be a watershed moment for Australian agriculture.

"This election comes at a critical moment for Australian agriculture, and for every Australian family who relies on farmers for affordable food and fibre," Mr Jochinke said.

"At the heart of this change, and the NFF's election platform, is the call for a comprehensive framework to safeguard our ability to feed and clothe Australians amid growing disruptions.

"We're lucky to have a strong food system, but we're not bulletproof.

"As the world becomes more volatile, we need to respond in a coordinated way."

One in three Australian families now face moderate to severe food insecurity – a challenge that will only deepen without decisive action.

"A National Food Strategy would help us understand the vulnerabilities in our supply chains and take action to ensure a food secure future for Australian families," Mr Jochinke said.

"This is not a new idea.

"It's been recommended time and again, and when I speak to people they can't believe it doesn't already exist.

"We can't afford to

continue ignoring it."

The NFF's call to all parties and candidates is to assist the sector in navigating major global megatrends, which are already impacting family farms.

These megatrends include:

- Skyrocketing production costs and red tape placing pressure on food prices and farm bottom lines

- A protectionist and uncertain global trading environment

- A changing climate and associated regulatory demands

- The energy transition – placing pressure on prices and land resources

- Internal migration to the regions – stretching housing, infrastructure and services to their limits

- Unmet workforce needs – placing a handbrake on productivity.

Mr Jochinke said the NFF's election platform detailed policies to help farmers navigate these shifts and keep the cost of living in check.

"We've worked closely with our member organisations to put together these detailed election goals," he said.

"We've laid it out for our politicians – supporting farmers helps keep food and fibre affordable for all Australians.

"Australian agriculture has the potential to be a \$100 billion industry by 2030, but we need smart federal policies and strategic investment to get there.

"As always, the NFF is taking the needs of farmers and agriculture

to the nation's decision makers and will continue to do so during this federal election period and beyond.

"We implore every candidate, campaigner and political party to engage with agriculture's challenges, impact and potential this election."

Scan the QR code below for NFF's election platform document.



A National Food Security Preparedness Strategy needed prior to the federal election. Photo: Rachel Claire

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For more information, visit churchilltrust.com.au



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Gungandji and Djunbunji Rangers doing Auschem training to earn their accreditation. Photo: NAILSMA

Protecting Country Against Invasive Species Program 2024

NORTH Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance's Protecting Country Against Invasive Species Program had a big 2024 and delivered many great achievements by partnering with Indigenous Ranger groups across Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Ten cluster projects have so far been funded, three each in WA and Queensland and four in the NT.

Engagement with IRGs, non-government organisations and government departments was a heavy focus of the program, with staff committing over 79 hours of time to significant meetings and engagements with stakeholders and 107 hours representing the program at conferences and workshops.

This level of engagement has allowed the program to create successful collaborations that leverage other funding sources to value-add to ranger projects and more effectively deliver training and field programs.

The reach of support from the program is broad – currently supporting 31 IRGs across northern Australia through cluster projects and capacity building funds.

This is set to increase in 2025.

New and existing collaborations between IRGs have been a key program achievement.

Mike Myers from Djunbunji Ltd said, "The highlight of the program was the collaboration between Mandingalbay Yidinji and Gungandji rangers, both of whom share cultural ties."

"This partnership fostered a strong sense of community and pride, as the rangers worked together to strengthen both their cultural and professional connections," Mr Myers said.

Nearly \$2 million has been directly invested into IRGs for Indigenous-led and designed projects.

The program has supported:

- Four ranger exchanges
- Eight formal training events
- Three invasive species consultations with IRGs to help IRGs determine what their invasive species objectives are
- Fifteen feral species

monitoring or control activities – including aerial surveys for feral species over two areas totalling 17,000sq km, 16 pig traps and over 100 camera traps deployed, 14ha of aerial weed control, 410 buffalo, 3808 pigs and 690 cattle culled in funded or in-kind project related activities, over 90ha of wetland monitoring and mapping, 2000ha feral sign ground surveys undertaken involving at least 64 male and 13 female rangers

• Twelve informal training, knowledge transfer and consultation activities

• Work health and safety policy and risk management mitigation development to ensure all activities are done safely.

The program is currently supporting active management of five invasive species – pigs, camels, cattle, siam weed and mimosa.

