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Two funded projects to better understand feral and domestic pig contact risks are being carried out in Queensland and Victoria. Photo: Daniel Lewer, Hunter Land Management

Tracking feral pig movements around piggeries to assess disease transmission risks

IN many areas, biosecurity risks to livestock industries due to the presence of feral pigs in the landscape are growing in response to favourable climatic conditions, lack of cross tenure, area-wide coordinated and collaborative management programs and their translocation by humans for hunting.

This means that feral pigs may now be inhabiting new areas.

Efforts to address these challenges are the focus of many nationwide initiatives supporting the implementation of the National Feral Pig Action Plan 2021-2031 – feralpigs.com.au/the-plan/#ActionPlan

Risks of disease transmission between domestic and feral pigs,



by **HEATHER CHANNON**
National Feral Pig Management Coordinator



including exotic diseases such as African swine fever and foot and mouth disease as well as many endemic and zoonotic diseases, continue to pose significant threats to the Australian pork industry.

Crucially, such risks are not well understood.

Limited data is currently available on the potential for, and likelihood of, direct and indirect contact between

feral and domestic pigs that could lead to disease transmission.

This knowledge is needed by Australian pork producers, other industry stakeholders and governments to assist with preparing and responding to potential incursions of exotic diseases that may spill over between domestic and feral pigs, in addition to strengthening on-farm

continued P2

Aligning R&D priorities to better deliver

HERE at Australian Pork Limited, our clear purpose is to enable a thriving pork industry for the future.

As we enter development of the 2025-2030 strategic plan, we are working to identify and strengthen our approach to ensure we are delivering on our purpose.

As part of both APL's and the Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited's commitment to research and development, an inaugural green paper was developed and finalised earlier this year.

Developed by the 2023 Pork Industry Insight Panel – which was comprised of APL and APRIL Board members, together with a range of invited producers, processors and research providers – the broad aim of the panel was to identify and document key industry challenges, opportunities and (potential) targets for the Australian pork industry across the entire value chain.

Led by the chief scientist for the Australian pork industry Dr John Pluske, and supported by APL general manager research and innovation Dr Rebecca Morrison and APRIL executive officer Dr Charles Rikard-Bell, the green paper identifies key findings and suggested key targets that are set to be reviewed annually by the PIIP,



with this year's review having commenced in November 2024.

By aligning research and development investments to address issues such as workforce shortages, disease control and market expansion, the green paper helps set a strategic direction for a more resilient, sustainable and innovative industry.

An essential foundation to producing disease-free pork is to strengthen our focus on keeping diseases out of Australia, being prepared for potential outbreaks and eliminating existing diseases.

This will require a focus on biosecurity improvements and advancements in vaccine technology, equipping producers to prevent outbreaks and tackle existing diseases.

These measures would protect animal health and ensure production stability.

Enhancing social license is another top priority identified by the green paper.

Today's consumers increasingly seek food with ethical and envi-

ronmental credentials and pork producers are well-positioned to respond.

By demonstrating their contributions to human health, community well-being and environmental stewardship, they can further gain public trust.

These efforts must be balanced with long-term productivity and profitability, ensuring that ethical practices remain economically viable.

Strategic innovations, such as increasing carcass value and managing seasonal demand fluctuations, will be essential to achieving this balance.

Another challenge highlighted by the green paper is the shortage of a skilled workforce, particularly in management roles.

This skills gap, coupled with a lack of researchers, poses a significant barrier to the industry's research and development goals.

Addressing workforce shortages will require focussed training programs and efforts to attract and retain talent, helping to ensure the industry is

equipped with skilled professionals across all levels.

Though developed primarily for APL and APRIL, the green paper serves as a valuable resource for the entire industry, offering insights that can benefit everyone, from producers to researchers.

By fostering a collaborative approach, this framework promotes efficient resource use and reduces overlap in research initiatives, aligning the industry with emerging opportunities.

With suggested targets that include eradicating pleurisy in Australian pig herds by 2030 and achieving self-sufficiency in carbon dioxide supply for export abattoirs, reaching these goals will require coordinated action and investment, but the potential benefits are well worth industry's efforts.

By aligning research and development priorities with APL's 2025-2030 strategic plan and the needs of producers, processors and consumers, the pork industry can build a sustainable future.

The journey may be challenging but with the vision and commitment now outlined in the green paper, the pork industry is well-prepared to adapt and thrive within Australia's evolving agricultural landscape.



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Pork Industry Calendar of Events

2025

JAN 7-9 – Banff Pork Seminar – Banff, Canada. <https://www.banffpork.ca/>

JAN 24-25 – Iowa Pork Congress – Des Moines, Iowa, USA. <https://www.iowapork.org/about-ippa/iowa-pork-congress>

JAN 28-30 – International Production and Processing Expo 2025 – Georgia, USA. <https://www.ippexpo.org/>

FEB 11-12 – Minnesota Pork Congress – Mankato, USA. <https://www.mnporkcongress.com/>

MAR 12-14 – VIV Asia – Bangkok, Thailand. <https://www.vivasia.nl/>

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

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

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

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

How to supply event details:

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

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Tracking feral pig movements around piggeries

from P1
biosecurity practices and procedures.

