VETERINARIAN Stephanie Nicholas, who commenced work in Western Australia recently with Portec Veterinary Services, is a leader at communicating with producers.

Veterinarian Stephanie Nicholas with fellow Portec Veterinary Services veterinarians, principal Kim Nairn and Vanessa Morris. Dr Nicholas and Dr Morris are both Pork CRC Industry Placement Program appointments. They were pictured at the 2017 Australian Pig Veterinarians Conference in Fremantle, Western Australia.

Another workplace agreement on Pork CRC Industry Placement Program

WHEN the Australian Pork Limited staff attend meetings or forums, they frequently hear that what our industry does is admired by other livestock sectors.

Initiatives including gestation stall free, animal welfare, biosecurity, APIQ’s, PigPass and our research programs have seen the pork industry lead the way.

However, understanding whether the right information is being seen in the right way by the right producers can sometimes be a challenge.

Are we communicating enough, not enough or too much?

Is it relevant or interesting? Can API do better and is API a leader at communicating among all the research and development corporations?

API has sought to manage the plethora of stakeholders with an ever-diversifying array of communications products.

As an example, there are producer and industry surveys, annual reports, weekly communications, Pork It Up and Pigs N’ Mud and other ad-hoc publications, marketing initiatives, research reports, the APIQ’s, Taulbro and more recently, the capacity to survey online and test producers.

Then there are the forums, lectures, roadshows and contact by phone or email, via our portal.

Combine this with the limitations on electronic communications for many producers, and the cost of printing and distributing these products, it’s no wonder that producers are wondering whether API is hitting the mark.

This challenge of balancing communication faces all organisations.

Take the humble annual report for example.

It is a requirement of most organisations to provide this to shareholders or members and the general public, outlining the achievements for the year.

However, there is a new breed of annual report designed to ‘engage and delight’ the reader – one that is ‘brand defining’ (Walters, 2017).

Walters suggests that the key to having a relevant annual report is a document that shows the personality of the company, its values and culture, and one that sparks a response from stakeholders.

The key to achieving this, suggests Walters, is to de-clutter and go global.

This means changing what information we choose to communicate, and how.

Back at API central, we are currently looking at what and how we communicate, and how this might be tailored to your particular interests.

To do this, we need to better understand who our audience is and how you would like to receive communication from us.

What communications you currently value and would like to see retained – and likewise, what we should ditch or change.

Another important factor is innovation as a tool in the means of communicating.

As an example, Meat & Livestock Australia recently launched MYMLA.

This portal is designed to be tailored to the individual needs of the producer, and includes a personalised dashboard (your local weather, daily indicator price comparisons, feed grain and so on) based on the location of the producer and the enterprise type.

Is this the way for API to bring together PigPass, API’s research technology transfer and other initiatives into a unique producer experience while acknowledging the internet challenges for many pork producers?

We need your help.

In November, the annual industry survey will be sent out to producers.

This survey collects information that assists with our advocacy and communication efforts.

This year we will include additional questions around the communication challenge and what you would prefer to see.

We also want to understand what information is critical, what is interesting – and of the latter, what do you keep to read later but never get around to.

To ensure we get to a broader range of producers, some producers will receive hard copy surveys in the mail to complete and return.

As an organisation, we believe we can do better at communicating with producers, the pork supply chain and other external stakeholders.

We are not the best RDC communicator – yet.

Given the difficult year our industry has experienced, it is important we are getting the best information to you in the best way possible.

We are aiming high to ensure your experience and interaction with API meets your expectations.
THIS month, I thought I would share with you some of the research that appeared in the 2017 International Society for Applied Ethology conference in Aarhus, Denmark that aim to address issues the animal production industry is facing overseas, all of which were centred around a general concern of understanding animal behaviour.

This conference was attended by Ashley Norval, Australian Pork Limited’s R&I manager, Technolo\gy Adoption and Industry Engagement. Why, while in Denmark, gaining personal development opportunities in the Danish pork industry and on leave from her role.

While not all the presentations were based on pig science, learnings can certainly be applied to our industry from others. The opening presentation was delivered by Christopher Hanon from SEGES, the major sponsor of this year’s 2017 ISAE conference. This address not only highlighted the ‘SEGES’ (a Danish word) approach to the research and farming knowledge generation, but also the main issues that Danish producers face with veterinarians – which are essential the same issues we face in Australia.

Animal welfare is in the majority of the agencies in Denmark and 70 percent consider it regularly or frequently, but the majority of (consumers) are only willing to pay limited extra.

In order to try to address this, the current approach is to focus on multiple stakeholders involving new national branding labels for higher labour safety and productivity. These labels were not trained in these cattle handling practices, in which turn was exacerbated by poor handling practices.

Overall, this study highlighted the importance of the professional training to minimise the incidence of poor cattle handling, with beneficial outcomes for animal welfare, labour safety and productivity.

I appreciate this is a study conducted in the cattle industry, however, I would like to note, this would also be similar if conducted between pig production and untrained staff in pig handling.

Helle Pellett Lahrmann (Denmark) presented her work on a ‘Lowered tail can predict a tail biting outbreak in grower pigs.’

Importantly however, these schemes have the potential to not only benefit SEGES, but also from the Danish government.

Maria Ceballos (Argentina) presented initial findings from her research ‘Cattle handling by untrained stockpeople gets worse along a vaccination work day’ during the second day of the conference was observed and evaluated (objectively) between farms with trained and untrained stockpeople during their routine vaccination day.

