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Pork CRC CEO Dr Roger Campbell caught up with researchers and participants at the stakeholders' meeting including Dr Cherie Collins, Rivealea Australia; Dr Avril Grieve, Elanco Animal Health; Tracey Muller, Pork CRC industry placement at CHM Alliance; Heather Channon, Australian Pork Limited; and Dr Deborah Nolan-Clark, Landmark Nutrition.

Pork CRC stakeholders' Melbourne meeting

OFFICIALLY opening the third annual stakeholders' meeting of the CRC for High Integrity Australian Pork in Melbourne on Monday, November 17, chairman Dennis Mutton told a 75-strong audience of researchers, students, producers and Pork CRC participants the future for pork research and development was strong.

"Having said that, we are looking to our researchers and participants to help us define that future," Dennis said.

"Now in year four of op-



eration and with our sixth investment round to come in the 2015/16 financial year, the Pork CRC encourages all involved to look at game changers to improve the industry's sustainability and grow intellectual property so that we can successfully transition beyond this



Pork CRC Bioenergy Support Program leader Dr Stephan Tait and Pork CRC Program 3 leader Dr Darryl D'Souza caught up at the Pork CRC stakeholders' meeting at Park Hyatt Melbourne.

CRC in 2018/19.

"The job is not yet done and we need to maintain energy and focus in this CRC."

Pork CRC CEO Dr Roger Campbell commended students and researchers in particular for their efforts in the past year and emphasised the valuable contributions of Australian and international collaborators, especially Pork CRC's suite of participants who commit cash and in-kind contributions.

"There's no doubt research is alive and well across Australia and it has a very bright future," Roger said.

"Our very successful education program is public proof of that, with undergraduates and post-graduates working within all our programs, plus we have a very successful industry placement program and an enviable hit rate with post-study employment for students we've supported."

More photos can be found on Page 10.

A busy end to the pork year – as usual

IT'S been a busy past month for the pork industry and agriculture in Australia more broadly.

In mid-November the industry gathered in Melbourne for the Australian Pork Limited Delegates' Forum, annual conference and annual general meeting.

As usual, the audience was engaged and the discussions fruitful.

Among the topics discussed was a look back on the 'Shaping Our Future' sow stall phase-out initiative.

We talked about the costs and benefits to the industry from having made the resolution in 2010 to phase out the use of sow stalls in Australia.

It's probably a lot easier to assess the costs rather than the benefits so far (and understanding that the benefits are still flowing to the industry).

The costs have included changes to on-farm infrastructure, reduced stocking densities for pregnant sows and the (at least initially) reduced productivity through lower farrowing rates in the new system.

The benefits included many improved aspects of the industry's image and reputation, such as big advances with the Federal Government's attitude towards the industry.

There's also a strong case to show that pig prices have improved generally as a result of the initiative, compared to where they would otherwise be.

There was also positive discussion with the



Point of View

by ANDREW SPENCER CEO



assembled delegates around a concept for improving the image of the Australian pork industry through greater transparency of what we do on-farm.

That means, for those in the community who want to know more about how pigs are farmed in Australia, we need to have options open for them to access this kind of information.

In general, Australia's pig farmers are proud of what they do and are happy to show and explain it to others who want to know more.

We'll be thinking about the tools we need to put in place for this to happen and continue to have the dialogue with industry in its implementation.

At the Delegates' Forum Prof Rob van Barneveld presented a newly proposed research and development system for the pork industry to operate once the Pork CRC ceases in mid-2019.

One of the great benefits that the Pork CRC has brought to the pork industry – on top of the excellent research outcomes it has delivered – has been the willingness

to support a collaborative system of undertaking R&D.

This collaboration has occurred between the CRC, APL as the industry body and other private sector partners as well as institutions such as universities.

The collaborative model has meant the industry has received great return on its R&D dollar and we're looking to continue that level of collaboration after the CRC through a leveraged investment model.

The big recent news has of course been the China-Australia free trade agreement.

Many pig producers may be asking themselves what if anything this means for the Australian pork industry.

Pork was one of the beneficiaries in the agreement.

If we were exporting pork to China now, we'd be paying tariffs on that product at more than 20 percent for some tariff lines.

Tariffs on nearly all lines of pork are due to be reduced to zero over the first four years of the FTA once it is put into effect.

However, this does not

mean our work is done.

Presently there are no negotiated protocols between the Chinese and Australian governments enabling pork exports to proceed, and finalising these protocols is now the priority.

Negotiations such as these do not proceed quickly and are likely to take years to put in place.

APL is currently hosting a delegation of officials from Jiangsu province in China and discussing Australian pig production, particularly our animal health issues, biosecurity and animal waste management systems.

We send a big thank-you to those producers and other industry participants who are helping to give this delegation a memorable trip to Australia.

We've also noted the pending acquisition of Primo Smallgoods by the JBS Group, which was announced recently.

It's difficult to say whether this change in ownership will make any difference to Australian pig farmers and the broader industry.

JBS states significant synergies lie in its global reach in international markets and it will be able to open the door wider to expanding Australian pork exports.

I can't see a lot of downside to that.

You'll next hear from me in the new year, so I'd like to wish all APL members and Australian pig farmers generally a really enjoyable Christmas and successful season.

Here's to a big 2015!



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Pig Industry Calendar of Events

2015

JAN 12 - 23 – Science & Practice of Pig Production course, University of Adelaide Roseworthy campus, SA Ph: Paul Hughes 08 8313 7603 E: paul.hughes@sa.gov.au

JAN 20 - 22 – Banff Pork Seminar, Banff, Alberta Canada www.banffpork.ca

JAN 27 - 29 – International Production & Processing Expo, Atlanta, Georgia, US www.ippexpo.org

JAN 28 - 29 – Iowa Pork Congress, Des Moines, Iowa US www.iowaporkcongress.org

MAR 11 - 13 – VIV Asia, Bangkok, Thailand www.vivasia.nl

APR 14 - 15 – Victorian Pig Fair, Bendigo, VIC E: aileen@acelabservices.com.au

APR 14 - 15 – Science with Impact – Annual Conference, Chester UK www.bsas.org.uk

APR 22 - 24 – European symposium of Porcine Health Management, Nantes, France www.esphm2015.org

APR 23 - 25 – VIV India, Bangalore, India www.vivindia.nl

MAY 7 - 9 – 6th European Symposium of Porcine Health Management, Sorrento, Italy www.esphm2014.org

MAY 17 - 20 – Alltech Symposium, Lexington, US www.alltech.com

MAY 19 - 21 – VIV Russia, Moscow, Russia www.vivrussia.nl

JUN 4 - 6 – World Pork Expo, Des Moines, Iowa, US www.worldpork.org

JUN 24 - 25 – International Symposium on Emerging and Re-emerging Pig Diseases, Kyoto, Japan www.emerging2015.com

AUG 9 - 12 – International Conference on Boar Semen Preservation, Illinois, US www.boarsemen2015.com

SEP 16 - 19 – Space 2014, Rennes, France www.space.fr

SEP 23 - 25 – VIV China, New China International Exhibition Center, Beijing, China www.vivchina.nl

NOV 22 - 25 – Australasian Pig Science Association conference, Melbourne, VIC www.apsa.asn.au

2016

APR 18 - 20 – Global Feed & Food Congress, Antalya, Turkey www.ifif.org

JUN 7 - 10 – International Pig Veterinary Society/European Symposium of Porcine Health Management, Dublin, Ireland www.ipvs2016.com

How to supply event details: Send all details to Australian Pork Newspaper, PO Box 387, Cleveland, Qld 4163, fax: 07 3821 2637, email: ben@porknews.com.au

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APL R&D recap: the year that was 2014

ANOTHER year has almost gone and for us at Research and Innovation, the recent Delegates' Forum and annual conference held in Melbourne marks the start of preparations for the 2015/16 research year.

Having said that, there is much to be done before the Christmas break, let alone the end of the financial year.

So I will provide a research and development recap of the year to date.

On a personal note, November 2014 marked seven years for me at APL, and I'm loving it.

In looking back over the past three to five years, Australian Pork Limited's focus has mainly been on the risk-based disciplines of biosecurity, animal welfare, food safety and product integrity, as well as a significant environmental effort.

From a cross-sectoral viewpoint, APL is regarded as being proactive and a leader in the research, development and extension space.

As mentioned in the May 2014 edition of this publication, APL RD&E in 2014 has seen a deviation and change of focus.

The message to the Specialist Groups in 2014 from the R&D Advisory Committee was one of caution and encouragement.

Caution in that APL was perhaps playing it too safe by being over-focused on applied 'incremental benefit' priorities.

In reviewing APL's RD&E focus for 2014/15, the RDAC noted there was a need to resource priorities that were more transformational; and that certainly has been the case for the 2014/15 period.

Production

One area requiring a rethink has been the productivity RD&E focus, which for all intents and purposes has had to be given a little bit of a kick start again.

Much of the focus in the area of growth and development and reproductive performance has been to effectively transition this program from the Pork CRC one to APL.

As a consequence, the past two to three years has seen the program filling in the gaps and many of the outcomes have been very much in the 'incremental' impact side of things.

Don't get me wrong, it is important that the Australian pork industry maintains this focus as we still need to close or at least maintain the relative cost of production gap between us and our larger importing countries in the US and Europe.