Two projects have recently been funded to better understand these risks.

The first, 'Informing risks of African swine fever transmission at the feral-domestic pig interface by collection and analysis of feral pig movement data', is being delivered by the Centre of Invasive Species Solutions, with funding from the Department of Primary Industries Queensland.

This project is being conducted at two sites in the Western Downs Regional Council and Toowoomba Regional Council districts of southeast Queensland.

Feral pigs of greater than 40kg are in the process of being fitted with GPS collars (n=12 per site), with 10 ear tags also being fitted to younger pigs at each site.

Once animals are collared or tagged, they are then released into the landscape and their movements tracked over a 12-month period.

The commercial pig operations at these two sites are utilising conventional indoor housing infrastructure, ranging in size from small to very large farrow-to-finish sites, and medium to very large-sized grow-out only sites – no breeding stock.

They also differ in size, site level management and levels of biosecurity.

The second project, 'Informing disease transmission risks at the feral-domestic pig interface', is being funded through Victoria's Swine Compensation Fund as part of the 2024 Livestock Biosecurity Grant funding program.

Excitingly, this pilot project aims to understand potential disease transmission risks posed

by feral pigs to outdoor-based pig production systems.

This project is being led by Western Plains Pork, and Australian Pork Limited is also investing in this research.

As for the Queensland study, GPS collars and ear tags will be fitted to feral pigs and animals tracked for 12 months.

Feral pig collaring, management, monitoring and community engagement expertise held by Darren Marshall and Lachlan Marshall from the Centre of Invasive Species Solutions will again be utilised, with support from Agriculture Victoria and experienced destruction, disposal and decontamination specialists Duncan Worsfold and Peter White.

With state parks and forests in proximity to the project site, regional staff from Parks Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria, agencies of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, are also involved – establishing cross-tenure partnerships is imperative to the success of this project.

Another essential component of this research is engagement with local hunters, to gain their co-operation to enable successful conduct of the project as well as to obtain local intelligence.

By monitoring feral pig movement in these two studies, data on home range, core home range, spatial and temporal movement patterns and their preferred habitats will be captured.

This information will enable understanding of whether any animals interacted with domestic pigs and associated infrastructure over the 12-month period.

Movement data will also be used to establish

if there are epidemiological links of critical importance to potential disease introductions between different properties and unrelated farming enterprises, including feedlot cattle, extensive sheep and cattle production, and grain.

The information gained, including size and scale of control areas, will also be used to plan future feral pig management planning, including knowing which control methods should be used, where, when and how often.

In Victoria, samples from feral pigs will also be collected to assess the incidence of key endemic and zoonotic diseases, such as Japanese encephalitis, leptospirosis, Q fever and brucellosis, and external parasites.

The movements of more than 800 feral pigs have been tracked using GPS collars in many studies across Australia.

Despite this extensive and important work, no studies were conducted with the principal objective of quantifying potential biosecurity risks posed by feral pigs to commercial pig production or other livestock industries.

It is anticipated that these projects will show how a piggery's exposure risk profile to feral pigs may change over time – for example, seasonally.

As part of these studies, workshops will be held to build the capacity and capability of land managers to apply different feral pig control methods, demonstrate benefits from working together to remove feral pigs and support efforts by jurisdictions and industry to promote biosecurity behaviour change.

Face-to-face community information ses-

sions, meetings with individual land managers and the provision of relevant information and resources will occur at both locations.

This engagement is essential to ensuring that everyone is aware of the project, understands its purpose, is willing to participate in free feeding and trapping activities to capture animals for tagging, and grants access to land by CISS personnel to undertake collaring activities.

At the conclusion of both projects, community meetings will be arranged to present the project outcomes and each land manager who participated in the project will be provided with information on the movement data of all collared pigs, together with written materials.

Subject to agreement, data may also be incorporated into the Australian Animal Disease Spread Model for ASF, FMD and potentially others to enhance their robustness, providing national benefits.

The AADIS epidemiological model simulates the spread and management of these diseases.

Once both projects are completed, insights gained will be extended to the wider pork in-

dustry by the CISS.

Resources will be also developed, drawing on additional material from DPI Queensland and DEECA as well as other feral pig-related projects, to support pork producers with mitigating ongoing risks posed by feral pigs to their operations.

Finally, we are seeking feedback from those dealing with feral pigs on the National Feral Pig Action Plan's implementation and the progress made to date.

The stakeholder evaluation survey can be found by scanning the QR code below and will take about seven minutes to complete.

The survey will close on Friday December 20, 2024.

Wishing you all a very happy festive season.

For any questions related to these initiatives or to discuss feral pig management issues, contact me on Heather. Channon@feralpigs.com.au or 0423 056 045.



Evident feral pig damage to pastureland. Photo: Rebecca McGowan

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Sows kept outdoors in Australian summers of course face different environmental challenges to those farmed that way in the UK.

Pigs having a field day

ADVOCATING for the uptake of outdoor pork production and pasture-raised pigs means I'm always on the lookout for positive messages from people and businesses sharing that passion.