What was most interesting about this study was on the farms that had trained stockpeople, no significant effect of time on handling or procedure efficiency was found.

Whereas on the farms with untrained staff, for every 15 minutes that passed during handling during the day, the staff’s positive actions decreased and negative actions increased significantly.

These results suggested cattle handling gets worse over time when stockpeople had not been trained in proper cattle handling practices, which in turn was exacerbated by poor handling practices.

Overall, this study highlighted the importance of professional training to minimise the incidence of poor quality cattle handling, with beneficial outcomes for animal welfare, labour safety and productivity.

Importantly however, these schemes have the potential to not only benefit SEGES, but also from the Danish government.
This time, his main mes-
sage was optimal weaning
age is 23–24 days (better
pigglet health and perform-
ance and better reproduc-
tion). He also mentioned
that about 50% of pigs
will die before weaning.
Gestating sows
Marcio recommends
2 kg/day for gilts and
2.3 kg/day for sows,
and 0.6 percent digestible
lysine is more than adequate
for gilts and sows.
However, he hedged his
bets a little, suggesting
2.5 kg/day to day 28 and
flat feeding after that.
I would agree with the
latter but I’m not sure we
can get away with such
total feeding levels during
pregnancy.
Marcio is definitely not
an advocate of bump feed-
ing in late gestation.
No effect of changing lysine or other amino ac-
ids over gestation as sow
partitions nutrients to the
developing foetuses in late
pregnancy and can prob-
ably do it better than we
can.
Most likely through covered
previously much of what he
said.
Lactating sows
As we know, it is about
maximising sow feed
intake and maintaining
body condition and
Marcio recommended ad li-
bium feeding from day
of parturition to increase
sof feed intake and wean-
ing weight.
He supported the use of
the sow caliper to better
monitor and manage
sow body condition.
Wean oestrus
Marcio recommended a
high feeding level and to
check the calibration of the
feed system, as it is
common to find systems
under-delivering against
the desired or intended
amount.
He showed some excel-
ent sow performance re-
sults from large herds in
the US.
Again, I have sent you
this material before, but
weaning at 24 days into
groups and using ESFs and
flat feeding (2.2 kg/day
for gilts and sows, respec-
tively) through gestation
is achieving 95 percent
farrowing rate, 147 born
alive and weaning 13.3 per
ter and in excess of 30
per sow, per year.
Very impressive I must
say, so they’re doing some-
thing right and we really
need to get to 12 weaned
per litter and around 26
weaned/sow/year.
Some producers are
close but to advance the
industry overall, we need
a couple of research and/or
management break-
throughs, but I’m sure the
targets are achievable.
NZ meetings
The Ecopharm meetings
were run by Dr Bruce
Welch and Dr David Law-
ton, the two major pig
vet-
erinarians in NZ.
Meetings were held in
Christchurch and Palm-
erin North.
It was freezing in
Christchurch and wet in
Palmerston North.
Conferences were very
well attended by produc-
ers and a number of tech-
nology companies.
They covered bench-
marking, presentations on
managing pigs and pork
production from Dr David
Chennells, a British pig
veterinarian, an update on
Pork CRC outcomes and
very interesting and in-
formative presentation on
rodent control.
NZ performance
We learnt about 40 per-
cent of sows are managed
outdoors but the majority
of pigs are finished
indoors.
Despite having high
feed costs, (SA$405–SA$540)
—continued P4
The 2017 Australasian Pig Science Association Conference is being held on Monday, November 20 at the Grand Hyatt Melbourne, the AP-SA Conference will not only be a celebration of pig science research, but also a reminder of how far the APSA society has grown from its humble beginnings in Albury in 1987 to the international conference it is today.

The success of APSA can be attributed to the hard work and dedication of many in the pig science community who have ensured every APSA Conference has been a success. APSA is a forum of topical sessions and high-quality, well-delivered abstracts. The APSA Conference will not only be a celebration of pig science research, but also a reminder of how far the APSA society has grown from its humble beginnings in Albury in 1987 to the international conference it is today.

In 2007, the APSA committee decided to acknowledge the contributions of those who have worked tirelessly in many different roles to ensure the success of the APSA Conference, through the setting up of the APSA Fellow Award. This prestigious award is offered in recognition of past and present members who have made an outstanding contribution to APSA as well as their commitment and contribution to pig science.

Nominations for the APSA Fellow Award are received from the current APSA committee and the initial nominations are supported by a verbal statement addressing the selection criteria, which are weighted to assist the committee in its deliberations. The selection criteria for the deliberation of APSA Fellow nominations cover contributions to:

• The APSA committee (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, ordinary committee member);
• Technical content contribution (editor, referee, scientific authors etc);
• Membership development (students, national and overseas);
• Contribution and commitment to pig science (research, involvement in postgraduate training);
• Contribution and commitment to pig science (research, involvement in postgraduate training).

It is very fitting for the 30th anniversary of APSA that Dr Ray King, one of the first APSA Fellows in 1987, will present the Dunkin Memorial Lecture to open the 2017 APSA Conference. Ray was also the first APSA president and has served on the APSA committee five times, twice as president. All past APSA fellows were significant contributors to APSA and pig science, and have made significant contributions to both the national and international pig science industry. Previous recipients are:

• Dr Ray King and Dr David Hennessey (2007);
• Dr Michael Taverner (2009);
• Dr New Ian Williams (2011);
• Prof Frank Dunsewitz and Dr Bruce Mollan (2015); and
• Prof John Plaske (2015).

