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APL's Ashley Norval is a Rural Achiever finalist.

Pork represented in the Rural Achiever Award

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited's manager of Technology Adoption and Industry Capability Ashley Norval has been announced as one of the 2017 Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Rural Achiever finalists.

The RAS Rural Achiever Award is a statewide leadership program run by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

It recognises young people who are working hard to make a significant contribution to their community and rural Australia.

Ashley is an integral part of the APL Research and Innovation division, running and managing APL R&I's extension activities including the 'Pigs in Schools' education portfolio.

Her industry knowledge and passion for the agricultural sector has led to many successful achievements for the pork industry.

Ashley will participate in the 12-month program that prides itself on developing future leaders in the agricultural sector.

Ashley will be exposed to a range of unique network-

ing and professional development opportunities.

She also takes home \$2000 prize money, a 12-month RAS alumni membership and clothing from Akubra and Thomas Cook.

"I am honoured to have been chosen to be a part of such a great program that recognises young leaders across the agricultural community and am looking forward to representing the Australian pig industry to the best of my ability," Ashley said.

APL's acting general manager of Research and Innovation Heather Channon acknowledges how great this will be for Ashley, and the benefit of new ideas and skills she will bring back to APL.

"Ashley is one of our rising stars here at APL, and we know she will do very well in the program," Ms Channon said.

APL CEO Mr Andrew Spencer said: "This is a great example of talented people in the pig industry doing great things to ensure we keep moving forward."

APL congratulates Ashley and wishes her good luck throughout the program.

Preparing for rainy days in the middle of summer

HAPPY New Year to all readers, especially our Australian pork producers from Australian Pork Limited and our best wishes for a prosperous 2017.

While it is still for many the quiet early part of January, lots of pig farmers are working because pigs have to be looked after.

For many around the world, 2016 was a challenging period.

We've had the Brexit and Trump phenomena, still with their consequences rolling out, which have created a lot of uncertainty for those affected.

The result of our own election last year has left a difficult path to tread for today's federal government to be able to achieve positive change.

But if you're an Australian pig producer, I think you'll look back on 2016 as a pretty strong year for your business, and the big challenge we have



Point of View

by ANDREW SPENCER CEO



now is how to make 2017 just as strong.

In terms of industry growth, to the end of October 2016 annual growth in pigs processed climbed 3 percent (see Figure 1) – a healthy margin above the population growth rate of about 1.5 percent.

In terms of pork produced, the growth was 3.1 percent.

On top of that, pig prices at the farm gate have remained strong – probably averaging

for the previous 12 months slightly higher than the 12 months before that.

And as a special bonus, grain prices are at several-year lows, adding to the already healthy profitability.

So what more should we be wishing for in 2017?

More of the same would be a good starting point but we're an industry that has proven itself as one not to rest on its laurels.

Preparing for a rainy day has to be on our list of 2017 tasks because our assumption is that the present positive market conditions for our industry will not remain so indefinitely.

So what sort of rainy days should we be preparing for?

Threats to our biosecurity in my mind are number one – risk of exotic disease outbreaks, risks to our biosecurity import protocols that protect the unique status of our herd health, risks brought about by those who might swill feed in contravention of the law.

Biosecurity is an activity centre for APL that never sleeps – we can never be too prepared for the worst while hoping for the best and this is reflected in the programs and projects that we have in place to minimise the risks in this area.