I was therefore keen to read a refreshing little piece tucked away on page 26 of the 100-page 2023 sustainability report of global meat production giant JBS that talked about the virtues, potential and reality of farming pigs outdoors. The report was released in August this year.

Let me share...

When done right, farming pigs outdoors can help improve the quality of the land.

This is a key principle of the JBS-owned Pilgrim's Europe Pork approach to regenerative agriculture and one of the reasons the sows in their British Quality Plus welfare program spend their entire lives outdoors.

Incorporating livestock into an arable rotation gives land a worthwhile break from continual crop production, which is known to deplete nutrients and compromise soil health.

Within the Pilgrim's Europe BQP program, pigs are hosted on partner farmers' fields for two years, during which time they produce manure that enriches the soil, reduces weed burden and disease carry over, increases nutrient retention and boosts biodiversity.

This makes the land more productive for growing crops such as cereals or potatoes, improving yields and removing the need for arable farmers to use synthetic fertilisers.

To showcase the financial and sustainability benefits of integrating free-range pigs into agricultural prac-

tices, Pilgrim's Europe Pork partnered with supply chain management firm Intellync to analyse soil health pre and post pig production across nine farms in southeast England.

The study indicated increases in organic matter and soil carbon, reductions in fertiliser use and yield improvements.

However, the benefits were temporary, necessitating the continuous inclusion of pigs in rotations for sustained results and reinforcing the synergy between livestock and arable crop production.

While I accept that farming and environment conditions for outdoor pork production are very different in the United Kingdom compared with Down Under, I still see this as a positive move that could be adopted here, albeit probably on a small scale and in select environments, to enhance crop productivity by utilising the very natural life processes of the pig.

In his introduction to the sustainability report, JBS chair Jerry O'Callaghan wrote that the key challenges of climate change and food security must be tackled in tandem to ensure reliable access to affordable nutritious food.

With the Food and Agricultural Organisation estimating a 20 percent increase in demand for animal sourced foods for a global population expected to reach 10 billion people in three



Cant
Comment
by BRENDON CANT

decades, and with consumers increasingly aware and demanding to know the origin of the food they purchase, opportunities abound for those willing to try alternate farming systems.

With large-scale factory farming of pigs in Australia – now so often 'on the nose' with the general public, governments and animal welfare advocates – perhaps the time has come to seriously consider gentler production systems, even if that is at the expense of productivity.

Author's note – Pilgrim's Europe is – at least according to parent company JBS – at the forefront of the UK's food manufacturing industry, providing fresh locally sourced poultry, as well as beef, pork and vegetarian products.

Pilgrim's Europe includes Moy Park, a leading provider of fresh locally farmed poultry and innovative convenience products, and Pilgrim's UK, the United Kingdom's number one pig farmer and producer of higher welfare pork that operates across several hundred farms and 15 well-invested manufacturing sites, many of Britain's leading retailers and foodservice outlets.

Headquartered in São Paulo Brazil, JBS processes, prepares, packages and delivers fresh, further processed and value-added beef, pork, poultry, lamb, fish, plant-based, cultured protein and prepared food products for sale to customers around the world.

JBS is present in more than 25 countries on five continents, with more than 600 operations located across Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Europe, Mexico, New Zealand, the UK, the US, Uruguay and Vietnam.

JBS claims to be the world's second biggest pork producer and market leader in Australia, Brazil, Europe and the US. 🐷



Pork belly and potatoes, a tasty dish that might well be plated up as a result of a balanced outdoor pork farming system.

Meramist's success story with new T4 Eradicator Plus pump

NESTLED in the serene Caboolture region of southeast Queensland, Meramist has earned a distinguished reputation for its premium Australian beef since its founding by the Meramist family in 1939.

Upholding a steadfast commitment to service, quality and consistency, the company has become an industry leader in beef processing.

The problem

Previously, Meramist faced challenges with the frequent clogging of their pump, mainly due to grass accumulation.

However, the introduction of Eradicator Plus technology has effectively addressed this issue, improving operational efficiency and reducing downtime and maintenance costs.

The solution

In December 2023, Meramist made a significant upgrade to its wastewater handling operations with the adoption of the Gorman-Rupp model T4F71SC-B self-priming wastewater pump, also known as the T4 Eradicator Plus.

This advanced pump technology has received positive feedback from employees, including Jason Mercer, a leading hand at Meramist.

Designed for extreme-duty applications, the T4 Eradicator Plus has proven effective in handling liquids containing solid debris such as trash bags, wipes, mop heads, hair, industrial by-products and agricultural waste.

Its ability to cut and tear organic solids upon entry into the pump adds to its versatility.

Jason Mercer's review of the T4 Eradicator Plus is both appreciative and practical.

He highlighted its efficiency and impact, referring to it as "God's gift", due to its time-saving benefits.

He also noted the reduction in labour needed to monitor the pump, emphasising its practical advantages and commenting that he no longer needed to spare a person to babysit the pump, finally having one that could handle the serious amount of grass the business deals with on a daily basis.

Gorman-Rupp introduced the 'Eradicator Plus' version of its respected and reliable Super T Series pump range in response to market needs for self-priming pumps that could handle heavy loads of stringy materials such as hay, wet wipes and rags.