The recipient of the 2017 APSA Fellow Award will also have made significant contributions to APSA, pig science and the Australian pig industry. The recipient of the AP-SA Fellow Award will be announced at the APSA Conference gala dinner, held on Monday, November 20.

APSA social events

The social events of APSA 2017 are shaping up to be a highlight of the conference. On Monday night, following the AC Dunkin Memorial Lecture, conference delegates will be able to network at an APSA cocktail party held in the magnificent Plaza Ballroom at the Regent Theatre, which is kindly sponsored by Austhe Ingredients with meat supplied by SunPork Fresh Foods.

The APSA Conference gala dinner will be held in the magnificent Plaza Ballroom at the Regent Theatre, which is kindly sponsored by DSM with meat supplied by Rivalea.

There, conference delegates will have the opportunity to meet friends and colleagues old and new and listen and dance to a fantastic Australian band.

On Tuesday night, the last night of APSA, the conference delegates will be able to relax in the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground with breathtaking views of the celebrated turf of the ‘G’, which has been kindly sponsored by Zoetis.

From all in the 2017 APSA committee, we hope you will join us in celebrating the 30th anniversary of APSA this coming November 20.
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There can be little doubt that the price drop this year was a wake-up call to us all. While we faced this year’s challenge from a much stronger position than we did the profit crisis of 2007, going from an average $3.36 for a boner to $2.82 last week, really hurts.

It looks like the market is stabilising for now, with production from the weekly abattoir reports appearing to be more stable in both salthurs and carcass weights. Meat produced grew at about 4.9 percent in September 2017 versus last year, its lowest rate since April this year.

Demand also appears to be continuing to grow in retail. Figure 2 shows that pork continues to outperform other species and we will continue to work hard at this in the coming months.

Over the course of the past few months, we have started improving our production forecasting phasing.

The survey has been accurate at predicting a year’s slaughters for a few years. Now we are working on monthly and weekly forecasts, measuring them weekly and reporting them in the weekly communique.

In addition, we are looking for solutions to fill the three black holes we have in complete supply chain understanding.

The black holes are:
1. What is going to occur in the 30 percent of production from properties we don’t get production survey information from? Here all producers can help. Peter Smith is sending out the October survey now.
2. Foodservice sales. This has been an area most food companies have struggled with since Adam was a lad. It appears APL Insights manager Kathleen Pindsle has found a way of measuring that is yielding better information than I have ever seen. We are hopeful this black hole is no more.
3. Wholesale sales. This is hard because how much of what gets sold to whom is commercially sensitive. However, we are working with a wide array of wholesale professionals to piece together a map of the wholesale market. This is messy and it will take some time but we are determined to be in a better position in 2018 than we are today.

We are continuously working to get demand growth ahead of supply growth.

Country of origin labelling landing bites with seafood and pork

In the August edition of Australian Pork Newspaper, we explained how importert ed ribs and bellies were making gains against fresh Australian pork, especially in the foodservice sector (‘Pork import protocols – the good, the bad and the ugly’).

Though the impact of these products on fresh ribs and bellies has softened somewhat, Australian Pork Limited has been working hard to ensure that country of origin information is made available to the customer at their local pub, club or restaurant.

Despite country of origin labelling having been rolled out to consumers in the retail sector, the foodservice sector remains absent from labelling requirements, meaning pork belly and ribs can be sold without any information about their origin or method of production.

In seeking to pressure state and federal governments to understand the impact of lack of labelling has, APL has found an ally in the seafood industry, which faces the same issue in trying to market its product in the face of imports and an unsuspecting customer base.

It seems the concept of ‘asking the waiter’ is losing credibility as even restaurant owners concede their staff may not always know the origin of their product.

Following on from a successful CoOL regime in Northern Territory cafes, restaurants and fish and chip shops, the seafood industry has made inroads with the NSW and Commonwealth governments in seeking to roll out the scheme more broadly.

Consultation processes are under way in both jurisdictions with reports due in December 2017.

APL is continuing to meet with the seafood industry as well as government officials in a bid to take advantage of the momentum generated, with an aim to extend this important regulation to the pork industry nationwide.

Alister Oulton
APL Policy Research Officer
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WHILE in China last month, I was rapt to read in an Oz article on my phone that Western Australia’s very own Linton Batt of Berkshire pork had taken out top honours at this year’s Sydney Fine Food Awards. His Berkshire pork won the champion pork exhibit this year, after earlier taking out gold with a score of 92.5, eclipsing another WA competitor, a Linley Valley Pork Berkshire cross CM Myora F1 entry with 91 points.

“Our Berkies are grown and raised on straw in large open sheds, we don’t dock tails or clip teeth and don’t use hormones or prophylactic antibiotics at any stage of production,” sprouts Linton proudly on his Black Label Berkshire website. He goes on to say his pigs are processed in small batches at the family-owned abattoir, only an hour away, which minimises stress on the selected animals and maximises meat quality.

“We pride ourselves on being able to control and monitor all stages of production, from paddock to plate, which guarantees our customers a consistent delicious pork product,” he says. As a long-standing (OK, biased) advocate of WA pork, I’m delighted to note that it seems WA-bred pork continues to be esteemed around Australia and England, including Supreme Exhibit at the 2013 Sydney Royal and the next year at the Adelaide Royal.