Part of the reason our de-

continued P6

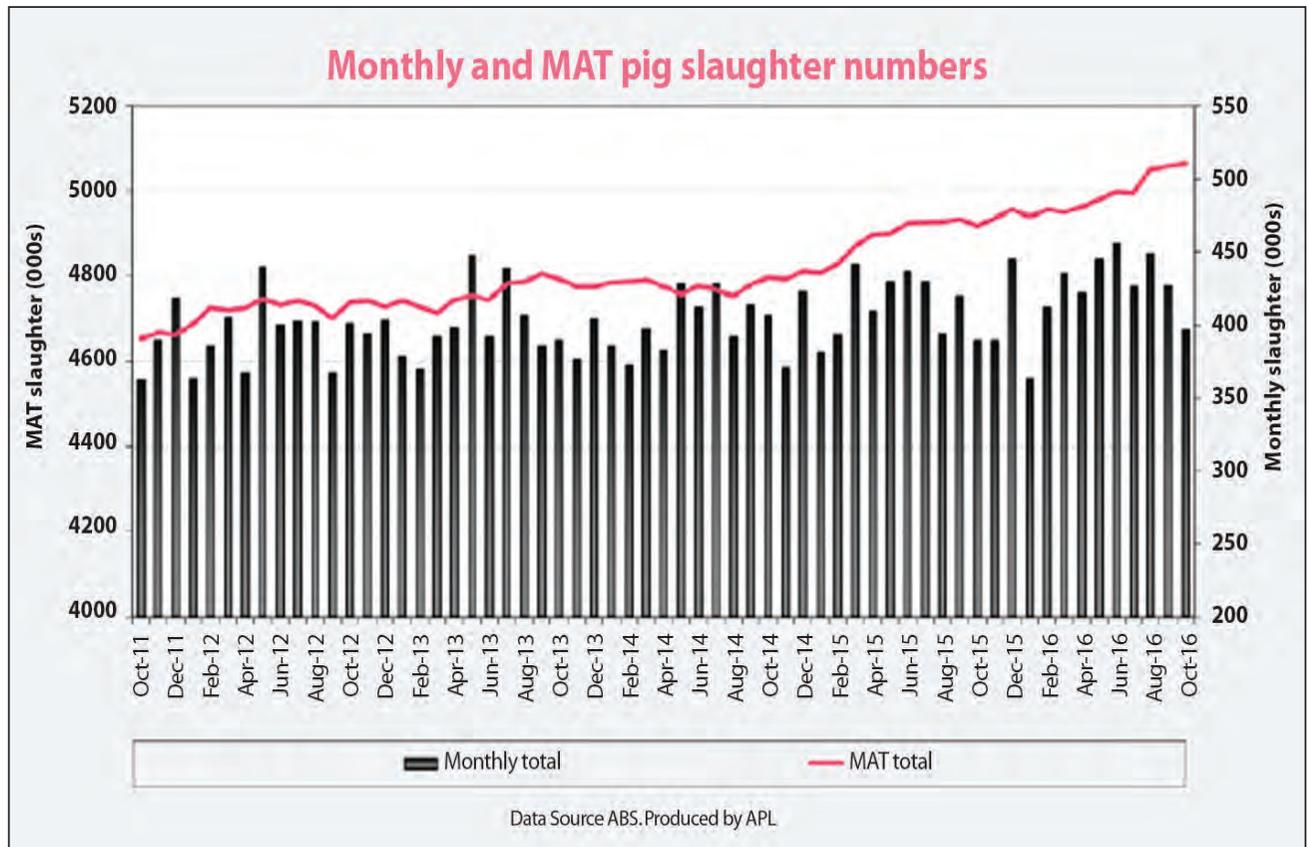
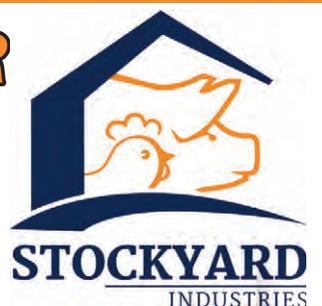


Figure 1

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**Pig Industry
Calendar of Events**

2017

JAN 10 - 12 – Banff Pork Seminar, Banff, Canada www.banffpork.ca

JAN 17 - 18 – Minnesota Pork Congress, Minneapolis, US www.mnporkcongress.com

JAN 22 - 28 – Australian Veterinary Student Conference, Townsville QLD www.ava.com.au/avsc2017

FEB 25 - 28 – AASV Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado, US www.aasv.org

MAR 15 - 17 – VIV Asia, Bangkok, Thailand www.vivasia.nl

APR 4 – Livestock Forum, Barcelona, Spain www.livestockforum.com

APR 4 - 5 – Victorian Pig Fair, Bendigo VIC Ph: 0419 552 768

APR 24 - 26 – Livestock Philippines 2017, Passay City, Phillipines www.livestockphilippines.com

MAY 3 - 5 – ESPHM European Symposium on Porcine Health Management, Prague, Czech Republic www.esphm2017.org

MAY 18 - 20 – China Animal Husbandry Expo, Qingdao International Expo Centre, China www.caaa.com.cn