The Eradicator Plus is equipped with hardened impellers and wear

plates, with options to upgrade to high chrome materials for more abrasive applications.

This version of the Super T Series is available in 3", 4" and 6" sizes.

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The new T4 Eradicator Plus pump at Meramist.



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Getting more pork on forks this Christmas

WITH Christmas around the corner, the Australian Pork Limited marketing team has been focusing efforts on continuing the positive momentum of the 'Por Que' campaign into the holiday period.

We have seen positive shifts in recent advertising tracking reports – October 24 – which show a 2 percent point increase in consumers considering pork since the pre-campaign period and pork being viewed as great tasting up 4 percent points, versus the prior measure in July.

The task at hand for Christmas is to continue this momentum and ultimately make roast pork and crackling synonymous with the festive season.

The creative challenge was to make consumers salivate while incorporating the attention and cut through established with the launch of the 'Por Que' campaign featuring Ramon Jamon.

The outcome... a 15-second advertisement that cuts through the Christmas clutter, opening with Ramon Jamon wondering 'Por que' (why) you would choose any other roast for Christmas, then leading onto mouth-watering food shots, directed by specialist

food director Jon Bader.

The ad will launch nationally on November 25 across Foxtel and YouTube, reaching consumers when they are in key planning mode for Christmas.

The campaign also includes radio activity in peak drive periods, as well as public relations and editorial support, all pointing consumers to roast pork with crackling.

Additionally, a focused push on social media activity through the use of high-reaching influencers will run over December to increase the shareability of pork crackling content and have 'Get some pork on your fork' on everyone's lips this Christmas.

Key retail partnerships with fast-moving consumer goods brands Gravox and Campbells will run alongside in-store activity in Coles, Woolworths, Metcash, Aldi and butchers across November and December to ensure pork is present across the whole consumer purchase journey.

You can watch and share the new Christmas ad campaign at youtu.be/bK7v32fz7zw

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A significant discovery has been made regarding the presence of sarcocystis species of parasite in game deer and feral pigs in Australia. Photo: SA Government

Research uncovers hidden parasite threat in Australian game meat

RESEARCHERS at Charles Sturt University have made a significant discovery regarding the presence of the sarcocystis species of parasite in game deer and feral pigs in Australia.

The research was led by Professor in Veterinary Parasitology Shokoofeh Shamsi in the Charles Sturt School of Agricultural, Environmental and Veterinary Sciences and the Charles Sturt Gulbali Research Institute for Agriculture, Water and Environment.

The recently published study in the *International Journal of Food Microbiology* is the first to report such infections in these animals in Australia.

The research team conducted an extensive examination of the oesophagus, diaphragm and heart tissue from 90 deer and eight feral pigs, searching for visual signs of sarcocystis cysts.

Professor Shamsi said that though no visual cysts were detected, subsequent polymerase chain reaction testing and histopathology confirmed the presence of the parasite.

"These findings are particularly concerning as they suggest that infected animals, especially those reared free-range, could pass through meat quality checks unnoticed," Prof Shamsi said.

"This poses a potential food safety risk if the meat is consumed without thorough cooking, which could lead to human infection."

Prof Shamsi emphasised the importance of proper cooking to mitigate the risk of infection. "This simple precaution can effectively prevent potential infections and safeguard health," she said.

The study also highlights the potential implications for the Australian pork industry, particularly with the growing trend towards free-range pig husbandry.

The possibility of infection spreading between feral pigs and domestic pigs in free-range systems underscores the need for ongoing surveillance and research.

This study not only sheds light on a previously unrecognised risk but also underscores the value of rigorous research and vigilant food safety practices in protecting public health.

As part of 2024 National Science Week, the Food Safety Information Council of Australia issued a warning about the increase in parasitic infections in humans in Australia in recent years.

Co-researcher and adjunct lecturer in parasitology in the Charles Sturt School of Agricultural, Environmental and Veterinary Sciences, Dr Diane Barton said, "It also reinforces the need for further research to determine the prevalence and species of sarcocystis in game animals and the value of ongoing surveillance and research to safeguard food safety."

"There are potential implications for the Australian pork industry, particularly with the increased emphasis on free-range pig husbandry."

"But the public can be reassured that any risks from consuming game meat can be managed with appropriate cooking and handling practices."



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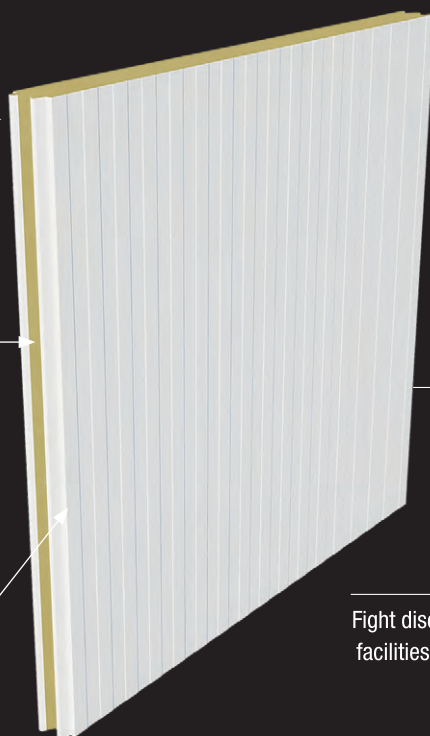
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A mix of second and third-year students, the apprentices were tasked with creating a three-course meal from a mystery box of ingredients.