Linton runs his black Berkshire pigs on his small farm at Beverley, 130km southeast of Perth. At the 2013 Sydney Royal, his ‘Berkies’ were bred in Beverley from stud-registered Berkshires and fed grain from neighbouring wheatbelt farms. Linton says he’s very proud of his herd’s world-class pedigree, whose bloodlines have consistently won champion ribbons at royal shows around Australia and England, including Supreme Exhibit at the 2013 Sydney Royal and the next year at the Adelaide Royal.

Linton runs his black Berkshire pigs on his small farm at Beverley, 130km southeast of Perth.

WA top of the pork pops

Cant Comment

by BRENDON CANT

He also owns and runs an abattoir 106km down the track at Corrigin. His Berkshire pork won the champion pork exhibit this year, after earlier taking out gold with a score of 92.5, eclipsing another WA competitor, a Linley Valley Pork Berkshire cross CM Myora F1 entry with 91 points.

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Linton runs his black Berkshire pigs on his small farm at Beverley, 130km southeast of Perth.

Join the Pork Lovers’ Club online!
Rural R&D funding turning farmers’ legumes into loot

FARMERS in low and medium rainfall areas could receive a boost to average farm profits by 10 percent and halve economic risk simply by turning to legumes, thanks to $5.5 million in government funding awarded to the Grains Research and Development Corporation.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce said the Government was contributing more than $5.5 million to the project under the Rural & D for Profit program, which supports R&D projects that deliver genuine benefits at the farm gate.

“The Government is committed to creating tangible benefits for farmers and this is a prime example of the real benefits of investment in comprehensive research and development,” Minister Joyce said.

“The GRDC will collaborate with seven partner organisations on this $56 million project to determine how new legume varieties, together with innovative management techniques, can improve profits for mixed farms (cropping and livestock) in low and medium rainfall areas.

“The new legume varieties reduce nitrogen use, increase soil fertility, reduce weeds and diseases and are a quality source of livestock feed – all contributing to a better bottom line for farmers.”

Member for Durack Melissa Price MP announced the funding boost while opening ABARES’ Kununurra Regional Outlook Conference in WA.

“The project will be trialled on farms across WA, Victoria, southern NSW and South Australia, and will develop whole farm economic modelling to give farmers a clear understanding of what these new crop varieties and management practices could deliver to their business,” Ms Price said.

“The new legume varieties reduce nitrogen use, increase soil fertility, reduce weeds and diseases and are a quality source of livestock feed – all contributing to a better bottom line for farmers.

“Grain, meat and wool producers could reap significant benefits, with the project expected to boost average farm profits by 10 percent and halve economic risk.”

The Rural & D for Profit program funds projects that deliver practical and accessible results for farmers, including managing pests, better pasture management and production techniques and improving access to premium markets.

Coalition funding for the $180.5 million Rural & D for Profit program is on top of around $700 million the government already invests in rural R&D each year.

Note: Kransky sausage may be replaced with Australian bacon or pork sausages

Kransky sausage pasta with tomato and chilli pesto

INGREDIENTS
- 3 pork kransky sausages, sliced diagonally
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 50g semi-dried tomatoes
- 1 red chilli, seeds removed and sliced
- 20g grated parmesan
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 400g can tomatoes, diced
- 400g penne pasta, cooked and drained
- Black pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese to serve

METHOD
1. Heat a non-stick pan over a medium heat and fry the sliced kransky sausages until browned on both sides.
2. Place the oil, semi-dried tomatoes, chilli, parmesan and parsley into the work bowl of a food processor and process until smooth.
3. Toss the pasta, pesto and kransky together in a large bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper.
4. Serve hot with salad and fresh crusty bread.

Prep time 20 min | Cook time 10 min | Serves 4

For more delicious pork recipes, visit pork.com.au
A three-hour pressure test was the final step to select the apprentice butchers to represent Australia at the World Butchers’ Challenge in Ireland next year.

Twelve apprentices who had impressed in state trials went head to head on the Gold Coast in a test of knife work, innovation and presentation.

The judging panel of World Apprentice Competition judge Bob Retallick; Australian Steelers captain Adam Stratton; and Chris Kelly from Murray Valley Meats said the apprentices had lifted their efforts incredibly since the state trials and blown them out of the water.

While all the finalists impressed, Joseph Maberley from Vic’s Meat Market, Pyrmont, NSW; Christopher Lukaitis from Rare Fusion Gourmet Butchery, Booragoon, Western Australia; and Mitchell Byrnes from Hudson Meats, Drummooye, NSW, were named as the Young Aussie Butchers.

“The Young Aussie Butchers team is all about finding our best apprentice butchers to represent us in the World Butchers’ Challenge in Ireland next year,” Mr Retallick said.

“The invitation to compete was open to all butchers who were apprentices as of September 30 this year and under contract to a training body.

“State trials were held in South Australia, Queensland, Victoria and NSW, but included competitors from Western Australia and Tasmania too.

“While we’re announcing them as a team, they’re competing as individuals and will be against more than 42 of their peers from around the world.”

This is the first time the apprentice butchers have competed on the world stage and as part of the prestigious World Butchers’ Challenge.

“These apprentices showed we have world-class butchers coming through the industry and gives them a chance to test their skill, but also pick up tips and tricks from others and the Australian Steelers butchery team as well,” Mr Retallick said.

“In this final selection challenge, they had three hours to show their skills with a shoulder of pork, hand on, and a boneless beef oyster blade, but in Ireland, the competition will be two hours and will feature three different cuts.

“What will remain constant though, is the judging criteria, and we know that this team we’ve selected will do Australia proud.”