This year, the productivity research focus has been concentrated on two key areas: (i) Optimising gilt progeny; and (ii) Producing more female pigs per litter while improving litter size.



by **DARRYL D'SOUZA PhD**
Research and Innovation
General Manager



Animal welfare

The animal welfare research focus has always been at the forefront and demonstrates our proactiveness in this area, which saw a world first for the Australian pork industry, with the voluntary ban on the use of sow gestation stalls by 2017.

I think this was certainly highlighted by a recent project audit (J Skuse) conducted by the National Animal Welfare RD&E Strategy and presented at the annual forum (end of October, 2014).

This audit (Figure 1) accounts for projects conducted over the past five years.

When looking at the make-up or areas of focus (Table 1), this is mainly focused on minimal confinement housing of gestating and lactating sows and assessment of welfare.

A little barb thrown by another livestock industry personnel indicated that perhaps a large number of projects only highlighted the fact that the pork industry was only reacting to recent issues.

We in the pork industry of course know that being reactive is a risky strategy and it was the proactiveness of the pork industry that saw us commence our sow gestation and sow housing R&D in the early 1990s.

One of the projects that is currently in progress is seeking to develop indices to benchmarking pig welfare on-farm.

These measures will be used to assess pig welfare on-farm, between units and for all pig categories including sows, weaners and grower-finishers.

The developed welfare indices or measures are presently being validated on a number of commercial farms.

As mentioned last year, the ProHand stockperson training program is currently undergoing a major revamp.

In a nutshell, ProHand Pigs and Pork Abattoir will be revamped to provide:

- A stable platform for the delivery of ProHand Pigs and Pork Abattoir. This is more likely to be web-based;
- A revised delivery method that maintains the effectiveness of the program; and
- An integrated tool to measure and benchmark pig welfare and stockperson attitudes for the whole pork supply chain.

While I would have loved to be releasing the revamped program to the pork industry, I am disappointed to say that will be delayed by another three months.

Following industry testing, the researchers have had to go back and revamp the 'revamped content' and also change the delivery platforms to enable more flexibility (on and off-line delivery).

On a positive note, Dr Temple Grandin is now part of this project and more importantly a big supporter of ProHand.

Biosecurity

The main focus of our biosecurity risk is to understand and prevent major exotic diseases from entering Australia.

Last year saw APL convene the Strategic Biosecurity Technical Review Committee to review and identify the exotic disease risk industry RD&E priorities.

Much of our focus has been on porcine epidemic diarrhoea virus, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, foot and mouth disease and African swine fever.

The PED mortality impact in the US has been declining quite markedly over the US summer but it appears a number of herds are re-breaking, with the incidence of PED rising with the change in weather.

More worrying is that on November 20, 2014, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture issued a quarantine order stopping the movement of pigs on Oahu after an outbreak of PEDv was confirmed on a farm in Waianae Valley.

At this stage the authorities do not know how the virus got to Hawaii, however the farm did not import any swine.

We can hypothesise a number of sources of transmission but people movement appears to be the biggest risk.

Needless to say, the Australian pork industry must adhere to its strict on-farm biosecurity plans and be ever vigilant.

In the case of PED, this exotic disease is now notifiable in Australia.

Highly pathogenic PRRS emerged in China in 2006 and has since spread throughout South-East Asia.

Highly pathogenic PRRS causes severe morbidity and mortality in affected pig herds and can be transmitted between pigs by a range of methods including ingestion of infected meat.

A recent study by Vicki Brooks (PhD scholar, University of Sydney) showed that there is a greater probability of infection of a feral pig than a domestic pig.

This was due to the higher likelihood of disposal of food waste on rural or remote properties than the chance of food waste being swill fed to a domestic pig.

The risk assessment also

demonstrated that small amounts of meat (less than or equal to 10g) can contain an infectious dose of virus and that longer routes into Australia still pose a risk of introduction of highly pathogenic PRRS.

Traceability and product integrity

APL is in the process of implementing a new program called the Trust in Australian Pork Quality Program, which is underpinned by four key elements: food safety and biosecurity; livestock traceability; product traceability; and product quality.

The aim of the TAPQP is to increase consumer and community confidence and trust in Australian pork products by our ability to demonstrate improved industry compliance against industry and government standards.

A key technology being developed by APL and the pork industry within this program is Physi-Trace – a simple, low-cost, rapid and robust traceability validation tool for Australian pork.

Physi-Trace involves regular sampling and trace element analysis of fresh meat samples of known origin from participating abattoirs to establish a database against which data associated with questionable samples may be compared, facilitating identification of their farm of origin.

Physi-Trace can now be used to validate the country, state and farm of origin of fresh pork products and has also been expanded to cover processed pork and offal.

The Pork Processor Referral Group was established by APL as a key forum for discussion of key issues affecting pork

continued P3

Topics	Projects
Management, housing, husbandry	17
Welfare assessment	9
Transport, slaughter, euthanasia	4
Pain assessment/management	3
Public and community attitudes	3
Education and training	3
Other	1

Table 1

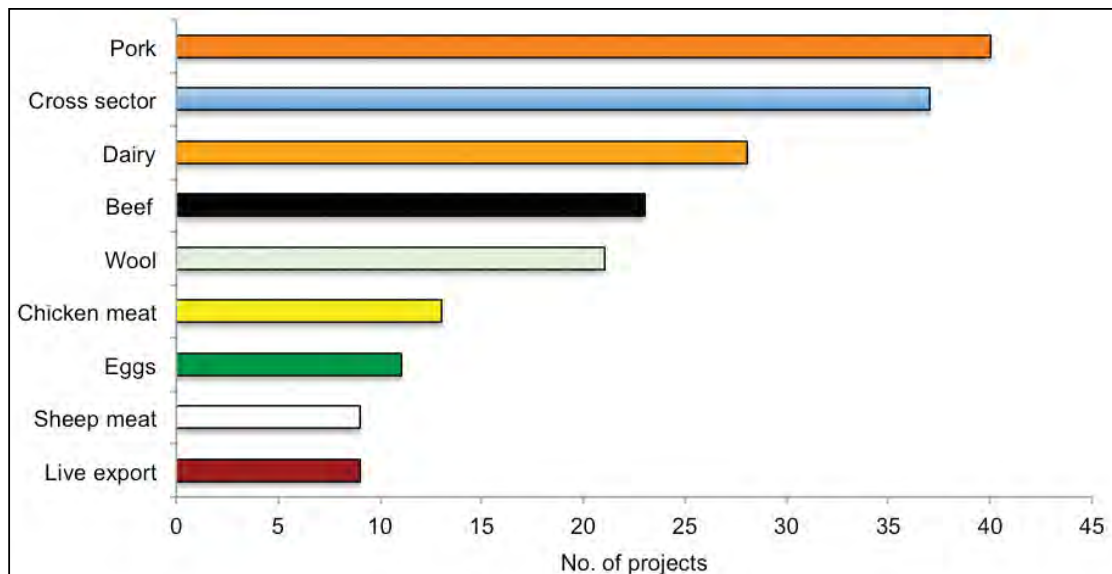


Figure 1



Pork CRC chairman Dennis Mutton officially welcomed everyone to the 2014 Pork CRC stakeholders' meeting in Melbourne immediately after chairing the annual general meeting.



Pork CRC's annual report for 2013-14 is now available to view and download from www.porkcrc.com.au

Remarkable year for Pork CRC and producers

AS we move towards the festive season and the end of another busy calendar year, I think we can mark 2014 as a year that was generally good for producers.

Prices remained relatively stable and depending where producers farmed, most enjoyed prices above cost of production.

So not a bad outcome considering it's been an economically turbulent year for some sectors of our economy.

Group housing

Best guesstimates are that 70 percent of producers have transitioned to group housing of pregnant sows and Pork CRC researchers at Melbourne University have demonstrated that whether grouped at weaning or four to six days after mating, farrowing rates exceeding 90 percent can be achieved at floor spaces ranging from 1.45-2.9sq m.

At lower floor space, sows exhibit higher cortisol levels and more aggression immediately after mixing, but both decline quite quickly and sows seem to adapt to mixing and reduced space within six to eight days and maybe sooner.

I will make available



Initiatives

by DR ROGER CAMPBELL
CEO



the results of Pork CRC's latest floor space project (IC-105) as soon as the report is finalised.

Positive producers

I know from our recent survey of producers that most (74 percent) think we now have enough information on group housing to make it work, but not everyone is achieving excellent reproductive performance, with 35 percent of respondents reporting that performance, and in particular farrowing rate, has declined since moving to group housing.

This may be due to the time sows have been housed in groups, since they appear to adjust or adapt to group housing with experience and you might expect reproduction to improve (return to usual) over time.

We have certainly seen

this in our benchmarking group, with farrowing rate declining during and for some time after the change, but generally returning to usual after time.

We also have less research on sows weaned into groups than those grouped after mating, so there may be something here we don't yet fully understand, though Melbourne University researcher Dr Jean-Loup Rault's results with sows mixed at weaning showed they had a farrowing rate of almost 95 percent.

In this case they were given plenty of space (4.4sq m) for the first six days after mixing, given ample (unlimited) feed between weaning and mating, kept in familiar groups when shifted on day six after weaning to

pens with 2.1sq m of floor space and grouped based on parity.

It seems Jean-Loup effectively followed all the secrets to success for group housed sows.

Feeding focus

Jean-Loup also fed the sows 2.7kg of feed/day from mating to day 28 of pregnancy and 2.4kg/d thereafter until farrowing.

I think this feeding strategy is probably one of the main reasons he achieved such excellent performance levels.

The change in the feeding of gestating sows, and in particular younger sows, emerged from research by Dr William van Wettere, Prof Paul Hughes, Dr Rebecca Athorn and Dr Pieter Langendijk.