Through the program, much needed equipment and capital purchases

have been made – three vehicles including two side-by-sides that allow access to areas previously inaccessible with other IRG vehicles, a large spray unit for weed control, several firearms for culling operations, pig traps and camera traps for improved monitoring and population modelling of feral animals.

To date, 145 male and 44 female Indigenous rangers have been involved in program activities, with Indigenous employment through the program numbering 48 males and 24 females.

Importantly, this significant activity on Country has achieved many flow-on benefits, including the ability to practice culture and intergenerational knowledge transfer.

NAILSMA is proudly partnered with the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to deliver the Protecting Country Against Invasive Species Program.



Mimal Rangers doing feral pig work. Photo: Mimal Land Management



Darren Marshall from the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions, with Traditional Owners from the Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation and the Nyikina Mangala Rangers in Jarlmadangah. Photo: NAILSMA

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Premi-Boost+ 250mL comes with a separate dosing applicator that delivers precisely 2mL per dose. This ensures accurate and convenient administration to newborn, underweight and premature piglets.

The applicator simplifies the dosing process, making it easy for caregivers to provide the necessary nutritional support to young animals.



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Australia's first injectable ileitis vaccine now available

MSD Animal Health Australia has launched the nation's first injectable ileitis vaccine – Porcilis Lawsonia.

This vaccine addresses all three forms of ileitis, with the disease estimated to cost Australian pig producers between \$4.06 and \$39 per marketed pig.

Pig farmers can now administer the vaccine, without relying on dosing through drinking water or the cumbersome drenching of piglets, to aid in the prevention of infections from lawsonia intracellularis, the bacterium responsible for proliferative enteropathy, commonly known as ileitis.

This disease is characterised by poor growth, diarrhoea and, in severe cases, sudden death and dysentery in grower and finisher pigs.

Porcilis Lawsonia offers farmers flexibility in disease control strategies, potentially leading to production cost savings in labour and feed.

The vaccine can be given as an intramuscular injection mixed with Porcilis PCV M Hyo or as an intradermal needle-free vaccine in combination with Porcilis PCV IDAL.

Both methods can also be used as standalone vaccines.

Currently, the only alternative ileitis vaccine in Australia is administered orally through individual drenching or in water, requiring a seven-day antibiotic-free window during administration.

In contrast, Porcilis Lawsonia provides a convenient single-dose option (intramuscular or intradermal) that streamlines the vaccination process, particularly when combined with existing vaccines such as Porcilis PCV M Hyo or Porcilis PCV IDAL.

Farmers can start vaccinating piglets from 21 days of age with Porcilis Lawsonia, reducing clinical symptoms such as diarrhoea and weight loss caused by intracellularis.

Porcilis Lawsonia is an inactivated vaccine effective against all three recognised forms of ileitis – subclinical, chronic and haemorrhagic.

Consequently, farmers can achieve labour and feed cost savings per pig marketed, even after accounting for the vaccine's initial purchase cost.

Pig producers may wonder if ileitis is a concern even with antibiotic use – the answer is yes.

Antibiotics often do not effectively control ileitis and increasing antimicrobial resistance has been documented.

For instance, tylosin shows only intermediate effectiveness, while chlortetracycline exhibits variable results with low to intermediate activity.

Poor control of ileitis can lead to decreased feed conversion ratios and average daily gains.