The Young Aussie Butchers will now be honing their skills and training extremely hard with the assistance of the Australian WBC Organising Committee, before travelling to Ireland in March 2018.

Apprentice butchers interested in future competitions should contact Bob Retallick on 0418 576 850.
Robots to help exterminate AMR risk in Aussie livestock

AUSTRALIAN agriculture is a world leader in the fight against development of superbugs. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce said the Government was providing almost $1.3 million to Australian Pork Limited under the Rural R&D for Profit program to boost Australia’s trade reputation by demonstrating the low antimicrobial resistance status of our farm produce.

“Antimicrobial resistance, or superbugs resistant to antibiotics, is a serious global problem that is a major public health issue worldwide,” Minister Joyce said.

“Minimising the development of resistance in livestock and companion animals is an important priority for industry. This research project, led by APL, will investigate the use of high-tech robots to define the low level of antimicrobial resistance risk in pigs and chickens within our supply chains.”

“Using laboratory robots that can work quickly, precisely and cost-effectively, the project will develop an industry-wide approach to gather information to help farmers demonstrate their low AMR risk status, giving them a competitive advantage in the international market.”

Specialised robots will be used to isolate, count and characterise large numbers of bacteria from farm faeces.

“The robots will be used to identify and grow thousands of individual bacteria to determine the presence and distribution of antimicrobial resistance at both the herd and national level,” Minister Joyce said.

“The project will help monitor on-farm control measures to reduce the presence of antimicrobial-resistant organisms across pork and chicken meat industries, with the potential for the project to be used as a model in other agricultural sectors and for ongoing surveillance.

“Australia is a global leader in minimising risks of AMR spreading due to the foresight of the government, with industry not permitting the use of several antibiotic classes in livestock.”

APL CEO Mr Andrew Spencer welcomed the Australian Government’s support for this project, which is significant for both humans and animals, and will demonstrate livestock industries as responsible citizens.

“The outcome of this project will enable industry to provide hard evidence to back claims and to show leadership credentials, which in an AMR averse world will be an important point of differentiation,” Mr Spencer said.

While there is limited overlap in antimicrobial resistance between human and animal products, it is essential that all parts of the puzzle contribute to the solution.

“The $180.5 million R&D for Profit program delivers on the Government’s election commitment to increase R&D funding for practical projects to increase farm gate returns and capture global market opportunities.”

TRICOTHECENES, deoxynivalenol, zearalenone, ochratoxin, aflatoxin... is your insomniac cured yet?

If not, read on to hear more about mycotoxins!

The past 18 months has been a notoriously bad time for mycotoxins in the eastern and southern states of Australia, largely due to the conditions around last year’s harvest.

As a result, we have been seeing a spike in ‘strange’ cases on farms due to mycotoxin contamination of feed and straw.

Cases have included reduced fertility, variation in growth and immune suppression resulting in increased susceptibility to disease and vaccines having little to no effect.

As a rule of thumb, mycotoxins pose the greatest risk to your breeding herd and weaners.

How do we control these mycotoxins then and prevent our pigs from becoming exposed – should we have a pocket of feed or bedding with high levels?

“Just check a mycotoxin binder in the feed mate and she’ll be right!”

However, this often leads to producers incorrectly believing they are covered against all mycotoxins if they put any binder in the feed. It is important to remember not all mycotoxin binders are created equal.

Most mycotoxin binders were initially developed for use in dairy cattle, where there is a need to protect the animal from aflatoxin and mycotoxins in the milk.

Aflatoxin-contaminated milk poses a risk to human health – this was the driving reason behind the development of the initial mycotoxin binders.

However, aflatoxin binders take a back seat when it comes to pigs. They can cause problems, however most commonly we see issues in pigs as a result of deoxynivalenol, zearalenone or ochratoxin or contamination of feed.

These mycotoxins have a completely different structure to aflatoxin, and as a result, mycotoxin binders designed purely for aflatoxin are often an expensive waste of money in pigs. Remember – cheap is not always better!

How then do we know if we are using the right mycotoxin binder?

There is plenty of data available on the binding capacity of different binders, we just need to know where to look for it!

Talk to your vet, nutritionist or animal health advisor about the different binding capacities of mycotoxin binders available on the market.

For pigs, look for the mycotoxin binder with high binding capacity for zearalenone and ochratoxin.”

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Australian farm production to fall following record-breaking year

THE gross value of Australian farm production is forecast to fall almost 9 percent to $58 billion in 2017-18, primarily reflecting a decline in crop production, according to the Agricultural Commodities, September quarter 2017 report. ABARES chief commodities analyst Peter Gooday said the outlook had been affected by mixed seasonal conditions.

“The fall in the total value of farm production is driven by a forecast decline of 39 percent in total winter crop output, reflecting a 10-year average for winter crops to 2015-16 but there is substantial variation in crop prospects across the country. “For livestock, we are expecting a 1 percent rise in the value of production. “Cattle slaughter is forecast to rise after two years of declining turns-off, however prices are expected to fall as domestic supply increases and we face increased competition in export markets. “Sheep and lamb prices are forecast to rise, supported by restocker demand, and lamb slaughter is forecast to increase. “Farm export earnings are also expected to fall from the highs of last year to be 7 percent lower at a forecast $45 billion in 2017-18. “The forecast decline is driven by a 16 percent decrease in export earnings for crops to $23 billion, reflecting lower forecast production,” Mr Gooday said.

Export earnings for livestock and livestock products are forecast to increase by 4 percent to $22 billion.