JUN 7 - 9 – World Pork Expo, Des Moines, Iowa, US www.worldpork.org

JUN 11 - 14 – 10th International Conference on Pig Reproduction, Columbia, Missouri, US www.muconf.missouri.edu/ICPR2017/Index.html

JUL 21 - 25 – AVMA Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, US www.avma.org

AUG 29 - 31 – SIAVS - International Poultry and Pork Show, São Paulo, Brazil www.siavs.org.br/?lang=en

NOV 19 - 22 – Australasian Pig Science Association (Inc) conference, Melbourne VIC www.apsa.asn.au

2018

MAR 3 - 6 – Annual Meeting of the American Association of Swine, San Diego, California, US www.aasv.org/annmtg

Jun 20 - 22 – VIV Europe 2018, Utrecht, The Netherlands www.viveurope.nl/en/Bezoeker.aspx

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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Reflections and preparing for 2017

I HOPE you had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas and new year with family and friends and are looking forward to what 2017 brings for our industry.

Before 2017 gets fully under way, I thought it would be a good opportunity to reflect on some of the lesser-publicised R&D highlights from 2016.

In the production portfolio, I draw your attention to outcomes from the optimisation of gilt progeny program, the use of caffeine and creatine to improve piglet performance as well as considerations when tail docking piglets.

Optimisation of gilt Progeny

Two studies have been completed that investigated gilt progeny optimisation as part of the growth and development R&D program.

The first of these (Australian Pork Limited 2015/062) benchmarked the performance data of gilt progeny that entered the breeding herd against sow progeny from the herds at Rivalea and Sun-Pork Farms North.

It is generally accepted that gilt progeny (progeny born to gilts) have inferior performance due to being born lighter, having slower growth rates and higher rates of morbidity and mortality compared to sow progeny.

However, the effects that these characteristics may have on their reproductive performance and longevity in the breeding herd are not well understood.

The key findings included:

- Overall, gilt progeny selected into the breeding herd were less developed reproductively than sow progeny;
- Gilt progeny took longer to reach mating weight/



by **HEATHER CHANNON**
Acting Research and Innovation
General Manager



condition, took over one day longer to be mated and had a lower litter size at their first farrowing;

- Progeny from gilts also had a longer wean to oestrus interval between weaning the second litter and the subsequent mating and had similar removal rates to sow offspring to parity three; and
- Despite this, the requirement for breeders to be selected only from sow progeny was not apparent.

The inclusion of gilt progeny in the replacement gilt selection process was recommended from the outcomes of this study.

In another study (APL 2014/458), data from three herds was used to identify the effects of sow and birth-litter characteristics on performance of progeny leading to the management and selection strategies that provide better support for gilts and their progeny.

Progeny growth was affected by sow parity in all herds, however, the magnitude of the effect was variable.

On average, growth rate of gilt progeny was -35g to -2g/day lower in comparison to the growth rate of sow progeny.

The average birth weight of gilt progeny also affected their growth through to slaughter as their growth was 5g/day higher for an

increase of 100g in birth weight when compared to sow progeny.

For one herd only, gilt progeny had a higher feed intake and an inferior feed conversion ratio.

It was recommended that lactation length for gilts be extended in order to improve growth performance of their progeny.

Two other studies investigating the optimisation of gilt progeny performance, including one large collaborative study, will be provided once they conclude in 2017 and 2019.

Using caffeine and creatine to boost piglet performance

The work that has been conducted using caffeine and creatine to boost piglet performance was presented at the SA Pig Industry Day in February 2016.

Briefly, the supplementation of sow diets with caffeine during late gestation was shown to increase the number of piglets born alive and lower stillbirths.

Sow diets supplemented during late lactation with creatine improved piglet weight gain from birth to day 21 of age.

A commercial validation study is now being conducted at a commercial facility and will include examining whether there are additive effects

on piglets from sows with late gestation diets supplemented with both caffeine and creatine.

Tail docking

To avoid issues with tail biting later in life, tail docking is routinely performed within the first few days of a piglet's life but can cause a temporary pain response that may lead to welfare consequences.

The project (APL 2013/040), led by Dr Rebecca Morrison at Rivalea, investigated the long-term welfare implications of tail docking and the best methods and medications to reduce the pain response.

This study compared the use of clippers and cauterisers, given clippers are currently the most common tool used in industry to complete tail docking.