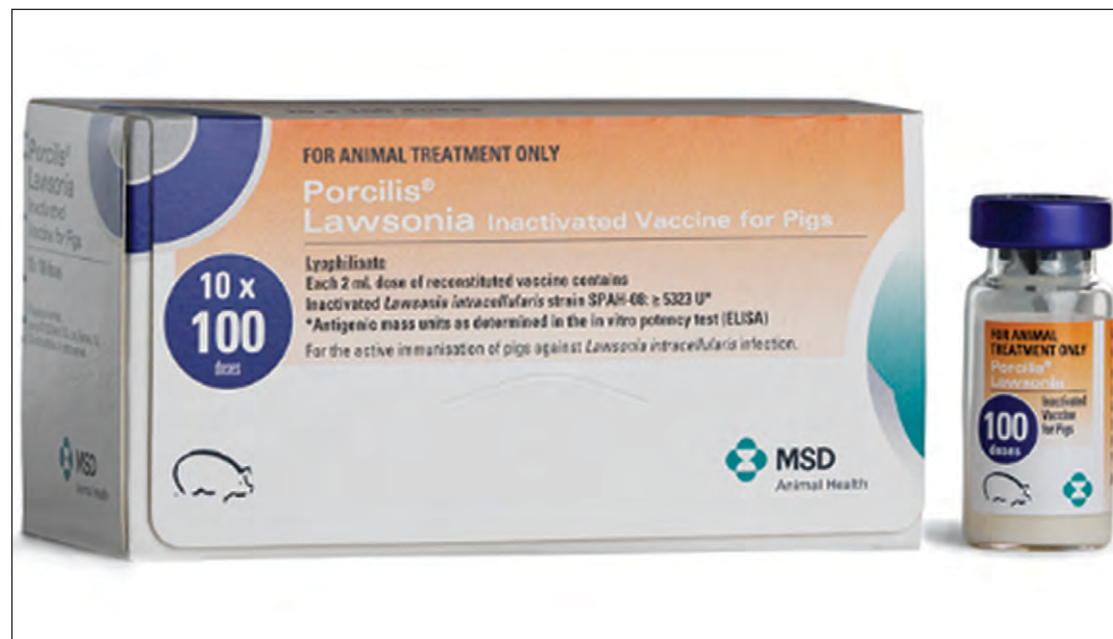
MSD Animal Health technical lead for swine in Asia Pacific Dr Leo Ellerma said: "Porcilis Lawsonia has

been a trusted vaccine for ileitis since its global launch in Europe in 2018, and MSD Animal Health has a long history of innovation in the swine industry."

For more information, and research references, contact MSD Animal Health at msd-animal-health.com or 1800 033 461.

Note, Porcilis is a registered trademark.

MSD Animal Health



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PALM Scheme 30-hour week extended

STAKEHOLDER engagement is well embedded in the PALM scheme.

The Australian Government is committed to listening to stakeholders and strengthening the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme to deliver for employers, workers and their families and communities in the Pacific and Timor-Leste.

From 1 July 2024, employers of short-term workers have been required to offer 120 hours of work over four weeks for all existing and new short-term recruitments.

The government has decided to continue the transition period for the minimum hours settings for

short-term workers until March 31, 2026, and has accepted industry's suggestion to add a 120-hour work guarantee.

This means employers of short-term workers will be required to offer 120 hours of work over four weeks.

If employers cannot do this, they must pay workers' wages equivalent to 120 hours over four weeks.

These measures offer flexibility to agriculture employers, to adapt to weather and market conditions.

These changes ensure workers receive regular income and recognise that workers are not eligible for income support or to source al-

ternative work while in Australia due to their visa conditions, and they need to support themselves and often send money home to support their families and communities.

An additional compliance mechanism will be implemented that requires a non-compliant PALM scheme approved employer to offer 30 hours per week every week as a condition of remaining in the scheme.

The compliance and assurance framework including due process, natural justice and proportionality continues to apply including with respect to the new condition.

For more information, visit palm.scheme.gov.au



Pete and Bec Anderson with their children Miah and Skye at their Comboyne property on the mid-north coast.

Small-scale livestock producers push for more micro abattoirs

PETE and Bec Armstrong are committed to giving their heritage breed pigs the best low stress lives possible.

Their animals spend their days roaming in lush pastures on their scenic farm on the Comboyne Plateau, exhibiting their natural behaviours and enjoying a diet of fresh farm fruits, pastured eggs and mash.

But until recently, the Armstrongs had a problem.

In the early days of their operation, their nearest abattoir at

Frederickton closed its doors to pigs, forcing them to make a 420km trip to Booyong in the Northern Rivers to have their animals slaughtered.

After putting so much effort into the welfare of their pigs, subjecting them to such a long stressful journey to the abattoir didn't sit right with them.

Not to mention the costs involved.

Mr Armstrong said that the very first time they took their pigs to Booyong, they thought: "Look, if we're going to continue doing this, we need to be able to process our own pigs on our own farm."

It took them almost four years to make it happen but after working through the necessary approvals, the Armstrongs were able to open an on-farm micro abattoir in December 2023.

In a typical week, the Armstrongs now process about six of their own pigs and 10 to 12 pigs for other producers in the area.

Mr Armstrong said the micro abattoir has made a huge difference.

"It was a massive effort to take the pigs up once a month to Booyong to the abattoir," he said.

"Now we just walk the pigs up from where they are in the paddock.

"It's as low stress as you can imagine.