“Income growth in Australia’s major export markets is supporting demand for Australian meat, wool and dairy products.”

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To view the full report, visit agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/57

DO you believe in fate? Boy Torrejas, or Buboy to his friends, was fated to marry Florangele Bragat. But their paths had not crossed, even though they both were born in the same town of Kidapawan in the province of Bukidnon in the Philippines. Both finished their agricultural degrees at the Central Mindanao University, but by the time Angel commenced first year college, Buboy was already preparing to finish his course.

In order for fate to materialise, Boy and Angel would have to meet, and for that to happen, an intermediary was needed - and that role was aptly played by Global Skilled Employment Services.

The fateful day began on October 14, 2016, when GSES arranged for a reputable Australian company to interview via Skype six Filipino applicants. Buboy and Angel were among the hopefuls. Of the six, the company hired three, and as fate would have it, Buboy and Angel were among those chosen.

However, Buboy was almost not interviewed because at the time he was not interested in sitting down for another interview, having suffered the misfortune of not being picked by three previous prospective employers.

In fact, he later wrote in his testimonial on our Facebook page that it was only after he received the 17th phone call from our Manila employee MJ that he relented and decided to be interviewed.

Buboy was counting - and 17 was his lucky number.

Suppose MJ had stopped at 16. But as fate would have it, she called one more time.

The Australian farm required that the newly hired employees pass the IELTS test.

Buboy and Angel decided to enrol in the week-long IELTS review boot camp of the McNally English Tutorial, or MET, which was held at MET’s Manila head office.

As you can read on the MET website (mcnallyenglish.com), the five-day boot camp provides an atmosphere that is conducive to learning because it promotes camaraderie among the attendees.

A photo taken during their IELTS program demonstrated that camaraderie was indeed very evident - and obviously, for Buboy and Angel, more than camaraderie developed – it was at the boot camp love sprouted and blossomed!

From then on, succeeding events made sure fate would be fulfilled.

They flew to Australia on the same flight, and although their employer had two farms in different locations in Australia, Buboy and Angel were assigned to the same farm, and it was inevitable they would find their way to the altar.

We, GSES are very proud of our mission statement: helping people change their lives.

In the love story of Buboy and Angel, we are especially elated in the role we played.

Estelle McNally
Global Skilled Employment Services director

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Australian farm production to fall following record-breaking year

THE gross value of Australian farm production is forecast to fall almost 9 percent to $58 billion in 2017-18, primarily reflecting a decline in crop production, according to the Agricultural Commodities, September quarter 2017 report. ABARES chief commodity analyst Peter Gooday said the outlook had been affected by mixed seasonal conditions.

“The fall in the total value of farm production is driven by a forecast decline of 39 percent in total winter crop output, as yields fall from the record highs achieved last year,” Mr Gooday said.

“This is around the 10-year average for winter crops to 2015-16 but there is substantial variation in crop prospects across the country. “For livestock, we are expecting a 1 percent rise in the value of production. “Cattle slaughter is forecast to rise after two years of declining turns-off, however prices are expected to fall as domestic supply increases and we face increased competition in export markets. “Sheep and lamb prices are forecast to rise, supported by restocker demand, and lamb slaughter is forecast to increase. “Farm export earnings are also expected to fall from the highs of last year to be 7 percent lower at a forecast $45 billion in 2017-18. “The forecast decline is driven by a 16 percent decrease in export earnings for crops to $23 billion, reflecting lower forecast production,” Mr Gooday said.

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Historical perspective of methionine sources

Methionine sources matter to animals

THE amount of antimicrobials given to animals destined for human consumption is expected to rise by a staggering 82 percent and reach 200,000 tonnes by 2030 unless policies are implemented to limit their use, according to new research.

The researchers, from ETH Zürich, Primestone, and the University of Cambridge, conducted the first global assessment of different intervention policies that could lead to the projected increase of antimicrobial use in food production.

Their results, reported in the journal Science, represent an alarming re-assessment from already pessimistic estimates made in 2010, pushed up mainly by recent reports of high antimicrobial use in animals in China.

In modern animal farming, large quantities of antimicrobials are used for disease prevention and growth promotion.

Co-author Gats scholar and PhD student at Cambridge’s Department of Veterinary Medicine Emma Glennon said, “Globally, animals receive almost three times as many antibiotics as people, though much of this use is not medically necessary, and many new strains of antibiotic-resistant infections are now common in people after originating in our livestock.”

“As global demand for meat grows and agriculture continues to transition from extensive farming and smallholdings to more intensive practices, the use of antimicrobials in food production will increasingly threaten the efficacy of these life-saving drugs.”

Global policies based on a user fee and strict regulation could help mitigate these ominous projections.

The study’s first author, Dr Thomas Van Boeckel from ETH Zürich said: “Under a user fee policy, the billions of dollars raised in revenues could be invested in the development of new antimicrobial compounds or put towards improving farm hygiene around the world to reduce the need for antibiotics, in particular in low and middle-income countries.”

Compared to a business as usual scenario, a global regulation putting a cap of 50mg of antimicrobials per kilogram of animal per year in OECD countries could reduce global consumption by 60 percent without affecting livestock-related economic development in low-income countries.

However, such a policy may be challenging to enforce in resource-limited settings.

An alternative solution could be to impose a user fee of 50 percent of the current price on veterinary antimicrobials — this could reduce global consumption by 31 percent and generate yearly revenues of between US$1.7 and US$4.6 billion.