Between them they showed that higher feeding levels in early gestation tended to improve reproduction, especially in parity 1 and 2 sows and that higher feeding levels in late gestation had little or no effect on piglet birth weight, piglet survival and sow reproduction.

The strategy has been adopted very successfully by a number of Pork CRC participants.

If you are yet to change, it may pay to implement

the changes slowly over the herd and see what happens.

Hot news

Given summer is upon us, I remind you to talk with your nutritionist about reviewing and if necessary changing the fatty acid content of your lactation diet based on research and commercial experience from the US.

US researchers showed that formulating the lactation diet to contain between 2.1 and 2.7-percent linoleic acid and 0.45-percent linolenic acid markedly improved farrowing rate and significantly reduced summer infertility when the change was combined with natural betaine at 2kg/tonne during the summer months.

If you have a problem with summer infertility, it's worth a try.

For more detailed information on how to manage summer infertility, visit porkcrc.com.au/news-events/publications or download 'Preparing for the summer months: seasonal infertility and beyond' from the Pork CRC website.

Reporting in

Pork CRC's annual report for 2013-14 is now available on our website.

continued P4

APL R&D recap – 2014

from P2

processors including inspection reform, to assist APL with identifying and prioritising projects and to obtain support for its direct involvement in food safety R&D activities.

In 2013 the group met twice, an industry representative was elected chair of the PPRG and membership was expanded to include Animal Health Australia and a veterinarian.

An abattoir process control project involving all seven export processors with support from the Agriculture Department commenced in January 2014.

The aim of this project is to determine whether microbiological monitoring programs used by export pork processors can be refined to drive continual improvement in hygiene performance and identify processing problems in both the abattoir and boning room.

A scoping study to determine a set of principles for consistent collection and reporting of ante and post-mortem condemnations and associated pathology by processors for their use as well as by veterinarians, producers and the regulator was also supported by the PPRG, and the findings reported to the PPRG in September 2014.

Environment

Much of our environment focus has been in the following areas: (i) New and emerging technologies; (ii) Innovation and uptake of best management practices; (iii) Validation of industry environmental data; and (iv) On-farm greenhouse gas mitigation.

The innovation and up-

take of BMPs research aims to develop technology transfer programs and materials as well as increase industry capability by extending research to producers and stakeholders in various ways that encourage consideration, uptake and adoption.

Research outcomes disseminated include manure and spent bedding reuse, energy usage, soil and pond microbial health, de-sludging and biogas safety.

Outcomes include the piggery manure and effluent management and reuse guidelines and a glove box guide that allows producers to quantify manure nutrients for reuse as well as providing a method to place value on the nutrients.

The project shows that an economic advantage of about \$156/ha in applying five tonnes/ha spent bedding compared to equivalent rates of conventional fertilisers can be achieved.

Energy usage was established for conventional piggeries, with energy profiles measured across a range of natural and tunnel-ventilated piggeries.

Significant variation in energy use across similar production systems indicates opportunity for energy use improvement and significant cost savings.

Fact sheets have been developed on the results, measurement and monitoring of energy use.

In addition, APL is undertaking an energy audit of the pork industry.

A call for volunteer farms will be made shortly (for more details, contact Janine Price, R&I environment manager at janine.price@australianpork.com.au).

Rural Research and Development for Profit

A quick update on the Federal Government's Rural Research and Development for Profit funding program.

The priorities for the program are:

- Increase the profitability and productivity of primary industries;
- Increase the value of primary products;
- Strengthen primary producers' ability to adapt to opportunities and threats; and
- Strengthen on-farm adoption and improve information flows.

The total budget for the program is \$100 million, with the first round budget about \$20 million (limit of \$30 million).

At this stage the date for the second round of funding has not been released.

A number of proposals have been submitted to APL and the other rural R&D corporations, with selected expressions of interest now being developed into full proposals.

I thank those who sent their project ideas to APL.

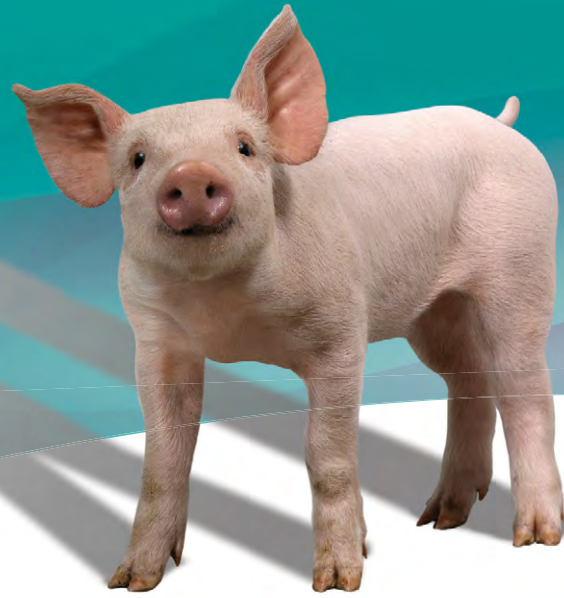
The RDCs are collaborating to ensure that a defined and collaborative R&D program is put forward to this first round program funding.

Finally, I would like to thank the pork industry and all the researchers for their continued support in 2014.

And on behalf of the R&I Division I would like to wish you a very merry Christmas and safe and happy 2015.

For further information on any of the topics discussed in this column, please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 6270 8804 or darryl.dsouza@australianpork.com.au

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THE SCIENCE OF HEALTHIER ANIMALS





Pork CRC Board member Rod Hamann (right) of Australian Pork Farms Group led this table's discussion about the profit drivers in Australia's pork industry. The interactive afternoon workshop, chaired by Pork CRC Board member Rob van Barneveld, was a highlight of the 2014 stakeholders' meeting in Melbourne.



Pork CRC Program 1 leader Dr Ray King updated the 2014 Pork CRC stakeholders' meeting on his program's outcomes and prospects, as did fellow program leaders Dr Brian Luxford, Dr Darryl D'Souza and Dr Rob Wilson.

Remarkable year for Pork CRC and producers

from P3

If you take a few minutes to read it, you'll see the breakthroughs our researchers have made across the four programs and I can tell you there are more to come in reproduction, enhancing satiety and reducing aggression in sows after grouping, diagnostics for respiratory and enteric pathogens, alternative health strategies, genetics of robustness and resilience, eating quality, grain processing, biogas production and the use of aerobic digesters and algae to generate heat for use in piggeries and to remediate effluent streams to provide water with markedly reduced pathogen and organic matter loads for wash-down purposes.

Smart science

It was clear at the November 17 stakeholders' meeting in Melbourne that research is alive and well in Australia and we have developed an excellent research infrastructure with very smart scientists and students involved in Pork CRC and Australian Pork Limited programs.

The challenge now is to maintain this, and the Pork CRC and industry plan to transition the Pork CRC to an alternative research model will be central to achieving this.

The plan partly depends on us receiving good revenue from our business deal with Aunir (AB Vista) to globalise our near-infrared spectroscopy calibrations for grain energy levels and amino acid levels in protein meals and this seems to be on track.

We have also generated considerable interest from our current participants and others to become members of the new entity.

I will keep you informed as the new model is further refined and put into place in the very near future.

Again, this would not have been possible without the efforts of the researchers and experts who developed the NIRS calibrations.

Dr John Black was central to developing the technology, as was Prof Rob van Barneveld and a host of others across Australia and our animal industries.

Forward thinking

I look forward to an exciting 2015 and expect the industry will continue to progress and prosper.

Pork CRC research is certainly contributing to the industry differentiating itself from the rest of the world and if you look at what is happening in Europe (oversupply and very low prices) and the growing uncertainty of prices in the US, Australian producers are in a good position.

We need to do all we can to ensure this continues.

In closing, I sincerely thank Pork CRC directors for their advice and guidance in the past year, the

Federal Government and our participants for their continued support and input and our researchers and students for the excellent science they keep turning out – it really is quite amazing and the industry is fortunate to have the research base and activity that has been developed during the past seven to eight years.

Have a happy and safe Christmas and let's hope 2015 is even better than 2014.

Of course

Speaking of next year, I'm reminded to remind you that with only 20 (intra-South Australia, interstate and overseas) people able to have their travel and accommodation supported through Pork CRC, places are filling fast for the popular annual Science & Practice of Pig Production course to be held from Monday, January 12 to Friday, January 23 at the University of Adelaide Roseworthy campus.

With numbers to be finalised very soon, anyone

wanting to attend should register their interest now by contacting Prof Paul Hughes on 08 8313 7603 or paul.hughes@sa.gov.au

The course covers just about the full spectrum of pork production, from genetics and reproduction to nutrition, housing, welfare, health and pig meat.

Course attendees typically have diverse backgrounds and knowledge and they appreciate that no background knowledge is assumed and everything is taught from scratch.

Field trips to piggeries and other facilities associated with the pig production industry complement classroom and practical sessions with the likes of Prof Hughes, Assoc Prof Roy Kirkwood of University of Adelaide, Tony Edwards of Ace Livestock Consulting, Rod Hamann of Australian Pork Farms Group, Dr Stephen Tait who leads Pork CRC's Bioenergy Support Program, Heather Channon of APL and yours truly.

www.porkcrc.com.au

Choosing a suitable pork advertising dance partner

IN the past few weeks our international meat marketing brethren have presented case studies of campaigns they've conducted using internet, social media and apps, iBeacons and other such high technology.