"There's a big difference in the quality of the pork too, because the animal is not stressed.

"They're in an environment they're familiar with.

"And now we can process fresh pork every week."

Since their initial ap-

proval, they've been given the green light to process poultry and are now working toward an approval for sheep and goats.

Widespread issue

Australia Food Sovereignty Alliance president Tammi Jonas said the difficulties the Armstrongs faced in accessing an abattoir is an issue affecting small-scale producers across the country.

Preliminary data from an AFSA national survey has found 81 percent of livestock farmers surveyed have lost access to abattoirs in the past five years and 18 percent have no other option but to travel at least 250km to their nearest facility.

Ms Jonas said small abattoirs that once served local communities have disappeared and many of the remaining big abattoirs aren't interested in doing small 'private' kills, leaving small-scale farmers with few slaughter options.

The situation was exacerbated in NSW last year by the closure of private kill accounts at the Cowra abattoir and the loss of the Canowindra micro abattoir.

Ms Jonas said micro abattoirs were the only way forward for paddock-to-plate producers.

In an ideal world, she said there would be a micro abattoir within half an hour to an hour of every farm.

"Which is quite literally how it used to be," Ms Jonas said.

Reforms needed

The AFSA is currently campaigning for changes to make it easier to build micro abattoirs.

Beef and lamb producer Glen Chapman

is part of an AFSA working group lobbying for reforms to NSW planning legislation.

Mr Chapman and his wife operate two properties in the New England region using regenerative principles, with most of their produce sold into their community.

A recent foray into pigs highlighted to Mr Chapman the difficulties with abattoir access and infrastructure in their region.

"We can use Stanthorpe, and we did for a test, but the cold storage freight is not available now," Mr Chapman said.

"We can't get cold freight hanging space back to our butcher that we work with in Armidale," Mr Chapman said.

They use Frederickton for their sheep and cattle, about two-and-a-half hours away, but struggle with the price of freight.

"It costs us in the order of \$4 a kilo of packed meat product to transport our animals down and transport that meat back to our butcher to be processed," he said.

Mr Chapman said NSW legislation currently allows for abattoirs to be built on rural properties with development consent, but there is no accounting for the scale of the operation.

"It assumes any abattoir is like a big commercial abattoir, and it's going to need a whole stack of waste management and the type of stuff you need when you're doing 500-1000 head a day, whereas we're talking probably less than 2000 animals a year."

He said for a micro producer Glen Chapman

continued P19



Extension to the current PALM scheme minimum hours obligation.

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Small-scale livestock producers push for more micro abattoirs

from P18
abattoir processing less than 2000 animals a year, waste is easily dealt with on-farm and transport in and out is low.

“It’s no more than what we’d be transporting out to a saleyard now.”

Mr Chapman said the AFSA wants NSW to follow the same legislation South Australia applies to micro abattoirs.

“South Australia allows micro abattoirs to be built on farms without approval,” he said.

“They’re classified as rural industry and, as long as it’s not the primary purpose of land, you can go ahead.

“So that’s what we want.

“We want to be able to say... OK, we’re on rural land.

“It’s a secondary operation to our main grazing and meat production, but for us, it’s an essential part of our meat supply chain in being able to supply meat locally to our consumers within our region.”

The AFSA is also asking for the application of ‘field harvest’ standards to domestic livestock, enabling them to be slaughtered on farm, chilled and inspected, and subse-

quently transferred to a licensed butcher for processing – as occurs in the game industry, as well as funding for appropriate training and accreditation for producers and workers throughout the supply chain, including meat inspection.

Need for choice

Sheep and cattle farmer John Monaghan is leading the charge for a micro abattoir at Dungog.

Mr Monaghan has spent the past six years shifting to a regenerative farming model and has been successfully earning carbon credits through a carbon project on his farm.

He still sells some livestock through the saleyard, but is moving more toward direct sales.

“If you’re going to make money out of small-scale farms, you’ve got to value add your product,” Mr Monaghan said.

Adding that there were a growing number of small-scale livestock farms in the region in a similar situation, but that there was uncertainty about continuing access to abattoir and butchering services.

He and a group of other producers have

proposed to build a micro abattoir that can handle approximately 1200 cattle, 500 sheep and 200 pigs a year.

A local landholder has agreed to have the facility on her property and a farmer cooperative will run it.