An important limiting factor in performing this global assessment was accessing sufficient data on veterinary antimicrobial sales volumes and prices. This present study is based on publicly available data, limited to 37 countries. Representatives from the animal health industry were approached for this study but all declined to share information on antimicrobial sales or prices.

Overall, it can be stated that the methionine sources DL-methionine and MHA-FA are clearly different in their nutritional value and yes, it matters to the animal species.

There are multiple reasons for the value difference and customers should take a deep insight when making their choice about the best source.

Massive projected increase in use of antimicrobials in animals by 2030

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THE Darling Downs is set to become an epicentre for Queensland grains and cropping research, with the announcement of an $11 million investment into a Grains Research Facility.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce recently announced the $11 million co-investment by the Grains Research Development Corporation and the Queensland Government.

Through an industry trust (Grains and Crops R&D Trust) a 740ha property on the Condamine River, southwest of Toowoomba, has been acquired and is set to become one of Australia’s biggest cropping research stations.

The farming property will be developed into a world-class grains applied research, development and extension facility, which will be operated by the trust on behalf of Australian grain growers.

Minister Joyce said the co-investment highlighted Queensland’s and northern NSW’s importance to the national grains industry and the need for ongoing, grass-roots driven RD&E.

Minister Joyce paid tribute to the major contribution of Dr John McVeigh, a federal member for Goomeri, to the development of the new research facility in his former role as Queensland Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (2012-15).

“This world-class grains research facility will have high relevance to the cropping sector as it is located in one of the country’s prime agricultural areas, in close proximity to established scientific research institutions,” Minister Joyce said.

“Australia has world-class grain growers, but what this facility will do is focus on issues including new technology, crop genetics and weed control, to boost growers’ farmgate profits and bolster our competitiveness globally.

“The location of the research facility will allow for both summer and winter farming systems trials that are relevant not just to Queensland grain growers, but nationally.

GRDC chairman John Woods said the facility would be open to both public and private organisations to undertake RD&E, which would help ensure enduring profitability for Australian grain growers.

“Importantly, it will enable targeted, innovative RD&E that addresses major constraints and challenges to farm profitability in this region now and into the future.

“Strategically, this investment is in close proximity to established Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries grain research centres in Toowoomba and Warwick, along with key research partners such as the University of Southern Queensland, University of Queensland and CSIRO.”

Mr Woods said while DAF and GRDC were co-investors in the trust with the aim of developing the ‘fit-for-purpose’ property, it will be administered by a trustee company, Queensland Crop Research Limited, on behalf of the Australian grains industry and only ever be used for scientific research to benefit growers.

QCR trustees include Goondiwindi grain grower Tom Woods (chair), Toowoomba-based wheat breeder John Sheppard, former GRDC Northern Regional Panel chairman James Clark and Nobby grain grower Chris Bazzey.

The inaugural chair of the trust was Pampas grain grower Lyn Brazil.
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Australasian Pork Newspaper, October 2017 – Page 15
Taking a closer look at post-weaning piglet dystbiosis

A GROUP of scientists from three research institutions – Clermont-Ferrand University, INRA, Institut de l’Élevage and Ghent University – and Lallemand Animal Nutrition published an in-depth review on post-weaning piglet gut microbiota dysbiosis in Trends in Microbiology.

First, the researchers reviewed the impact abrupt dietary and environmental changes during weaning caused pigs’ digestive microbiota, which can lead to enteric problems.

Next, the researchers looked into the effects of non-antimicrobial alternatives that are currently evaluated to restore intestinal balance and allow better management of the weaning transition. One of the conclusions of this extensive review was: among the available alternatives, probiotics seem to have the highest potential and could represent a safe opportunity to fight against post-weaning dysbiosis and enteric infections in the swine industry.

Additionally, the review evaluated in vitro models that have been designed to study piglet microbiota and develop new feed aditives, which is aligned with the EU 2010 directive to reduce the use of animals in research additives.

Reviewing non-antimicrobial approaches in weaning piglets

Based on the need for non-antimicrobial alternative strategies to restore microbiota balance and control gastro-intestinal infections associated with weaning transition in piglets, the authors reviewed studies with several types of such approaches: zinc oxide, organic acids, essential oils, prebiotics and probiotics.

Concerning the latest, they reviewed 12 probiotic studies (six in healthy piglets, six in pathogen-challenged piglets) conducted with different types of bacteria or yeast probiotics.

Conclusions indicated lactic acid bacteria showed an increased abundance of lactobacillus or bifidobacterium spp. and a decrease in E. coli in newly weaned piglets, highlighting a strain-dependent effect.

This led researchers to conclude that among the available alternatives, probiotics seem to have the highest potential as they constitute the only feed additive that is efficient towards pathogenic strains in piglets.

Although the underlying mechanisms are not fully understood, protection of piglets from post-weaning infections by probiotics could notably occur through inhibition of pathogen growth and adhesion to intestinal mucosa, stimulation of the piglet immune system, or modulation of the composition and activity of the resident microbiota.

Finally, the review also evaluated in vitro models of the piglet gut.

Lallemand Animal Nutrition, together with academic partners from UMR MEDIS INRA, Clermont-Ferrand University, ANSES, ANR, Université de Bretagne Loire, has recently contributed to the development of a new dynamic in vitro model of the piglet colon, called PigutVM.

Until now, only a few in vitro models of the pig gut existed and none reproduced the piglet gut.

Nevertheless, such a tool would be of high interest since the first weeks of life are a critical phase in the swine growing cycle.