There is no denying that technology these days is impressive, bordering on amazing, at least for those who have reliable access to the internet.

Likewise, there are myriad marketing consultants making money out of promoting adoption of these technologies with a "if you don't do this (or that) you will get left behind" threat.

To be fair, the number of people embracing technology is mind-boggling.

It's easy to get caught up in the Facebook user figures, the number of mobile phones and the amount of content being added daily.

A recent quote from one of the biggest marketing agencies said these new digital media represent far more of agency revenue than they do the advertiser's media spend.

So if everyone else is now investing more in digital media than traditional advertising, why isn't Australian Pork Limited?

There are two trite but nevertheless valid reasons and two real reasons.

The first trite one is: The trouble with shiny new stuff is no one knows how to work it.

That means, let others waste money writing the operating manual and then we can pick up that manual.

Second, and the perennial creator of booms



Marketing Matters

by **PETER HAYDON**
General Manager Marketing



and busts: Individuals are smart but groups of people are stupid.

The two real reasons APL is testing rather than spending big in digital media are: Marketing is about understanding other people and their behaviour; and

The long term is made up of a series of short terms and short terms are measured in sales.

One of the costs of working in marketing is that everyone thinks you will benefit from their advice – everyone is a marketer!

Clearly, there are occasions when they make sense, but for the most part people think marketing is about ads, pretty pictures and off-the-wall ideas.

What marketers really do is understand how people make their decisions and find a way for those people to believe they have found a great solution in Australian pork.

We are group psychologists.

So why do people buy pork?

So they can feel good when all the people they serve love it.

That means the biggest impact on pork sales is not messaging but rather good experiences.

What advertising does is remind people of good experiences or promise better ones.

So when digital media becomes more cost effective than TV and radio we should move to it.

Until then, we should learn from the manual but not write the book.

How will we know when digital is more cost effective than TV and radio?

Who knows.

TV and radio hit so many people that (provided the advertising gets noticed) an effect in sales can be measured.

Now truth be told, you never know exactly what causes what because the world is complex and advertising, pricing, what's available and what's trendy all change eventually.

However, over time we can say that consistent APL activity in sales channels and consumers' homes has coincided with five years of pig price and fresh pork per capita consumption growth.

Digital media on the other hand can measure lots of things – but in food, not sales.

At least not yet.

So while we will continue to scan the horizon for signs of opportunity, for the time being we are going to dance with advertising, the one that brought us to the dance.

Australian Pork
NEWSPAPER

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China-Australia free trade agreement welcomed by pork industry

THE Australian pork industry has welcomed the China-Australia free trade agreement, which provides a significant opportunity for Australian pork producers to build market access to China.

Thanks to its population of over 1.3 billion people, China has emerged as the world's largest consumer market for food and beverage, surpassing the US in 2011.

Importantly, with increasing levels of disposable income China is demanding a diverse range of luxury, lifestyle and consumer products including premium imported food.

China is already Australia's largest trading partner, with agricultural exports worth over \$7 billion in 2013.

Of this, pork exports (of casings) to China in the 12 months to August 2014 totalled 4381 tonnes worth \$12.1 million.

Until now Australian producers and exporters have faced significant tariffs on agricultural products, putting them at a competitive disadvantage to countries that have a FTA with China.

The ChAFTA secures Australia's position in a market where some key competitors already have preferential access, particularly Chile and New Zealand; providing Australia with an advantage over its other major agricultural competitors including the US, Canada and the EU.

It also provides a basis for further liberalisation through a review of market access outcomes three years after the FTA commences.

Negotiations on the ChAFTA began in April 2005 and its conclusion sees tariffs of up to 25 percent on pork eliminated within four years.

The agreement also removes tariffs on Australian lamb, beef, horticulture and dairy products.

However, commodities such as sugar, rice, cotton and some grains were excluded from the agreement.

China presents incredible opportunities and challenges to Australia's pork producers and exporters in building market access.

While the ChAFTA will significantly reduce the tariff barriers affecting bilateral trade in goods including agricultural products, this outcome was not linked to any import protocol or processor accreditation – with both being required before Australia can take advantage of this opportunity.

Notably, securing a trade import protocol is both a technical and political exercise.

Achieving access requires a number of formalised steps to secure support for the protocol including the alignment of interests between the Australian and Chinese governments.

Moreover, the process for accrediting each establishment (from slaughter

to export port) will require accreditation by the Chinese Government.

As you can imagine, with a number of other Australian commodities and a variety of countries also seeking similar approvals, this can be challenging in terms of time and resources for the Chinese and Australian governments and industries.

Receiving market access and a protocol is no guarantee of success at exporting pork to China as the Chinese Government provides significant support to its local industry and there are several strong national pork exporting competitors, many of which have industries that supply premium-quality products.

The ChAFTA follows the recent signing of FTAs with South Korea and Japan in April and July this year, and acts as

a precursor to FTAs with the EU and India.

French president Francois Hollande recently said he supports the idea of a FTA between Australia and the EU but negotiations should look at easing restrictions on imports of fresh pork into Australia.

This adds further pressure from exporting countries including the US looking to access the Australian fresh market, which would enable French farmers and others to access Asian markets as well.

This demand may have arisen because of pork trade issues within the EU, specifically stemming from Russia's ban of imported meat (due to the MH17 disaster) and African swine fever.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is still in the early stages of

assessing a possible FTA with the EU, which means no negotiations have commenced.

Under Australia's scientifically robust import protocols, EU-produced frozen pork can already be exported to Australia as frozen boneless product.

However, this imported product must be used in the processing sector.

One hundred and fifty thousand tonnes of pork per annum is already imported and used in this segment (70 percent of the total segment).

French producers are able to participate in this segment providing they can meet the protocols and the export establishments have the appropriate accreditation.

This is the status quo.

Currently the major EU exporters of pork to Australia are Denmark and

the Netherlands.

This has significant implications for the Australian pork industry following a decision by the NZ Ministry for Primary Industries to issue new import health standards that allow the importation of uncooked pork from porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome exposed countries.

This decision was challenged by NZ Pork during a prolonged process of appeal.

In December 2013, the NZ Supreme Court upheld the MPI decision and by early 2014 fresh pork imports from PRRS-exposed countries were entering NZ.

The total volume of pork imported to NZ in September 2014 was 3229 tonnes (4377 tonnes carcass weight equivalent), up 10.86 percent on last month and 13.77 percent

on the same month last year.

Australian Pork Limited believes producers in Europe and the US will similarly continue to challenge Australia's biosecurity protocols for imported pork, using the NZ experience as a precedent.

APL will continue to advocate to governments and the broader community the risks of the NZ precedent, which threatens Australia's clean, green and disease-free status.

On behalf of the Australian pork industry, APL will be strongly advocating that the existing science-based protocols remain unchanged – and cannot be overturned – through any FTA, including with the EU. 🐷

Deb Kerr
APL General Manager
Policy

Importer fined for ham scam

A HAM scam has netted an importer and his company a \$25,000 fine for breaching Australia's strict importing requirements.

Perth-based Topas Pty Ltd and its director Paqualino Licastro breached strict conditions of their import permit by importing ham from unapproved regions in Italy in 2011.

The company was fined \$22,000 and Mr Licastro was fined \$3000 for offences in relation to the importation of 2241kg of Parma leg ham in a sea freight consignment.

Department of Agriculture First Assistant Secretary of Compliance Raelene Vivian said the prosecution sent a strong message to businesses and individuals who knowingly breach Australian biosecurity laws.

"After breaching their import permit, Topas and Mr Licastro then failed to act on a directive from the department to move the ham to a cold store facility," she said.

"Products containing animal or plant material may carry exotic pests or disease, which could have devastating impacts on human, animal and plant health.

"That's why these re-

quirements are critical – for instance if foot and mouth disease were to enter Australia it would cost the economy more than \$50 billion over 10 years."

The department ordered that the ham be held pending sampling and testing for staphylococcus, listeria, *E. coli* and salmonella before it could be sold or distributed.

"Despite this directive, the company sold 220kg of the ham to retailers without the required testing," Ms Vivian said.

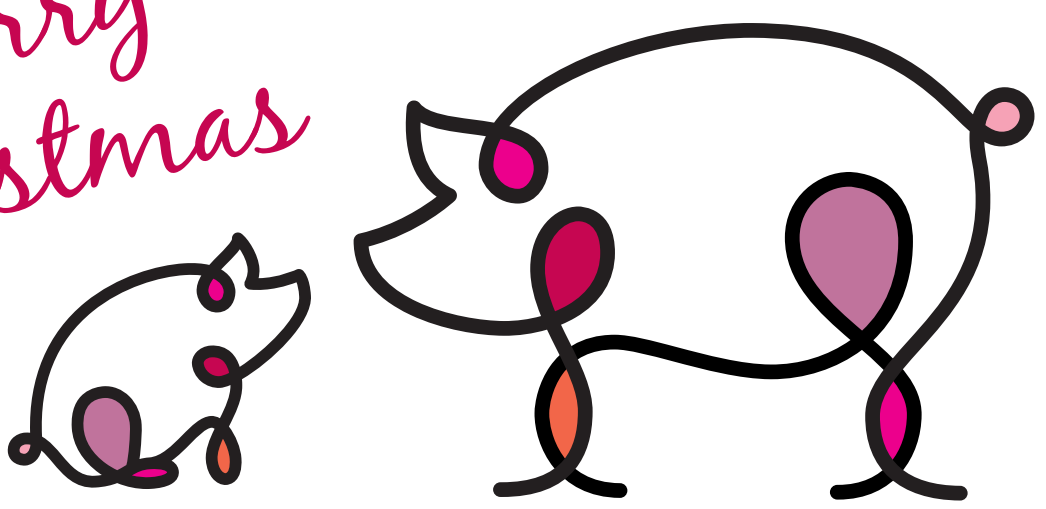
"Topas Pty Ltd has been punished for knowingly breaching our import and food control requirements.