Future proofing pork with TAFE Qld

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited, together with SunPork, again sponsored the TAFE Queensland Apprentice Chef of the Year cookery competition.

The competition was a remarkable showcase of talent, with eight aspiring chefs rising to the challenge.

Representing esteemed restaurants and establishments across Brisbane such as The Brisbane Club, The Star and The Westin Brisbane, each competitor was tasked with creating a three-course meal – an appe-

tiser, main course and dessert – from a mystery box of ingredients.

A mix of second and third-year students, the apprentices were given 30 minutes to review the ingredients and plan their menus before the competition started.

From that point, they had only 90 minutes to present their first dishes, which had to incorporate specific ingredients such as Australian pork, red papaya and loligo squid. Judged by current industry chefs and food representatives, the pressure was on.

The creativity and skill displayed by the participants were truly inspiring.

The competitors were tasked with using SunPork tenderloins and the competition encouraged them to explore their abilities and push their limits of creativity.

One of the standout pork dishes was a main course – seared orange and lemon myrtle pork tenderloin with chicken liver pâté and polenta.

The results of the competition will be announced in February 2025. 🐷

APRIL calls for applications for 2025 awards

THE Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited is an independent participant-based entity committed to enhancing the overall human capacity base for science, innovation and training in the Australian pork industry and is calling for applications for its awards in the following areas.

Applications for 2025 Education Awards now open

The education awards are only available through APRIL participant universities, which are:

- Murdoch University
- The University of Queensland
- The University of Melbourne

The awards offer a number of different opportunities for current and prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students as follows:

- Scholarship awards for Honours students
- 'Top-ups' for postgraduate research students (PhD, MS/MSc/MPhil) in an APRIL-funded research project, or related
- Support for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine/undergraduate veterinary science projects
- Support for MS/MSc/MPhil students where a research project is an incorporated component of the program of study in an APRIL-funded research project, or related
- Scholarship award for PhD student.

Eligibility varies according to the different scheme being applied for.

Ensure that the guidelines associated with

each opportunity are read thoroughly before submitting an application.

Information concerning the different education opportunities from APRIL, including guidelines and application forms, can be found on the APRIL website – scan the QR code below.

Applications for Industry Placement Program now open

As part of its education and training program, APRIL is continuing to assist with human capacity building in the Australian pork industry through the IPP award scheme.

A successful business applicant will receive \$75,000 over the first two years of a three-year agreement, with APRIL to help cover salary and other costs associated with training an awardee for the three years.

The overall aims of the IPP scheme are to:

- Retain graduates – trained by APRIL, the Pork CRC, Australian Pork Limited and/or other relevant organisations at the Honours and/or postgraduate level – and attract others by sponsoring their placement in a commercial pork production organisation, or an affiliated business strongly aligned to pork production, in a structured and enhanced development program
- To attract and stimulate graduates into the industry with a career interest in pork production, while continuing their development and understanding of how research and develop-

ment, education and training, technology and extension/adoption can enhance industry competitiveness and success.

This award is only available to APRIL participants, with the rights and benefits applying according to an organisation's tier of participation.

Further information on the IPP application forms can be found on the APRIL website – scan the QR code below.

Important information for all applications

The APRIL Education Advisory Committee will assess all applications.

APRIL will determine the number and amount of any grant awarded.

Funding rules stipulate that no overhead – indirect cost recovery – can be charged.

Awards are conducted under the terms and conditions of the APRIL scholarship agreement.

Completed applications should be lodged electronically by the closing date to APRIL executive officer Dr Charles Rikard-Bell at c.rikardbell@april.org.au

Any questions on the awards or process can be directed to Dr Rikard-Bell.

Applications open October 25, 2024 and close January 24, 2025. 🐷

APRIL



Cost of imported bacon could help Australian producers

MANY Australians love nothing more than sitting down to a plate of bacon and eggs for brekky.

But supermarket shoppers are now likely to pay more for bacon rashers than a pork roast.

Recently, middle bacon rashers were priced at \$19/kg at Woolworths and \$8/kg for a whole pork roast.

Australian Pork Limited chief executive officer Margo Andrae confirmed that bacon was now costing \$19-21/kg, adding that what consumers were actually seeing was the price of imported bacon increasing.

Nearly 70 percent of ham and bacon on Australian supermarket shelves is made from imported ingredients.

As Australians have a ravenous appetite for ham and bacon, more than 164,652 tonnes of pork were imported in the past financial year.

With other top import sources being the Netherlands, Denmark and Canada, about half of Australia's imported pork is from the US.

All fresh pork in Australia is produced here, thanks to biosecurity regulations.

Victorian Farmers Federation pig group president and producer David Wright said

most homegrown pork goes into the fresh market, such as chops and roasts.

"Any product you buy with a bone – so ham on the bone – is Aussie grown," Mr Wright said.