PigutVM is the first model of its kind that reproduces the anaerobic conditions of the colon maintained by microbial fermentations.

It was used for the first time to assess the impact of antibiotics on the colonic microbiota of piglets and the effect of the probiotic yeast saccharomyces cerevisiae var. boulardii CNCM I-1079.

The first results were published earlier this year. The authors concluded to the relevance of this model to replicate in vivo situations, and to its possible adaptation in future research projects to study piglet digestive dysbiosis.

Interestingly, the positive effect of saccharomyces cerevisiae var. boulardii CNCM I-1079 on the decrease of E. coli levels using the PigutVM confirmed previous in vivo evidence.

A new project is ongoing with the same partners to improve the model and study various dysbiosis scenarios and new ways to mitigate it.

Lallemand Animal Nutrition R&D director Dr Mathieu Castex said, “We are very proud to be involved in such advanced research into piglet microbiota.”

“Over the past decades, rumen microbiologists have focused a lot on the characterisation and understanding of the rumen microflora and experimental models, from in vitro fermentations to cannulated cows, are common tools.

“When Lallemand started looking into swine microbiota more than 10 years ago, the level of knowledge was really low, and we acknowledged the fact that the swine microflora was underestimated.”

Research manager Dr Frédérique Chaucheyras-Durand said, “Capitalising on our advances in rumen microbiota, we focused major R&D efforts on piglets’ digestive microbiota.”

“Development of the PigutVM is one piece of the puzzle that will help us get a better understanding of probiotics’ and antimicrobials’ modes of action, but also to look for new solutions, a key in the actual context of antimicrobial reduction.”

Also check out the recently presented Piglet-Blota project: lallemand animalnutrition.com/europe/introducing-pigletbiota-research-partnership.html

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Australian pig farmers leaders in animal welfare

A VOLUNTARY initiative introduced by Australian pork producers to phase out the use of sow stalls on farm has now been adopted and implemented by pig farmers who collectively account for almost 80 percent of Australia’s sows, Australian Pork Limited CEO Andrew Spencer recently revealed at an Agribusiness Australia breakfast in Adelaide.

With four out of every five Australian sows now loose housed – as well as a 91 percent probability they will not be housed in sow stalls at any point in time between five days after mating and one week before farrowing – it marks a significant milestone for the producer-owned organisation in its pursuit to implement ever-more transparent and constantly improving industry practices.

Mr Spencer said the successful uptake of the voluntary initiative – unique to Australia – will now be followed by a review of Australia’s pig welfare standards and the mandatory phase-out of all sow stalls on Australian pig farms.

“It has been extremely encouraging to see such a high level of compliance with our voluntary sow stall phase-out initiative,” he said.

“Our producers have embraced the opportunity to shift their practices on farm forwards and adopt new and more transparent ways of working.

“We aimed to get the whole industry on the line on this one but being a voluntary initiative, I think the achievement is still one to be proud of.

“Interestingly, the proportion of sows housed in sow stalls at any point of time during pregnancy has also dropped to 9 percent and is continuing to fall.

“It’s just another indication of how our industry is embracing animal welfare improvements across the board.”

Australian Pork Limited is the producer-owned organisation representing almost 80 percent of Australia’s sows.

Mr Spencer said the challenges facing the Australian pork industry, pork remains the second most consumed meat in Australia and initiatives such as the sow stall phase-out will help keep consumers buying pork.

“The path to growth is rarely smooth and APL will work to cultivate global export markets and support continued cost reduction and productivity through effective research and development so the industry can prosper into the future.”

Mr Spencer also spoke on the wider attempts to promote Australian pork.

“We have invested an extra $1 million in advertising this year to drive Australian fresh pork sales and launched advertisements promoting Australian ribs,” he said.

“We are also collaborating with restaurant chains to negotiate supply agreements that benefit the sector such as the agreement with Hog’s Breath Cafe, which exclusively offers Australian pork on its menu.

“It’s clear that if you want the freshest pork of the highest quality, consumers need Australian pork.

“We’re going to ensure they get more Australian pork on their forks and ask if ribs and bellies in their restaurant or pub menu are fresh, quality Australian pork.”

Mr Spencer said despite the challenges facing the Australian pork industry, pork remains the second most consumed meat in Australia and initiatives such as the sow stall phase-out will help keep consumers buying pork.

“Interestingly, the proportion of sows housed in sow stalls at any point of time during pregnancy has also dropped to 9 percent and is continuing to fall.

“It’s just another indication of how our industry is embracing animal welfare improvements across the board.”

APL’s sow stall phase-out initiative is part of a wider drive by the organisation to become more transparent regarding industry practices and has also included the development of a new website detailing how Australian pork ends up on your fork.

These initiatives further “raise the curtain” on the pork industry by clearly explaining to Australian consumers how their pork is produced, while simultaneously helping show improved animal welfare on farm.

This is particularly critical for the Australian pork industry at present because it is currently battling an influx of foreign pork imports, the vast majority of which come with little animal welfare oversight or quality control guarantees.

Mr Spencer also outlined how as a producer-owned Rural Research and Development Corporation, APL is urgently working with its producers, retailers, processors and wholesalers to ensure the market is as strong as it can be for domestic pork.

“APL’s purpose is to enhance the viability of pig producers,” he said.

“In times like these our producers look to us to take the lead in getting the industry back on track.

“The sow stall phase-out is one of those initiatives to improve viability, helping consumers buy high-welfare, quality pork and helping producers compete with overseas importers.”

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