Mr Monaghan said they envisage the abattoir will handle slaughter, boning and packaging and will have six full-time employees.

The group is preparing to submit a development application to the council and, if successful, hopes to have the abattoir up and running within 18 months.

Mr Monaghan said they don’t oppose large abattoirs or their continuing role in the provision of boxed products to the retail market but see the need for choice from a farmer’s, retailer’s and customer’s perspective.

“I am seeing a growing market for farm products that satisfy customers’ concerns with farming practices, animal welfare, traceability and nutrient content, and I believe that access to micro abattoirs is a critical factor in the supply of this market.”

Muswellbrook Chronicle



New England beef and lamb producer Glen Chapman.



John Monaghan is part of a group of farmers in Dungog planning to build a micro abattoir. Photo: Angus Michie



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World Pork Expo 2025

THINKING of heading to the US for the World Pork Expo 2025?

Here's a look at this premier event for pork professionals.

The 2025 World Pork Expo will bring the pork industry's leading producers, suppliers and innovators together for two days of education, networking and business opportunities.

Hosted by the National Pork Producers Council, the event will take place June 4-5 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines, Iowa.

NPPC president Lori Stevermer said in a release, "The World Pork Expo continues to be the premier event for pork producers, offering the tools and insights they need to succeed in a constantly evolving industry."

"Each year, we bring together the top minds in pork production to spark creativity and

shape the industry's future."

Here are a few great reasons to attend.

It's a one-of-a-kind industry experience.

The NPPC said, "The world's largest pork-specific trade show will once again welcome thousands of pork producers and industry professionals from across the globe."

"Last year, attendees had the opportunity to explore cutting-edge technology, business solutions and industry trends showcased by 395 companies in nearly 700 booths across 300,000sq ft of exhibit space."

It's a great way to reach the next generation.

The 'Young Pork Advocates Issues Meet' will take place again, providing a platform for the next generation of industry leaders to discuss key challenges and opportunities.

The NPPC added

that the event will offer new educational sessions tailored to professionals from all corners of the pork industry, ensuring that attendees leave with actionable insights to grow their operations.

A bigger network opens the door for opportunity.

This year's schedule is designed to maximise meaningful connections, with expanded networking events, hospitality tents and social opportunities.

Attendees can enjoy the return of complimentary pork lunches at The Big Grill, along with live entertainment and industry receptions designed to celebrate the pork community.

Registration details are available soon at worldpork.org

Attendees are encouraged to follow #WPX2025 on Facebook, Instagram and X for event updates.



Since limiting the use of crucial antibiotics in farm animals in the US, researchers have been exploring alternative ways to maintain the health of young pigs, particularly after weaning.

Essential oils as potential alternative to feed-grade antibiotics in pork production

SINCE the US initiated the Veterinary Feed Directive in January 2017, which limits the use of crucial antibiotics in farm animals, researchers have been exploring alternative ways to maintain the health of young pigs, particularly after weaning.

Various products – including organic acids, enzymes, probiotics, antimicrobial peptides, medium-chain volatile fatty acids, spray-dried plasma products and essential oils (also known as photogenic plant products) – are being investigated as substitutes for antibiotics in swine rations.

This review consolidates the findings from studies that tested selected essential oils and dissects evidence sug-

gesting that these products could emerge as viable alternatives for antibiotics.

They offer the potential for consistent availability within the industry, high safety factors for pigs and consumers, cost-effectiveness and environmental friendliness.

Despite mixed results, the use of essential oils by pig producers in the European Union for several years underscores the need for further research and understanding.

However, the potential of essential oils to revolutionise pork production is a promising prospect.

Essential oils are defined as natural bioactive compounds that are derived from plants.

They include aromatics, volatile (change in chemical structure and overall usefulness) and oily liquids extracted from materials such as seeds, flowers, leaves, buds, twigs, herbs, bark, woods, fruits and roots.

Essential oils that have been fed to pigs in multiple research studies include carvacrol, thymol, citral, eugenol and cinnamaldehyde, which are derived from thyme, lemongrass, clove, nutmeg, cinnamon, basil, oregano and hay leaf.

While essential oils are natural bioactive compounds derived from plants, their oily and volatile nature presents challenges in pig diets.

These challenges include their effectiveness within diets and their absorption into the pig's gut.

While scientists don't completely understand how essential oils work in the intestines, they believe they help reduce inflammation and protect the gut.