Global AgriTrends analyst Simon Quilty said Mexico was part of the reason bacon was costing Australian supermarket shoppers more.

"Right now, America is driving the bus when it comes to pork pricing around the world," Mr Quilty said.

Adding that America produces the cheapest pork in the world currently, and Mexico is one of its biggest buyers.

However, according to Mr Quilty, pork production was expected to increase more in the coming months than it had so far this year.

"There's been a jump in prices of about 13 percent in the past six weeks, driven by Mexico," he said.

Ms Andrae said that there had also been a rise in demand for Australian pork and bacon, as well as an increase in price.

"That really does relate to the cost of doing business – labour, biosecurity and animal care," she said.

"People can buy

homegrown bacon for as little as \$24-26 a kilo."

Adding that the decreasing gap between the price of local and imported bacon could benefit Australian growers, as traditionally the difference has been much greater.

"People probably have a better choice, or an easier choice to make, on whether they support the Australian versus the imported," Ms Andrae said.

Meanwhile, Mr Wright has said local bacon was not always easy to locate on supermarket shelves.

"It's really hard for our Aussie products to get visibility at the shelf and get into Aussie households," he said.

Adding that the industry was working with the government to make labelling clearer,

as well as lobbying to improve placement and marketplace share of Australian-made bacon.

When looking to buy local, Ms Andrae said shoppers should look for a bar chart on the product label.

"We often used to believe that the triangle with the kangaroo in it meant we were buying Australian product," she said.

"What we actually need to be doing is looking at the small bar chart underneath, and anything above about 60-70 percent, you can be guaranteed you're buying an Australian product."

Yet, as consumers are currently looking to save at the checkout, paying slightly more to support Australian producers may be a little tough to swallow.



Country of origin labelling in Australia includes a bar chart that shows the percentage of local ingredients.



Local bacon for brekky supports Aussie producers. Photo: Vincent Rivaud

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A focus for the THRIVE initiative is creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces for all individuals working in the veterinary profession.

AVA awarded second Zoetis Foundation grant

THE Australian Veterinary Association has been awarded a second grant from the Zoetis Foundation to continue delivering the THRIVE Cultivating Safe Teams psychological health and safety pilot program to veterinary clinics across Australia.

AVA president Dr Sally Colgan said: "Creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces for all individuals working in the veterinary profession is a major focus for AVA and our THRIVE initiative."

Burnout and mental health challenges are well recognised in the veterinary profession.

Research conducted by the AVA in 2021 found that 66.7 percent of respondents had experienced a mental health condition at some stage, compared to 61.8 percent in the general population.

The second grant will assist in delivering tailored in-workplace psychological health and safety awareness training specifically designed for veterinary professionals.

The training, provided free of charge as part of the Cultivating Safe Teams pilot program, aims to train over 500 veterinary professionals across Australia by its conclusion.

"The pilot program will yield valuable data to help us expand this initiative across the entire sector," Dr Colgan said.

"We are deeply grateful to the Zoetis Foundation for its generous support."

The recent release of the inquiry report into the veterinary workforce shortage in NSW highlighted the importance of wellness programs for the veterinary profession.

The report included four recommendations

related to mental health support, underscoring the need for industry led initiatives.

Zoetis Foundation president Jeannette Ferran Astorga said: "It is critical for the future of veterinary medicine that we empower the veterinary community to prioritise wellbeing."

Feedback on the training has been positive, with participants noting improvements in team communication and bonding, and greater individual accountability for team safety.

"Programs such as this are key to supporting our veterinary workforce with tools and approaches that work," Dr Colgan said.

"This initiative underscores the AVA's commitment to improving the wellness and safety of veterinary professionals, helping to create safer and more supportive environments to work in."

Australia's first injectable ileitis vaccine now available

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

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

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

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

Porcilis Lawsonia of-

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

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

Both methods can also be used as standalone vaccines.

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

In contrast, Porcilis Lawsonia provides a convenient single-dose option (intramuscular or intradermal) that streamlines the vaccination process, particularly when combined with ex-

isting vaccines such as Porcilis PCV M Hyo or Porcilis PCV IDAL.

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

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

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

Pig producers may wonder if ileitis is a concern even with antibiotic use.

The answer is yes.

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

been documented.

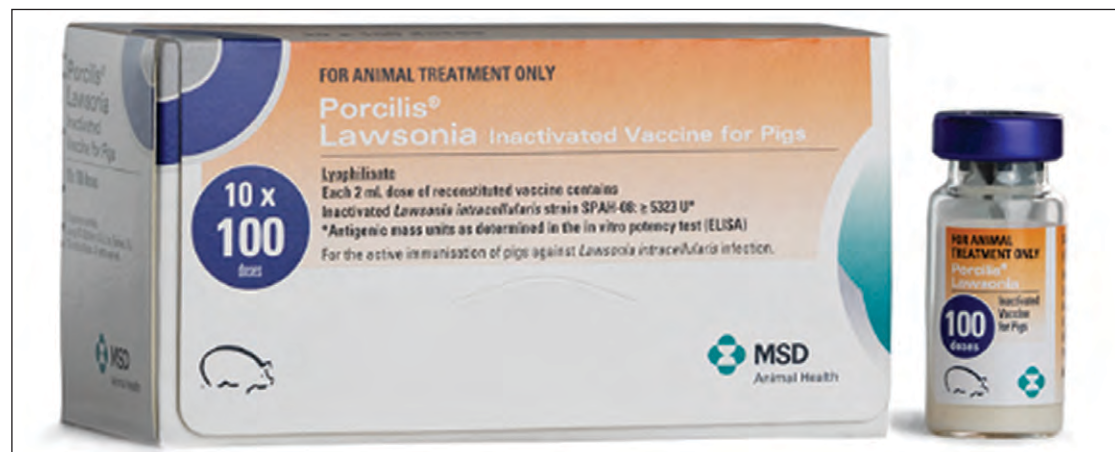
For instance, tylosin shows only intermediate effectiveness, while chlortetracycline exhibits variable results with low to intermediate activity.