"As this case shows, we have a zero-tolerance approach to companies and individuals who engage in unlawful conduct – and we will take action against them.

"We have a shared responsibility to minimise the impacts of biosecurity threats, which is why honest import declarations and having the necessary import permits are not only a legal requirement, but a biosecurity must."

For more information about biosecurity and compliance, visit agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/about/compliance 🐷


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Hot weather strikes Queensland pig numbers

QUEENSLAND'S extreme heat and drought conditions saw slaughter numbers fall in late November.

As we approach Christmas, the additional demand and heat impact on growth rates and will see reducing margins without price increases.

While prices have been much more stable over the past few years as a result of more contractual and supply arrangements, producers are concerned with rises in feed costs and little increases in pig prices.

At the end of the day the market supply and demand cycle will set the price.

Summer infertility, the other result of this heat wave that is covering most states, will impact late next year.

Farm raids

Producers are reminded that with the Christmas season and the focus on pork and ham sales, animal activists generally target our industry and as such farm security should be top of mind and reviewed to ensure you have limited your exposure.

Producer members can access the Austral-



President's Perspective

by JOHN COWARD



ian Pork Limited website for information on dealing with farm raids.

Having a plan to deal with any invasion will include no entry without permission and bio-security site signage, and producers need to have emergency contact lists readily available.

Producers should have neighbours as lookouts for strange surveillance of their operations and have local police prepared for an emergency call and response.

Having your farm APIQ✓ assured also provides a third assessment supporting your compliance with industry and regulatory standards.

Chinese market opportunity

Recent trade discussions between Australia and China have seen the opportunity for the export of pork to China in the not so distant future.

While this will re-

quire the development of importation protocols including the certification of Australian processing facilities, which may take a couple of years, it provides the opportunity of developing another market outlet, and this is ever so critical in limiting our exposure to mainly an Australian domestic fresh market.

Trade development strategies are well under way as part of APL's market development plans involving export processors.

Pork Queensland Inc. will provide assistance and introductions for Chinese delegations that have already shown interest in these new developments.

Season's greetings

Pork Queensland Inc. wishes all producers and supply chain partners a merry Christmas and safe, happy and prosperous 2015. 🐷



Back dam or Swan Lake at 'Perivale', the author's mate Steve's orchard at Donnybrook. Features a great pontoon for sunbaking on a hot day.

The F word: it's that time of year again

I'M not sure about you, but for me it seems as if we are in the middle of the festive season already and we're still weeks away from Christmas.

Well, more precisely that should read festival season.

There are festivals everywhere of every kind, from music to food and much more in between and beyond.

I recently ventured south to Margaret River, where I stayed at Wharncliffe

Mill – Claire and Adrian Prendergast's fabulous (another F word) bush retreat a couple of kilometres north of Margs and far enough out of town to avoid, if you so chose, the ugly hustle and bustle of a typical weekend there, exacerbated as it was by a marquee event such as the Margaret River Gourmet Escape.

A food and wine festival like no other, the Escape attracts the big wigs of the wacky world of celebrity chefs including Heston Blumenthal, Rick Stein and Poh Ling Yeow.

There's also the likes of esteemed restaurant critic and columnist for *Australian Gourmet Traveller*, *Esquire* and *Vanity Fair* AA Gill, who co-hosted a gourmet food trivia night with Matt Preston at Margaret River.

My weekend highlight though, aside from a Saturday morning bush walk into the local markets and an evening concert at Sandalford Winery featuring the delectable Megan Washington, cultural Gurumul and awesome Neil Finn, was a chat on the Sunday to Linley Valley Pork's John Thompson at the LVP marquee at Leeuwin Estate.

In what was much more than a token gesture (\$7 per token redeemable for food and drinks and so on), John served me a yummy pork and pear terrine and another memorable fresh pork dish, which I managed to successfully manoeuvre around on the always dodgy cardboard plates, while also holding a micro-brewed ginger beer.

John was ably assisted by two of WA's best-known chefs: 'dashing' Don Hancey (who seems to be everywhere these days, a bit like 'chicken man' once was; that is he's everywhere, he's everywhere) and 'sensational' Stephen Clarke of Clarkes of North Beach, whose signature dish, at least in my cookbook, is Linley Valley Pork belly with apple textures and crackle dust.

Mention of pome fruits such as apples and pears reminds me that I'll soon be heading southwest to Donnybrook for its more



Cant Comment
by
BRENDON CANT

modest annual food and wine festival.

With only a few rows of food and wine stalls, all casually bordering the tranquil banks of the Preston River (no, not named after Matt Preston!), it's a pleasurable way to spend

a Saturday and I've done it for a few years now.

As my home for a couple of years, Donnybrook and its wonderful fruit (F word!) will always be special to me and I look forward to a casual barbecue (probably) on the Saturday night at my mate Steve Dilley's Beelerup farmlet, before heading out the next day to his picturesque apple and pear orchard 'Perivale', half-way between Donnybrook and Kirup.

A swim in the dam will be on the cards too, provided our erratic November weather serves up the hot days it once did.

For those who don't believe in climate change, take a deep breath and look around when next you're out and about.

Meanwhile, thanks for supporting *Australian Pork Newspaper* and reading Cant Comment (you must if you've come this far) in 2014 and best wishes to you and yours for the festive season (still loving the F word!). 🐷



The safari tents at Wharncliffe Mill are comfy and good value.



Back in February the author delighted in picking some lovely, crunchy 'Perivale' royal gala apples.

www.porknews.com.au

Results of 2014 Australian Pork Limited annual general meeting

AT the Australian Pork Limited annual general meeting it was announced that CEO Andrew Spencer now fills the role of company secretary, following the resignation of the previous company secretary Christine Quick.

All items listed on the meeting agenda were passed and voted for in the affirmative.

On the issue of elected directors; David Plant and Brian Luxford re-nominated and were unanimously reinstated for further three-year terms.

In regard to the special director nomination, which is an APL Board appointment, the meeting was informed the Board recommend Kay Carey be reappointed.

Those in attendance voted unanimously to support the Board's recommendation.

The final item on the agenda dealt with on the day was to do with a change to APL Constitution Rule 10.4A regarding delegate resignation.

The Constitution allows for a resigning delegate to put forward a replacement delegate of their own choosing.

Under the current Constitution, neither the members who appointed the resigning delegate nor the Board have any

say over whether or not the replacement delegate is suitable.

To remedy this, an amendment to the Constitution was proposed that would require any replacement delegate to be ratified by the Board prior to becoming a delegate.

It was also proposed that the Constitution be amended to allow the Board to nominate a replacement delegate if the resigning delegate fails to do so.

To give effect to these changes, a special resolution was proposed to delete and replace Rule 10.4A of the Constitution, dealing with the retirement of delegates.

The proposed new Rule 10.4A is shown below.

To be approved, the special resolution must gain at least 75 percent of votes cast by members at the annual general meeting.

The final vote was 99 percent in favour and one dissention.

Proposed Rule 10.4A Retirement of delegates

(a) A person appointed as a delegate in accordance with Rule 10.3(a) or Rule 10.4A(f) (v) will cease to serve as a delegate if the person:

- (i) resigns by notice in writing to the company; or
- (ii) dies.

(b) Any delegate who resigns pursuant to Rule 10.4A(a)(i) must, in his or her written notice of resignation to the company in accordance with that rule, nominate a person to serve out the remainder of his or her term. The person nominated must be ratified by the Board first prior to becoming a delegate.

(c) The Board must nominate a person to serve out the remainder of the term of any delegate who dies or if the resigning delegate does not nominate a replacement.

(d) The Board must convene a meeting within 30 days of the death of a delegate or the receipt of a delegate's notice of resignation pursuant to Rule 10.4A(b) for the purpose of:

- (i) considering ratifying the appointment of the person nominated in a delegate's notice of resignation to serve out the remainder of the resigning delegate's term; or
- (ii) nominating a person to serve out the remainder of the term of any delegate who dies, or who resigns and does not nominate a replacement, pursuant to clause 10.4A(c); or
- (e) If the Board does not ratify the appointment of a person nominated in a delegate's

notice of resignation the Board must advise the resigning delegate accordingly and the resigning delegate may nominate another person for the Board to consider. Paragraphs (d) and (e) will reapply as relevant to any such nominee.

(f) A person nominated under Rule 10.4A(b) or 10.4A(c):

- (i) must be a natural person;
- (ii) may, but need not be, a member or a director;
- (iii) may, but need not be, a former delegate;
- (iv) must not be a current delegate; and
- (v) following receipt of an invitation from the company to serve as a delegate, will be appointed as a delegate if and when he or she consents, in writing to the company, to his or her appointment.

(g) A person who is appointed in accordance with Rule 10.4A(e) will serve as a delegate from the date of his or her appointment until the return date at which the term of the delegate they are replacing would have expired.

For more information on the proposed rule changes, please contact Emily Mackintosh at Emily.Mackintosh@australianpork.com.au or call 02 6270 8814. 🐷



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Successful pork greenhouse gas workshops

A VARIETY of pork producers from all states attended the recently completed Pork Industry Greenhouse Gas workshops.