This means essential oils might help lessen some of the problems caused by e coli, which can upset a pig's immune system and cause diarrhoea after weaning.

The need for further research to fully understand the potential of essential oils in pig diets is not only critical, but also urgent and of utmost importance.

In the US, research with essential oils for sows, nursery pigs and grow finishers is increasing, as discussed in greater detail below.

Though some studies have noted improved feed palatability and intake, contributing to overall growth performance, a clear path to their widespread adoption by pork producers has not been delineated.

In addition to the lack of definitive information around the pharmacodynamics effects – that is, the relationship between dose and the mechanistic beneficial actions – key challenges facing the use of essential oils in pork production include some potential regulatory concerns, high inclusion costs, formulation and effective delivery methods.

The current gaps in knowledge underscore the need for further research on the use of essential oils in pork production.

Sows

Essential oils have been tested in sow diets to increase overall reproductive performance and key performance indicators typically measured in these studies

include sow feed intake, number of piglets born alive and sow milk production.

Sows with essential oils in their feed have shown small but significant indications of improved gut health compared to untreated controls regarding intestinal lining changes (especially microvilli density and length), lymphocyte proliferation and various blood parameters.

Significant improvements in sow health or performance have accompanied these changes in gut morphology in some studies.

For instance, a study in 2009 reported that supplementation of a blend of essential oils from 10 days before the estimated farrowing date through weaning improved early lactation feed intake in sows, decreased sow weight loss during the first week of lactation and enhanced piglet body weight at weaning.

A study involving 2100 sows reported that they had higher voluntary feed intake, lower annual mortality rate (4.0 percent versus 6.9 percent), reduced sow culling rate during lactation (8 percent versus 14 percent), increased farrowing rate (77.0 percent versus 69.9 percent), increased number

continued P21



Great reasons to attend World Pork Expo 2025 in the US.

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Adding essential oils to grow-finish pig diets impacted growth performance and carcass merit. Photo: Kathleen Trigg

Essential oils alternative in pork production

from P20 of live born piglets per litter (10.49 versus 9.95) and decreased stillbirth rate (0.91 versus 0.81).

However, another study noted that 70 second-parity sows fed oregano essential oil blend during gestation and farrowing did not increase piglet growth or immune responses.

Nursery pigs

Most research on essential oils in pigs has been directed toward nursery pigs due to the dietary changes and other stressors they encounter at this crucial time of their development, which often negatively impact health and performance.

Numerous studies show that feeding essential oils during this period changes the gut environment, favouring a healthier bacterial population.

In some cases, this proliferation of healthier bacteria appears to override the harmful bacterial pathogens that cause diarrhoea, decreased feed intake and reduced performance within the first few weeks of weaning.

In one specific case, essential oils were encapsulated – thymol and cinnamaldehyde tested in these studies – to improve performance, immunity and beneficial gut microflora in 240 piglets that were 36-days old at the start of the study over 35 days.

Results showed reduced e coli counts in faeces, increased lymphocyte transformation and reduced occurrence of diarrhoea.

A study done by a South Korean University reported that dietary supplementation of blended essential oils fed six weeks to 90 weaned nursery pigs resulted in an improvement in post-weaning final average daily gain (487g versus 476g, P < 0.1) without any apparent adverse effects on health or other performance indicators.

However, a 2006 study

showed that in-feed antimicrobials increased growth performance more effectively than a diet with essential oils in a piglet study conducted 28 days after weaning at day 21.

In that study, 210 piglets were fed either an oregano essential oil diet or a neomycin and oxytetracycline-supplemented diet.

The antimicrobial diet slightly improved body weight (17kg versus 15.4kg, P = 0.09) compared to the essential oil diet.

Studies noted that ADG, ADFI, G:F and 28-day weights of pigs fed oregano essential oil diet (25, 50 or 100g per ton) were similar to those of pigs fed the control diet (P > 0.05), and there was no effect on growth parameters of increasing dose of essential oil (P > 0.05).

Grow-finish

Adding essential oils to grow-finish pig diets has impacted growth performance and carcass merit, potentially decreasing the stress response during management practices.

According to a review of European essential oils, feed intake increased from 9 percent to 12 percent with dietary supplementation.

Furthermore, some studies have reported the same impact on feed intake, ranging from 3 percent to 19 percent in their review of essential oil use in Europe.