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

MSD Animal Health technical lead for swine in Asia Pacific Dr Leo Ellerma said: "Porcilis Lawsonia has been a trusted vaccine for ileitis since its global launch in Europe in 2018, and MSD Animal Health has a long history of innovation in the swine industry."

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

Note, Porcilis is a registered trademark. MSD Animal Health



Launched by MSD Animal Health, Australia's first injectable ileitis vaccine Porcilis Lawsonia addresses all three forms of ileitis.

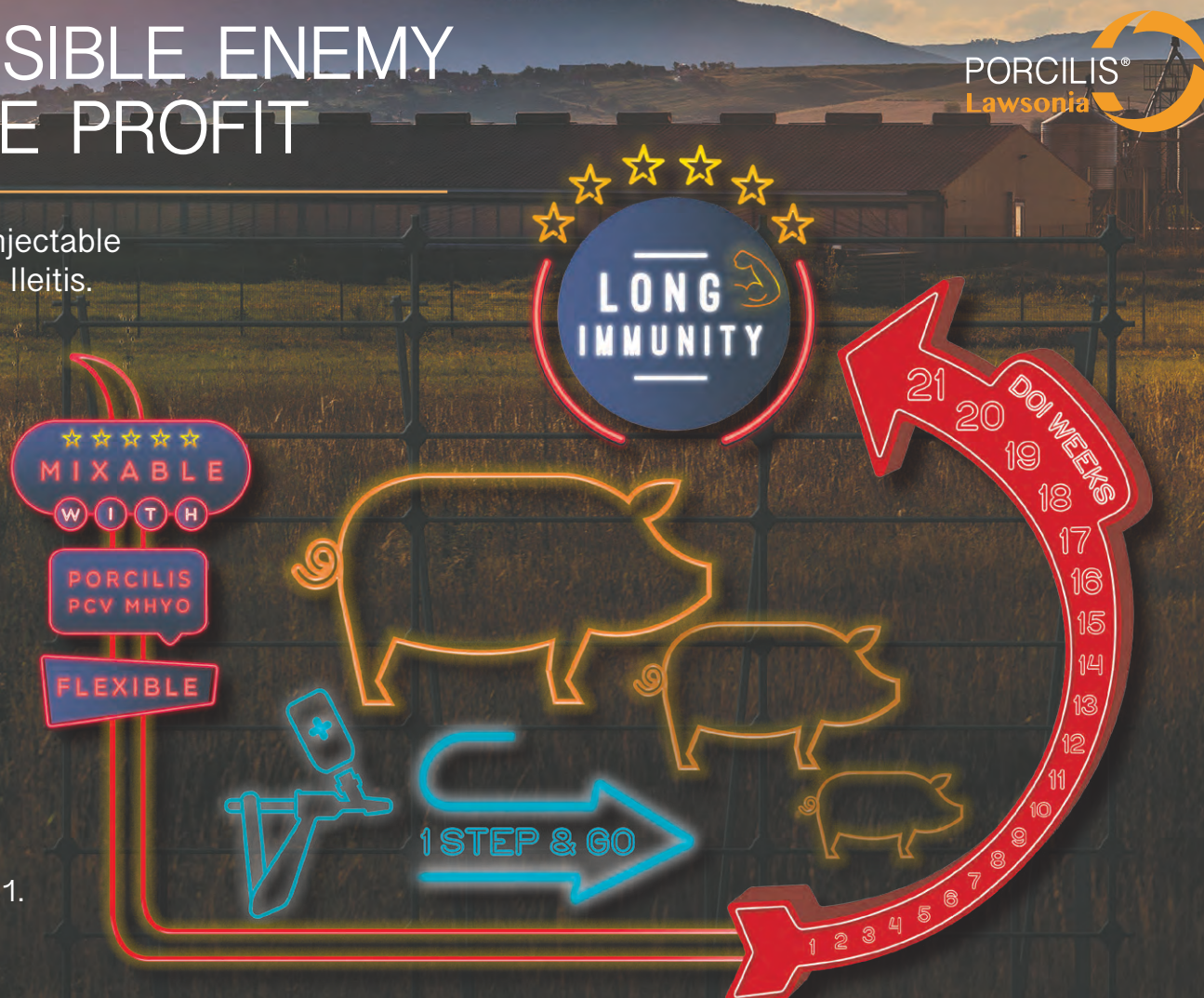
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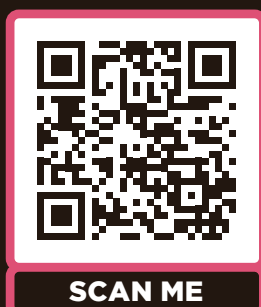
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Aussie's new pump selection guide

WITH changing weather conditions and the unpredictability of decent rain, many farmers are planning ahead when it comes to managing water resources.