The key learnings resulting from this study are:

- Tail docking causes an acute short-term stress response of two-day-old piglets;
- Cauterisation of piglets' tails appeared to be less aversive than clipper treatment and may lessen the acute pain response;
- Administer meloxicam to the piglet one hour prior to tail docking to assist in alleviating the stress response. The need for additional labour, pig handling and medication costs will need to be taken into account. The ability to provide analgesia through the sow's milk is an area that is being investigated overseas. If this is successful, it could provide producers with a practical method of improving piglet welfare when conducting tail docking; and
- The cauterisation method involves the equipment that requires a high level of maintenance as well as very high lev-

els of stockperson competency to ensure that the procedure is humane and efficient.

Pigs to Pork publication

All producers should have received a copy (via mail) of our latest publication 'Pigs to Pork'.

This will be produced quarterly and is designed to highlight APL's latest research outcomes to all Australian pig producers.

If you would like additional copies sent to your farm, or have feedback on the first edition, please don't hesitate to contact me or the Research and Innovation team.

R&D process

Throughout February, the four Specialist Groups (Marketing Development Committee; Production and Welfare; Environmental Management and Quality Assurance; and Biosecurity and Food Safety) will be meeting to discuss and prioritise industry RD&E needs and future research direction for 2017/18 and beyond.

This year, I welcome two new chairs for Specialist Groups 2 and 3 – Darryl D'Souza and Mark Hogan, respectively, and the R&I team looks forward to working closely with them as part of our R&D process.

I'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Dr Rob van Barneveld and Dr Rob Wilson for their significant contributions as chairs of Specialist Groups 2 and 3, respectively.

Your knowledge, innovative thinking and expertise is greatly appreciated.

For further information on any of the topics discussed, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0423 056 045 or heather.channon@australianpork.com.au

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Pork CRC powering ahead in 2017

BASED on bumper grain harvests nationally and globally and continuing good demand for high-integrity Australian pork, 2017 promises to be a very good year for Australian pork producers.

I certainly hope so and we at Pork CRC will do everything in our power to ensure it is.

Margin call

Australia seems to have missed out on falls in grain costs across the rest of the world in 2015 and 2016 and you will see this when I cover the global situation next month or maybe in March.

In 2015, most EU countries enjoyed 14-16 percent declines in cost of production relative to 2014, due largely to reduced feed costs, but we certainly did not.

In the US, feed cost declined from \$A355/tonne in 2014 to \$A291/tonne in 2015 and fell further in 2016.

In Australia there was little change in average feed cost between 2014 and 2015 and little relief in 2016.

We should catch up this year, though I imagine all pork producing countries will enjoy further feed cost reductions in 2017.

With the exception of China, the other countries, however, did not enjoy the relatively high and stable prices we did over the past two years.

This is shown for the US industry in Figure 1.

They have been less profitable than Australia and are relying on tapping into the market in China to reduce domestic supply and improve profitability in 2017.

Indeed, China will play the major role in shaping the global pork situation in 2017.

The other big issues in 2017 are likely to be antimicrobial resistance and use and the impact Donald Trump's US presidency has on global trade agreements.

Great expectations

For Pork CRC, 2017 will be one of great expectations.

We have 51 active projects and will review and commission new projects this year from our last investment round, which closes on January 9.

I know there are many exciting and potentially system changing projects in the 51 currently active and, if history is any guide, I expect to see quite a few more from the current call.

We have seen some exciting outcomes to date



by DR ROGER CAMPBELL
CEO



from projects on the development of vaccines for APP and swine dysentery, we have a new project on strep suis, which has vaccine implications and we expect some interesting results from a project investigating the effects of antibiotics and alternative strategies on the change of the gut microbiome and the development of antimicrobial resistance.

Indeed, we have very exciting projects in Program 2 'Herd health management', which will help veterinarians more effectively use and hopefully reduce the use of antibiotics.

This 'issue' is not going away and if we can get ahead of the curve I think it will put the industry and individual businesses in a place we need to be nationally and globally.

From Program 1 'Reduced confinement of sows and piglets' we expect to see industry relevant outcomes from projects on defining and improving the welfare and even contentment of sows during farrowing and lactation, on means of improving pre-weaning survival and on the enrichment of group housed gestating sows, which include further studies on the Ridley enrichment block.