While most research has found that adding essential oils to grow finisher diets increases feed intake, another study in 2010 failed to observe any improvement in performance generated by essential oil blends in finisher pigs in the US.

It has also been noted that essential oil diets increased the longissimus muscle area for 96 grow-finish pigs, starting at around 24kg to market, increasing the hogs' muscle mass.

One study concluded

that carcass and meat quality attributes were unchanged when comparing oregano essential oil diets to conventional diets in 64 finisher pigs.

Concerns were noted that the concentration of the essential oils within the diet could alter the flavour of the final pork product, which is now being studied.

It was also noted in the same study that sensory panellists could not detect flavour or aroma differences between the conventional-fed and essential oil diets.

Certain essential oils have been researched and have shown promising results in decreasing stressful situations, such as moving and transporting pigs.

Cost

Researchers have noted that the cost-effectiveness of essential oils is generally not achieved in pigs when products are used at concentrations high enough to affect health or performance.

As interest in alternatives for in-feed antibiotics in pig production grows and more research is conducted, it is reasonable to speculate that economies of scale in production and formulation of the essential oils will be achievable,

leading to broader use of crucial oils in pork production.

Essential oils may become practical alternatives to feed-grade antibiotics.

They are being studied for their health and performance benefits for swine in all production phases.

However, none of the essential oils tested in pigs have provided consistent positive benefits in disease prevention or performance compared to antibiotics.

Knowledge about how these molecules lead to improved gut health and growth parameters in pigs is emerging from global research, particularly in Europe and Asia.

However, the expanded use of essential oils in pork production will likely depend on additional research focused on the cost of production, formulation and effective dosing and presentation of essential oils.



Scan for the full article.



Essential oils may become practical alternatives to feed-grade antibiotics. Photo: Kaboompics.com



Maximise feral pig trapping in warm weather. Photo: Local Land Services

Hot tips for trapping feral pigs

TAKE advantage of hot and dry conditions to maximise your feral pig trapping.

Feral pigs lack sweat glands, making them susceptible to heat stress and reliant on water and shade to regulate their body temperature.

To keep cool they will spend more time around watering points, wallowing in mud and resting in shaded areas.

You can use these behavioural patterns to your advantage by selecting trap sites close to water sources

and in shaded areas, especially while food sources are reduced.

Over the warmer months as conditions become hotter and drier, food resources for feral pigs within the landscape also become limited.

This benefits your trapping efforts as feral pigs will more readily take up the free feed in traps as an available source of protein.

Targeting feral pigs during the hotter months, while they are vulnerable, is an effective strategy to re-

duce numbers before seasonal conditions change and encourage population growth.

Remember to always keep animal welfare in mind, by only setting traps when you can check them early the next day and humanely destroying trapped pigs before temperatures rise.

Every landholder has a general biosecurity duty to take action on their property to prevent, eliminate or minimise pest animals. **Local Land Services NSW**

Nutrien Ag leadership transition

NUTRIEN Ag Solutions has announced a significant leadership transition for its Australian operations as Kelly Freeman steps into a new global role within the company.

After more than two successful years as managing director of Nutrien Ag Solutions Australia, Kelly has been appointed as executive advisor to Nutrien's operations in Latin America.

Effective immediately, Adrian Capogreco has been appointed as the new managing director for Nutrien Ag Solutions Australia.

Adrian is a highly respected leader within Nutrien, having most recently served as senior director of finance for the Australian business.

With an impres-

sive career spanning finance and leadership roles at Nufarm, KPMG and JP Morgan Chase, Adrian brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his new role.

Commenting on his appointment, Adrian said, "I am honoured to take on the role of managing director and continue the work of supporting Australian agriculture."

"I look forward to building on the strong foundations established under Kelly's leadership."

Reflecting on his time with Nutrien Ag Solutions in Australia, Kelly said, "To say that I have immensely enjoyed working closely with our valued customers, suppliers, teams and partners in Australia is an understatement."

"It has been an outstanding professional and personal experience, and I am confident that the Australian business will continue to thrive under Adrian Capogreco's leadership and our exceptional team across the country."

Joining Nutrien Ag Solutions in 2022 from Nutrien's Canadian retail operations, Kelly led the Australian business to significant growth through his collaborative leadership style, strategic vision and commitment to driving results.

Adrian joined Nutrien in 2021 and holds a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy), Commerce from RMIT University and an Executive MBA from Melbourne Business School.

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