They were informed about the sources of on-farm greenhouse gas emissions, how to calculate emissions using the PigGas Calculator, ways to reduce emissions, government greenhouse gas emissions reduction policies and most importantly, new income opportunities.

Eleven intensive one-day workshops have been held across the pork producing regions of Australia over the past 15 months.

The workshops, facilitated by Ian Kruger, Greg Mills and Rob Wilson, resulted in excellent producer feedback.

Most participants were initially sceptical about what they would get out of the workshops.

However, feedback after each workshop showed very positive reactions such as:

“Great workshop; took me out of the fog; Now I have a good understanding of carbon farming and impact on our piggy business; Good mix of participants with sharing of ideas and knowledge; I knew nothing prior to attending but now understand the Carbon Farming Initiative; The PigGas Calculator is a great tool with an easy layout; Looking forward to on-farm visit and establishing baseline emissions for my



Ian Kruger

piggery; and I will definitely investigate a biogas project.”

Attendees at workshops represented more than 20 percent of Australia's pork production.

What did producers learn?

There is bipartisan support for Australia's commitment to reducing national greenhouse gas emissions by 5 percent below 2000 levels by 2020.

Producers were interested to hear about the Carbon Farming Initiative and the Australian Government's new Emissions Reduction Fund, the reverse auction process for selling lowest cost emissions abatement to the Government and its commencement date.

Looking forward to the first quarter of 2015, pork producers learnt that by using either the covered pond or engineered digester methodology to capture and combust methane, they will be able to bid into the Government's first auction under the Emissions Reduction Fund to sell their Australian carbon credit units

earned for avoided greenhouse gas emissions.

These two methodologies are making a significant and growing impact on mitigating the Australian pork industry's gross greenhouse gas emissions.

Currently, piggery Carbon Farming Initiative projects are mitigating about 8 percent of pork industry emissions and this is expected to rise to 16 percent over the next few years.

Producers were also informed about the positive contribution the pork industry is making towards mitigating greenhouse gas emissions through innovative Australian Pork Limited and Pork CRC research and development programs.

New manure management and land application technologies are being developed under the National Agricultural Manure Management Program that is being co-ordinated by APL.

This research will lead to the development of new methods for reducing piggery emissions under the Emissions Reduction Fund.

One such technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from soils that is being researched is the incorporation of composted and pelletised manure rather than applying fresh manure.

Another technology to reduce emissions from soil involves mixing clay minerals with manure and spent litter to bind nutrients prior to land application.

Also being studied are emissions from deep litter housing versus conventional housing.

Short residence time pond treatment of effluent is being studied as a means to reduce pond methane emissions.

Anaerobic digestion of spent litter from deep litter sheds is also being researched to capture biogas methane for cogeneration and precipitate nutrients from the waste stream as a mineral fertiliser.

This research is aimed at the development of new Emissions Reduction Fund methods, which together with the existing two Carbon Farming Initiative methodologies, will move the industry

towards the Pork CRC emissions intensity target of 1kg of carbon dioxide equivalents per kilogram of pork.

A number of producers with covered ponds or digesters and cogeneration have already achieved emissions intensities lower than this target and may well have the lowest on-farm emissions intensities of any meat products in Australia.

How is the PigGas Calculator helping?

The PigGas Calculator accurately models on-farm emissions associated with energy use, manure management methods and land application of effluent and solids for any type of production system.

Producers learnt how to use PigGas at the workshops using their own production data.

Following the workshops, many producers sought follow-up free consultations to finetune the workshop results and develop emissions reduction scenarios for their piggeries.

In this on-farm program a PigGas report is written by a consultant for the producer, which documents the baseline emissions profile of the piggery as well as a scenario to mitigate on-farm emissions.

Some piggeries are already using their emissions intensity results in marketing their product.

Others are using the emissions results to better understand whether it may be worthwhile pursuing energy reduction or biogas feasibility studies.

And a number of producers have made simple changes to production, feeding management, waste treatment systems and housing types or installed solar or biogas energy systems to reduce the carbon footprint of their piggeries.

Overall, emissions reduction scenarios modelled on piggeries have averaged 42 percent reductions below baseline emissions.

Energy offsets

Energy use on piggeries was a hot topic of discussion at all workshops.

With rising electricity and fuel prices, pork producers

continued P9

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Pork CRC project leader profile

■ Pork CRC Project 2A-106: 'A comprehensive risk factor analysis of *E. coli* disease in the piggery environment'

PROF Michael Ward leads Pork CRC Project 2A-106 'A comprehensive risk factor analysis of *E. coli* disease in the piggery environment', which commenced in late 2012, with PhD student Lechelle van Breda joining the project in mid-2013.

Research associate and experienced microbiologist Dr Om Dhungyel co-supervises Lechelle.

Michael is chair of Veterinary Public Health & Food Safety within the Veterinary school at University of Sydney and is based at its Camden campus.

After graduating as a veterinarian in 1986 at University of Queensland, Michael joined the Queensland Department of Primary Industries as a government veterinary officer at Townsville, where he undertook general disease control activities, was involved in the brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication campaign and supervised livestock export testing.

He simultaneously completed a Masters degree at James Cook University.

In 1991 he moved to the US for PhD studies in epidemiology at the University of California Davis campus.

Following his PhD, Michael returned to Queensland DPI and worked on sheep diseases.

He again moved to the US in 2000, first to the veterinary school at Purdue University, Indiana and then in 2004 to the veterinary school at Texas A&M University.

Feral fear

In 2008, Michael commenced his current position at University of Sydney, where he has led a number of projects that focus on infectious disease control and bio-security.

These include a project assessing the risk of feral pigs as a reservoir for exotic diseases such as classical swine fever and foot and mouth disease as well as assessing the risk of an incursion of porcine re-

productive and respiratory syndrome virus.

All three diseases would have devastating effects on Australian pig herds.

The threat of disease spread posed by feral pigs has long been a concern to the industry.

Coli concern

As many pig producers have experienced, *Escherichia coli* disease causes substantial production losses in weaners and suckling pigs.

It is a multi-factorial disease with complex risk factors and triggers, but these are poorly understood.

E. coli disease seemingly occurs without warning and can have devastating effects on animal health, welfare and profitability.

It is one of the most common problems faced by pig producers.

Nutrition, genetics, climate, hygiene, husbandry and weaning practices probably all play a role in this disease.

Beside these negative effects, *E. coli* disease is also responsible for substantial use of antibiotics.

In general, pens of piglets with postweaning scours will be treated with antibiotics in feed or water.

The use of antibiotics in agriculture is increasingly becoming a concern to regulators and the public.

Excessive or inappropriate antibiotic use in humans and animals can lead to the development of resistance, which compromises health care.

Of importance is the risk that antibiotic resistance can potentially be spread to humans via the food chain.

For example, if pork consumed contains bacteria with these antibiotic traits then that can cause resistance infections in the consumer, or suboptimal response to antibiotic therapy later when that person is infected by other pathogenic bacteria.

Resistance role

Though the role of antibiotic use in food-producing animals on antibiot-

ic-resistant infections in humans is unclear, there is general agreement that responsible use of antibiotics in agriculture is desirable.

Recently, a draft discussion paper titled 'Developing a National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy for Australia' was jointly released by the Commonwealth Departments of Health and Agriculture.

This signals the importance now being given to the issue of antibiotic resistance.

Michael's current Pork CRC project on postweaning *E. coli* disease seeks to understand why disease occurs in some herds regularly and in others rarely.

The approach is to focus on a variety of herds in southeastern Australia and characterise the *E. coli* that infects pigs – both sick pigs and those that are clinically normal.

Information on the husbandry practices used in these herds is being collected, as well as their antibiotic use.

All this information will be combined to identify what key characteristics and practices lead to postweaning *E. coli* disease.

So far, 25 herds stretching from Sydney to Adelaide have been sampled and thousands of isolates of *E. coli* bacteria have been grown, characterised and stored.

Testing of these for an-

tibiotic resistance has recently commenced.

Farm tool

With a good understanding of the risk factors responsible for post-weaning *E. coli* disease, the next step is to determine how these risk factors are interrelated and what are the critical pathways leading to disease.

Ultimately, the vision is to develop a tool (such as a simple scoring system) that can be used on-farm to characterise the risk of disease occurring and which areas of farm management need to be improved to prevent the disease.

To contact Michael, email michael.ward@sydney.edu.au



Prof Michael Ward



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References: 1. Kim D et al. *Vaccine* 20. 2011; 3206-3212. 2. Seo HW et al. *Vaccine* 2012; 6671-6677. © 2014 Zoetis Inc. All rights reserved. Zoetis Australia Pty Ltd. ABN 94 156 476 425. Level 6, 5 Rider Boulevard Rhodes, NSW 2138. www.zoetis.com.au 09/14 PAL1165/APN

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Successful workshops

from P8

are looking to reduce on-farm energy use.

At the moment biogas projects are feasible for larger piggeries starting at about 900 to 1000 sows farrow to finish in size.

Dozens of producers attending the workshops are investigating the feasibility of implementing a covered pond or digester project with on-site electricity generation and heat recovery for piggery use.

In particular, there is significant interest from medium-sized family owned piggeries of about 400-800 sows farrow to finish.

As more biogas equipment providers enter the Australian market, smaller cogeneration systems and equipment are being made available to this medium-sized piggery sector.

It is anticipated that in

the next few years these piggeries will have viable biogas energy alternatives available.

A number of representatives from energy technology companies attended the workshops to learn more about piggery applications.