The enrichment blocks will also be extended to weaner and grower-finisher pigs in 2017.

We will be following up some interesting outcomes from Project IC-103 suggesting that sows grouped during the last week of lactation and given boar contact had markedly bigger litters next time around.

We will also see if a similar situation exists with sows housed in conventional systems during late lactation.

In Program 3 'Healthy pork consumption' we have a project on using NIRS to detect boar taint.

If successful, it will have global implications.

In Program 4 'Carbon conscious nutrient inputs and outputs' we have a couple of projects that could be the next big step in improving growth performance and ongoing

research on the use of algae to remediate effluent streams and as a potential feed source, as well as a number of projects to further extend the use of biogas and the efficiency with which it can be used.

AusScan assistance

We also continue to refine the AusScan calibrations for rapidly determining the energy value of grains and the amino acid contents of soybean meal and canola meal.

I urge you to have your new season grain tested,

as we know it is not uncommon for some barleys to have a similar digestible energy level to wheat and that there is little relationship between how a grain is graded or even its fines content and its DE.

Grain might be cheaper than last year, but there is still money to be made from knowing what your grain contains and adjusting diet formulations accordingly.

The same applies for canola and soybean meal, so ensure you have them tested – it takes just a few minutes these days.

I will keep you regularly and fully updated on all our R&D outcomes, but I expect 2017 to be a big year for Pork CRC.

Dysentery developments

Prof David Hampson and his team at Murdoch University recently submitted their final report on Project 2A -114 'Iden-

continued P4



Pork CRC's executive team, led by CEO Roger Campbell, will work hard to ensure 2017 is a year of positive outcomes for all Pork CRC stakeholders. Dr Campbell was pictured with Charles Rikard-Bell, Rebecca Smith, Geoff Crook and Richard Westmacott.

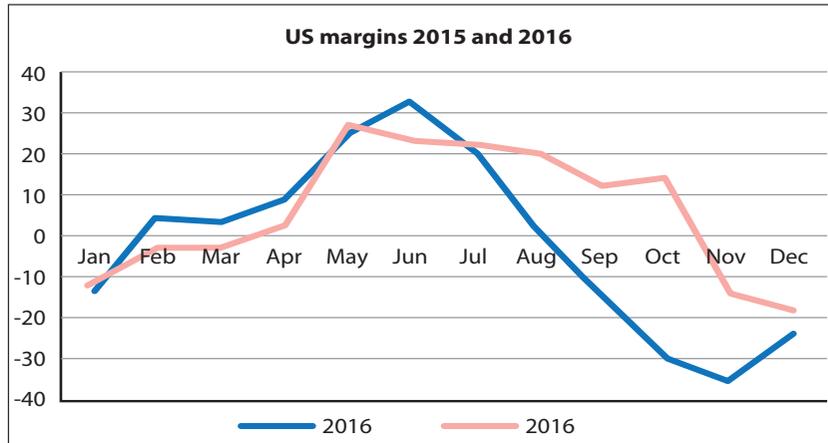


Figure 1: US pork production margins (\$US/pig) in 2015 and 2016.



Pork producers are encouraged to test new season grain using AusScan.

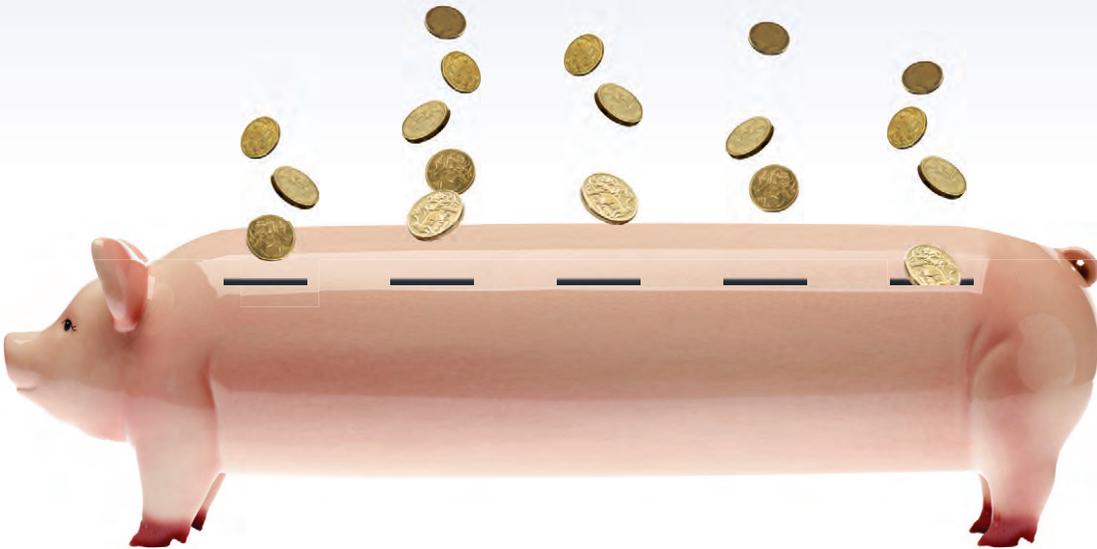
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Pork CRC powering ahead in 2017