They are looking to maximise water harvesting, when possible, with proactive management of water tanks and dam levels.

Selecting the right pump to achieve this is essential.

Aussie Pumps' new *Pump Smart 9* catalogue displays a full range of self-priming centrifugal pumps for a variety of on-farm applications, including transferring

water, spray irrigation, even firefighting duties.

The catalogue explains how to select the right pump, providing details of pressures and flows with comprehensive performance curves.

Portable self-primers

Aussie's self-priming QP range consists of engine-drive pumps that use leading brands such as Honda, Yanmar, Kubota and Deutz.

The *Pump Smart 9* catalogue includes a lot of information about specific applications for these pumps, from fire protection to flood mitigation.

The Aussie QP pump range starts with a light-weight 1" Ultralite and goes all the way through to big 6" flood lifters that will move up to 6000LPM.

And these QP pumps all come with a five-year warranty.

Aussie's QP portable firefighting pumps have built an excellent reputation among farmers for their performance, longevity and quality.

Available in both petrol and diesel-drive versions, it is the diesel-drive option that farmers are turning to.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales

said, "In our experience, customers choose diesel fire pumps for many reasons."

"From a safety point of view, refuelling a petrol pump during an ember attack is seriously dangerous."

"Animals and crops are lost in the paddock due to inadequate fire-fighting protection," he said.

"Farmers are moving to diesel fire pumps for that protection."

Cast-iron performers

The *Pump Smart 9* catalogue also covers the Aussie GMP motor pump range.

These heavy-duty cast-iron trash pumps can be used for everything from handling effluent to recycling water and stall/shed washdown.

The Aussie GMP range also includes a full line up of 2" through to 4" heavy-duty self-priming stainless-steel pumps, designed for abrasive applications in both high-flow and high-head versions.

Smart pumps for chemical transfer

When it comes to handling corrosive liquid fertilisers and other ag chemicals, Aussie offers a range of corrosion resistant 'smart pumps'.

Available with either EPDM or Viton seals, these 2" and 3" polyester pumps can handle a comprehensive range of chemicals.

"We christened these 'smart pumps' because they are manufactured from 30 percent glass-filled polyester and are capable of handling a range of farm liquids safely," Mr Hales said.

Knowledge shared

The new Aussie *Pump Smart 9* catalogue is also fully priced, so customers can be confident they are getting the best value for money.

It also includes plenty of QR codes that link to further reading and videos to assist with pump selection, maintenance and even troubleshooting.

"It's a gem that we're really proud to release, because we know it's full of useful information aimed at giving customers the knowledge they need to select the right pump first time," Mr Hales said.

The catalogue is available to download from aussiepumps.com.au and free copies are available from Aussie Pumps or authorised distributors.

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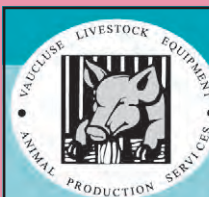
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New project to help in fight against farm injury

AS the agricultural sector aims for zero on-farm fatalities, the launch of the Ag Safety Data Net is aiming to reinforce the collective responsibility for farm safety.

The ASDN project is an initiative of the Rural Safety and Health Alliance, funded by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Grains Research and Development Corporation, Australian Wool Innovation, Australian Pork Limited and AgriFutures Australia.

The ASDN project will develop and implement an ongoing data system

that will provide meaningful metrics for farm safety planning and, for the first time, report at industry, regional, state and national levels.

The project is coordinated by AgHealth Australia and will run through until June 2027.

Farmsafe Australia chair Felicity Richards highlighted the urgency of addressing farm injury, particularly as harvest and hay/silage seasons approach.

"We are seeing up to 40 fatalities and an increase in serious injuries on Australian farms each year," Ms Richards said.

"Despite this, there is no single source of truth for all key injury measures.

"Therefore, by centralising this information, ASDN will make it easier to highlight issues and trends more easily.

"Targeted solutions that will have benefits for individuals, families, rural communities and the overall productivity of farm businesses can then be prioritised.

"The better we can identify and address risks, the greater chance we have of everyone returning home safely after a day at work."

This year, farm-related deaths and injuries reported in the media have exceeded those from 2023.

This underscores the urgency to prevent these incidents.

ASDN consolidates farm injury information at national, state and regional levels, while ensuring privacy and confidentiality.

The platform will also produce measures that target the prevention of injury through practical actions that farmers can take.

For more information, visit agrifutures.com.au.

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¹ AVERAGE OF 13 PUBLISHED STUDIES. Assumptions for the calculation: FCR improvement = 0.141, Live weight = 100 kg, Number of animals sold per year = 3000, Vaccination costs: \$7,139.

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