In the meantime, the medium-sized piggery sector is beginning to invest in solar power systems of up to 50kW capacities to offset rising energy costs.

The National PigGas Extension Project is funded by Ian Kruger Consulting, the Australian Government and APL.

A limited number of free one-on-one PigGas consultations are still available.

Interested producers should contact Ian Kruger by emailing iankrugerconsulting@gmail.com or calling 0401 365 488.

Pork CRC 2014 stakeholders' Melbourne meeting



Some Pork CRC supported students had a quick lunchtime meeting to discuss the merits of Pork CRC's education program with Pork CRC Board member Kathryn Adams and executive management Dr Roger Campbell and Geoff and Graeme Crook.



About 75 researchers, students, producers, Pork CRC participants, board members and executive management gathered at Park Hyatt Melbourne for the Pork CRC 2014 stakeholders' meeting.

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Assoc Prof Karen Charlton and Pork CRC CEO Dr Roger Campbell chatted about the inherent properties of high-integrity Australian pork.



Dr Roger Campbell and APL CEO Andrew Spencer (also a Pork CRC Board member) contemplated the year that was.

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NEWSPAPER



APN would like to thank all advertisers, producers and contributors for their support in 2014.

We also wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.





Pork CRC Board members Sandra Di Blasio, Pauline Mooney and Dennis Mutton (chair) chatted over a cuppa in Melbourne. Pork CRC's annual general meeting was conducted prior to the stakeholders' meeting and the 2013/14 annual report was also made available to attendees.



Veterinarian Chris Richards of Chris Richards & Associates caught up with Ridley AgriProducts staff Anne-Marie Mooney and Robert Parkes.

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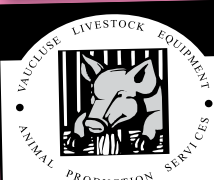


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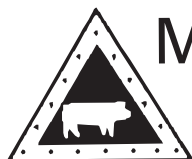
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Tanya Nowland wins 2014 Ron Pollard Undergraduate Scholarship Award

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited is proud to announce University of Adelaide student Tanya Nowland as the winner of the Ron Pollard Undergraduate Scholarship Award for 2014.

Tanya was presented with the award at the recent NSW Farmers meeting in conjunction with the APL/Pork CRC Roadshow in Young, NSW.

Ron Pollard's son Ean and APL CEO Andrew Spencer presented Tanya with the award.

Tanya is in her final year of a Bachelor of Animal Science, with the desire to further her education by undertak-

ing an Honours degree with the pork industry.

The aim of the award is to recognise high-calibre undergraduate students and foster their interest in pursuing a career in the pork industry.

Tanya completed a two-week placement on-farm as part of APL's Undergraduate Industry Scholarship program where she was able to gain practical experience in all aspects of pork production.

The staff from Tanya's host farm said, "She is a very bright and enthusiastic girl who asked lots of questions and was very keen to learn about

the pork industry."

"In fact, if we could have given her a job we would have."

In learning that she was to receive the award, Tanya said, "Thank you so much for this opportunity, I can't express how happy I am and how much it means to me."

"I look forward to meeting more people within the industry and learning more about the pork industry as a whole."

The Ron Pollard Undergraduate Scholarship Award was established in 2009 by APL's Research and Innovation Division, in memory of the late Ron Pollard.

The award honours Ron's commitment to mentoring young people in the pork industry.

Ron was a respected NSW pork producer, former president of the Pork Council of Australia and instrumental in the restructure of a number of national industry associations, which resulted in the formation of APL.

He also served as APL's interim chairman.

In congratulating Tanya on receiving the award, Ron's son and Westmill Products managing director Ean Pollard said: "I love it when young people get enthusiastic about our industry – it has a lot to offer." 🐷



Ean and Janine Pollard with award winner Tanya Nowland.

Antimicrobial use in Danish pigs continues to increase

ANTIMICROBIAL use in animals in Denmark continued to rise in 2013, mainly due to an increased use in pigs.

However, antimicrobial use in pigs was still 12 percent lower than in 2009.

In general, livestock received very little of the critically important antimicrobials, which are used to treat humans.

These findings appeared in the annual Danish Integrated Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring and Research Programme report from the State Serum Institute and the National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark.

In 2013, the total use of antimicrobials in livestock and pets in Denmark was 4 percent higher than 2012 when measured in kilograms.

The increased consumption is mainly attributed to a 6 percent rise in the consumption of antimicrobials in pig production, which accounts for about 84 percent of meat production in Denmark.

But the consumption in poultry and pets has also increased.

Pigs accounted for about 78 percent of antimicrobial use in 2013, cattle 10 percent, aquaculture 3 percent, poultry 1 percent, fur animals 4 percent and pets, horses and other companion animals 3 percent.

Increased use in pigs

Antimicrobial consumption in pigs measured in doses has increased in all three age groups: sows/piglets (9 percent), weaners (5 percent) and finishers (5 percent).

This is primarily due to increased consumption of pleuromutins and tetracyclines, which are used for group medication.

However, consumption in pigs was still 12 percent lower than in 2009, when the highest consumption was recorded since Danish farmers stopped using antimicrobial growth promoters.

National Food Institute senior researcher Dr Yvonne Agersø said: "It is crucial that we reverse the increase in consumption if we are to tackle the problem of antimicrobial resistant bacteria."

Continued low use of critically important antimicrobials

Consumption of critically important antimicrobials in animal production was still low.

For a second consecutive year, the use of fluoroquinolones in pigs was very low in 2013 at less than one per thousand of the total consumption in pigs.

The use of 3kg of cephalosporins in pig production was also low.

However, it does represent a significant increase compared to the year before when total consump-

tion of cephalosporins was 1kg.

There has been a notable drop in consumption in cattle.

Dr Agersø said it remains important that Danish pigs and cattle are treated with critically important antimicrobials only when absolutely necessary, to help ensure these agents continue to be effective when treating seriously ill people.

In 2010, Danish pork producers introduced a voluntary ban on the use of cephalosporins where other effective treatment options are available. 🐷

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Pork CRC PhD candidate Anne Watt.

Watt's work all up in the air

'Investigations into bacterial causes of disease in swine with emphasis on airborne pathogens'



Anne Watt: Pork CRC PhD candidate in Project 2A-102, University of Melbourne

Supervisors: Dr Marc Marenda, Prof Glenn Browning and Assoc Prof Philip Markham

erable time and expense that can be challenging for producers, particularly when samples contain mixed micro-organisms.

Alternatively, detection of specific DNA sequences through polymerase chain reaction can rapidly identify a pathogen in such complex populations.

Quantitative PCR assays with melt curve analyses are increasingly being used by diagnostic laboratories because of their excellent specificity and sensitivity.

Instead of individual clinical microbiology, sampling the atmospheric environment is a useful method for the detection of airborne materials in intensive animal production systems.

Monitoring air quality on farms can provide non-biased, early warning data to improve livestock health status by preventing or controlling infectious diseases before they become a significant burden.

Previously there had been little work done on the application of these methodologies to pig production.

Now, through her current work, Anne has shown the benefits of such an approach.

She has already sampled air from two different commercial farm settings, covering eight different pig age groups and several housing systems.

Air sampling is performed by a commercial air sampler, designed to assess biological contamination in different environments.

This equipment captures micro-organisms present

in a set volume of air, trapping them in a liquid media that can then be used for further analysis by PCR or culturing.

Following Anne's first assessments, actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae was chosen as an important pathogen present in pig farming and became the focus of her studies.

APP, previously known as haemophilus pleuropneumoniae, is the major cause of pneumonia in pig herds around the world.

There are two biotypes and 15 known serotypes of APP, with the most virulent strains able to cause death within a matter of hours.

If a herd contracts a highly virulent strain of APP, the damage to the herd can be severe, resulting in dramatic losses to the farmer.

With the idea that this air sampling method could be used to screen herds for the presence of APP in the environment, Anne has developed a quantitative PCR for detecting APP in air.

From samples so far collected, she has detected low levels of APP in pigs aged eight to 16 weeks, indicating a sub-clinical infection within the herd, thus detecting the disease early enough to prevent production losses.

The high resolution melt curve analysis also allowed identification of genetic differences within the sample, which was then confirmed through DNA sequencing.

This technique allows for more specific identification of strains present and shows their relatedness.

This work on air sam-

pling has naturally progressed into an attempt to develop a vaccine candidate for APP.

Current vaccines have not successfully provided cross protection for all serotypes of APP, meaning identification of the strains present during an outbreak is essential in order for protection to be provided.

Anne's vaccine work is focusing on producing a live-attenuated strain that has been restricted in its ability to utilise nutrients from its environment.

Her research is driven by a desire to improve conditions in large-scale commercial farming environments.

Improving air sampling and diagnostic techniques can assist in rapidly identifying APP and lead to improved control measures.

Future work on air sampling will look into developing quantitative PCR techniques for other important respiratory pathogens in the farming industry, with the aim to reduce losses in the industry through improved disease control.

Melbourne born and raised, Anne is still contemplating her career path post-PhD, but may consider a post-doc overseas, as she admits to a love of travel.