from P3

tifying, tracking and controlling swine dysentery in Australian pig herds'.

You might remember they previously found a number of new and uniquely Australian strains of brachyspira hyodysenteriae (Project 2C-111) and, more concerningly, in herds previously thought to be free of the disease based on the lack of clinical signs.

This situation was confirmed in the recently completed project, which had the objectives of further surveying the industry for SD, seeing if the new strains were pathogenic, determining changes in antimicrobial sensitivity over time and rechecking an ELISA test previously abandoned because of false negative results.

Most of the false negative herds have proven infected (positive).

So, the disease can be silent under particular environmental and dietary situations and therefore unknowingly spread.

Clearly, constant surveillance and testing is required.

Hopefully, the ELISA test proves more accurate than thought and becomes a real advantage for industry.

In challenge tests, some of the new strains have been pathogenic, or at least caused the same disease symptoms as known pathogenic strains.

We also learnt more on means of better defining the pathogenicity of brachyspira serotypes.

Antimicrobial sensitivity, as you might expect, has declined over time, with some isolates found to be resistant to all antimicrobials tested.

The changes over time to three commonly used antimicrobials are shown in Table 1.

The project has brought the industry up to date on the situation with swine dysentery and, as I said, confirms the need for constant surveillance, an effective test for the disease and an alternative to antimicrobials to control it.

We are currently working on the latter.

No, no

An initial small experiment in Project 1C-114 suggested that feeding

sows magnesium sulphate for three to five days before farrowing and three days after farrowing reduced pre-foster mortality.

However, a validation study at SunPork SA involving 810 sows (270 per treatment) showed that MgSO₄ or a Mg-rich marine algal product (ACID-BUF) tended to increase still birth rate and mortality to day three of lactation respectively.

The results are shown in Table 2.

The differences were small and may or may not be 'real' but the bottom line is that feeding sows Mg in the period before and for three days after farrowing would seem to have little commercial merit.

Eye on

Apart from Pork CRC project outcomes that I will let you know about, whether they be positive or negative, the top of my list of technologies to keep an eye on or even implement in 2017 are:

1. Sow calliper for objectively measuring body condition. The calliper is quick and easy to use and provides a much more objective assessment of sow body condition than doing this visually using the old body condition scoring. The US and data from elsewhere suggests that getting the calliper score right can help optimise feed costs in gestation and result in an overall improvement in reproduction and sow longevity. This link (www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgxQE1zkjBQ) will take you to a video on how to use the calliper. It can be ordered from Dr Mark Knauer (mtknauer@gmail.com). It comes from the US but delivery is rapid.
2. Post cervical AI – an older technology I have

been banging on about for a while and it's good to see more producers testing and adopting the technology. According to those using it, some training and patience is required, which is no different from when we moved from using boars (natural mating) to artificial insemination way back in the late '80s and early '90s. A revolution back then and standard operating procedure now. PCAI is one of the next steps in the process. PCAI enables mating to be done more rapidly and if you are game for sperm numbers to be reduced. If you haven't tried it, talk to your semen supplier or AI equipment supplier.