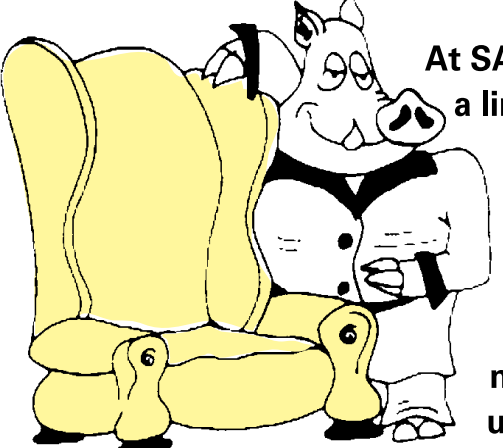
She also declares a very real interest in farming conditions, especially differences in systems around the world and believes commercial farming is such a big industry.

Anne would particularly like to improve the welfare of animals, particularly through better disease control.



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THE Australian Government is asking farmers to have their say on the new ideas put forward in the Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper regarding drought support and natural resource management.

Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce said the Green Paper included a range of new options to consider for drought support and land management.

"Some of the suggestions in the Green Paper include encouraging the uptake of commercial multi-peril crop insurance, investing in improved weather and climatic information and accelerated depreciation for new water and fodder infrastructure," he said.

"To deal with times of significant drought,

stakeholders have also suggested the Government continue providing concessional loans, expand the farm management deposits scheme and provide additional mental health support in times of drought.

"I know there are many farmers and their families doing it tough and they know better than anyone what government support is most useful.

"In natural resource management, there have been some new policy ideas put forward on further water market reforms and even amending the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999."

Minister Joyce said the Green Paper identifies 25 diverse policy themes, and given the tight fiscal environment the Government

needs to build a strong case for each and every policy that is selected for the White Paper.

"We want feedback on the Green Paper especially to focus on the ideas that will help us increase competitiveness, increase farm-gate profitability and contribute to the prosperity of our rural and regional communities," he said.

"Everyone has the opportunity to have their say on the Green Paper.

"Submissions are open until December 12, 2014.

"Now is the time to help shape Australian agriculture into a stronger, more profitable and more sustainable sector."

To read the Green Paper or provide a submission in response, visit agriculturalcompetitiveness.dpmc.gov.au

www.porknews.com.au

Aussie stock protection

AS temperatures start to rise, the risk of grassfires significantly increases.

A combination of a series of dry, hot days and strong wind can turn verdant paddocks into raging infernos in a matter of minutes.

Grassfires have been known to spread at up to 30km/h, trapping livestock and taking farmers by complete surprise.

Aussie Pumps product manager Brad Farrugia said too often valuable cattle, sheep, free range pigs and sometimes even top-quality stud animals are lost through lack of planning.

Aussie Pumps stresses the need for graziers and major livestock producers to have a fire safety plan in place.

The company is regarded as a world leader in the design of portable high-pressure fire pumps.

After consultation with government departments and firefighting authorities, Aussie Pumps has developed a simple plan for livestock protection.

1. Identify safe havens

Your safe haven needs to be centrally located, easy to access and strategically placed – not adjoining timbered or brush area.

There are a few important factors to consider when planning your area.

Grass type: A paddock containing green summer crops will offer good protection, as it will not burn as readily as a paddock that has dry, long grass.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries suggests a paddock that has been systematically grazed in spring and early summer to reduce dry feed will also suit for a low-risk area.

Sufficient drinking water: Animals are susceptible to radiant heat, stress and dehydration.

Ensure there is sufficient drinking water such as a dam or stream to enable stock to remain in the area during times of high to extreme temperatures.

Adequate amount of feed: Livestock may need to stay for an extended period.

A supply of feed is very important to avoid sickness and maintain health levels.

Fire break: A low-risk area needs at least a 20m-wide cleared or ploughed perimeter.

Ensure the area is clear of any unnecessary combustible material (leaves, bark, branches and so on).

2. Speed is of the essence

Under some circumstances it may even be necessary to move stock early on high fire danger days.

Be prepared and think out the plan in advance.

3. Sufficient firefighting equipment

Be prepared to put out spot fires and wet danger areas.

A trailer or ute-mounted fire pump and tank will provide a mobile option.

Make sure the pump is capable of delivering sufficient water.

"We developed the Aussie Fire Chief for applications just like this," Farrugia said. "We have a hugely efficient pump design that develops pressures of up to 100psi and flows of up to 450l/pm."

The Fire Chief has proved itself to be the design and reliability leader time and again.

The Fire Chief is considered the world's finest lightweight portable fire pump.

Apart from being used by major government departments and firefighting authorities around Australia, the pump has been widely accepted in Europe, Africa and some areas of South-East Asia.

"We even supplied this superbly engineered product

to US customers, who are amazed to find that there is no similar product made in the US," Farrugia said.

The Fire Chief is powered by a genuine Honda petrol engine and comes standard with heavy-duty steel skids and anti-vibration mounts.

An optional one-piece welded steel roll frame is also available.

The Chief's big brother, the Aussie Mr T is a mighty twin-impeller pump that develops pressures of up to 130psi and flows to 550l/pm.

It comes with Honda 9hp and 13hp petrol engines available in recoil or electric start.

A big Yanmar 10hp diesel drive with electric start is a popular choice as well.

Diesel fuel is considered much safer around fire than petrol because of its lower flash point.

"Many farmers are changing over to the big Yanmar diesels because of the inherent fire safety, lower running costs and overall reliability," Farrugia said.

All models in the Aussie Pumps fire pump range offer a self-priming feature that ensures the pump primes first time, every time.

Only Aussie Pumps offers a vertical suction lift of up to 7.6m, enabling the operator to draw water from wells, streams or dams.

"That's a major feature and can be a matter of life or death when a fire is on the move," Farrugia said.

"We've heard horror stories about Third World pumps, sometimes masquerading under popularly advertised brands, which simply won't prime in an emergency."

Aussie Pumps is unique in offering a five-year warranty on its Aussie Quik Prime product range.

Further information including guidelines on how to protect property, life and livestock is readily available from www.aussiepumps.com.au or Aussie Pumps Gold Distributors across Australia.

Australia's biosecurity system is ready for future challenges

A NEW CSIRO report highlights the importance of a strong, integrated and seamless biosecurity system to protect Australia from future threats to human, animal and plant health.

Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce welcomed the report, titled 'Australia's Biosecurity Future', which outlines how the biosecurity risks facing the nation could potentially change in the years ahead, and discusses some of the key local and global trends that will influence these risks.

"Many of the issues raised in this report are issues that both my department and I are already tackling – and as Agriculture Minister I am committed to constantly improving Australia's biosecurity system to meet both current and future biosecurity challenges head on," Minister Joyce said.

"Australia's biosecurity system focuses on targeting what matters most: stopping the pests and diseases that can cause the most harm and economic devastation from entering Australia."

"We call this risk-based intervention and it involves working offshore, at the border and within Australia, targeting risk where it is most effective to do so."

"The CSIRO report says we are 'fortunate' in Australia to be free of many pests and diseases, however I don't see our enviable biosecurity status to be the result of fortune or good luck – rather it is the result of tens of thousands of people across the nation, in government, industry and the community, working together every day to ensure that Australia remains pest and disease free."

Minister Joyce said in biosecurity good luck only happens to those who plan and work hard and with effect.

"The CSIRO report emphasises one of my main beliefs around the biosecurity system – it's a

shared responsibility," he said.

"We must all continue to work together – including government, industry, scientists, farmers and the wider Australian community."

"This shared responsibility is at the heart of our biosecurity system."

Minister Joyce said investing in Australia's biosecurity system is an investment in Australia's future.

"When I released the Australian Government's Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper in October, I made it clear that biosecurity presented the greatest risk to the future of Australian agriculture, and that investment in our biosecurity should never be compromised – and I stand firmly by this," he said.

"The CSIRO report, looking 25 years ahead, demonstrates how important the science behind biosecurity is."

"What I've been saying all along is that we have a robust science-based biosecurity system."

Minister Joyce said as part of improving Australia's biosecurity system, he will be introducing biosecurity legislation into Parliament before the end of the year.

"The new legislation will provide for a strong and sustainable biosecurity system in any age, regardless of advances in transport and technology or future challenges," he said.

"I'd like to thank the CSIRO and the industry research groups for their work on this important report and assure the Australian community that we have a robust and effective biosecurity system in place to protect us against potential threats both now and into the future."

"In Australia over the years we have remained free of bovine brucellosis, tuberculosis, foot and mouth and papaya fruit fly among a range of other insidious pests and diseases – this was not achieved by luck."



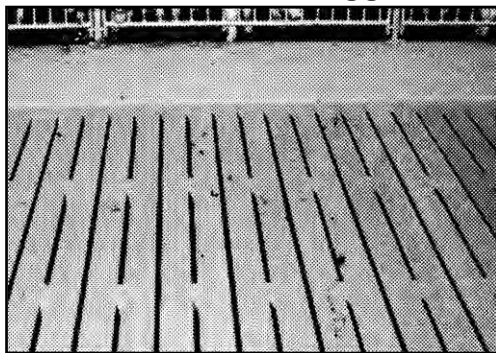
Tillie Angel from Maitland has geared up with an Aussie Fire Chief to protect her family's livestock.

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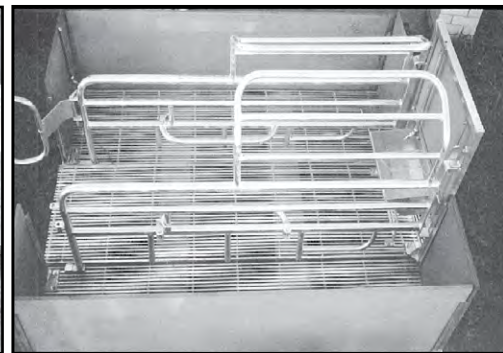
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