3. Set time AI or synchronising ovulation in weaned sows – I think this is the next big advance in AI and reproductive technology. The technology enables matings to be done without the need for oestrus detection with just one dose of semen. Pork

CRC research proved both outcomes and indicated that the technology may help reduce the incidence of summer infertility. The technology has been intensively researched in the US and a product named Ovugel was registered for use some time ago in America. The same product has since been registered in Australia by Elanco and will be launched, I believe, in November 2017.

What's on

- January 9 – Call for round eight Pork CRC proposals closes.

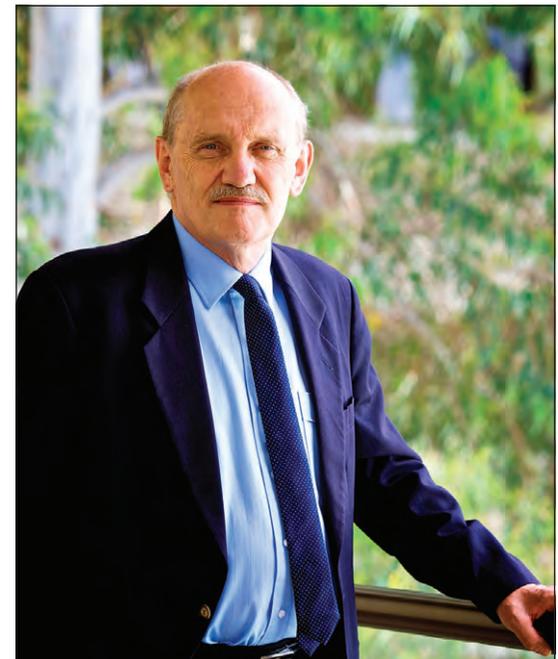
- January 30 to February 10 – Pig Science into Practice Course at Roseworthy, South Australia.

- February 7 – Pork CRC R&D committee meeting.

- February 24 – SA Pig day.

- February 27 – First APRIL board meeting.

- February 28 – Pork CRC board meeting. www.porkcrc.com.au



Prof David Hampson and his team at Murdoch University recently submitted their very revealing final report on swine dysentery in Project 2A-114.

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Period (no. of isolates)	Antimicrobial	No. (%) susceptible	No. (%) intermediate	No. (%) resistant
2014-2016 (n=46)	Lincomycin	9 (19.6%)	9 (19.6%)	28 (60.9%)
	Tylosin	-	4 (8.9%)	42 (91.3%)
	Tiamulin	12 (26.1%)	27 (58.7%)	7 (15.2%)
2006-2007 (n=60)	Lincomycin	19 (31.6%)	31 (51.6%)	10 (16.6%)
	Tylosin	-	-	60 (100%)
	Tiamulinc	57 (95%)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.6%)
2002-2006 (n=89)	Lincomycin	26 (29.2%)	57 (64%)	6 (6.7%)
	Tylosind	-	2 (2.7%)	73 (97.3%)
	Tiamulinc	16 (18%)	62 (70%)	11 (12.4%)

Table 1: Classification of the B. hyodysenteriae isolates collected in 2014/2016 as being susceptible, intermediate or resistant to three antimicrobials, and comparison with reported results for Australian isolates from previous periods.

	CONTROL	MGSO4	ACIDBUF	Sig.
Gestation length (d)	116.2 ± 0.1	116.1 ± 0.1	116.1 ± 0.1	0.653
Total number of piglets born	12.7 ± 0.2	12.5 ± 0.2	12.8 ± 0.2	0.632
Piglets born alive	11.5 ± 0.2	11.1 ± 0.2	11.4 ± 0.2	0.221
Piglets stillborn	0.7 ± 0.1	1.0 ± 0.1	0.8 ± 0.1	0.014
Piglets at day 1 of age	11.4 ± 0.1	11.3 ± 0.1	11.4 ± 0.1	0.95
Litter weight at day 1	16.0 ± 0.3	16.3 ± 0.3	16.1 ± 0.3	0.74
Piglets at day 21 of age	9.5 ± 0.2	9.6 ± 0.2	9.1 ± 0.2	0.154
Litter weight at day 21	58.9 ± 1.3	59.3 ± 1.6	55.6 ± 1.3	0.098
Pre-fostering mortality	0.4 ± 0.1	0.3 ± 0.1	0.3 ± 0.1	0.501
Mortality from day 1 to 3	0.5 ± 0.1	0.5 ± 0.1	0.7 ± 0.1	0.05
Mortality from day 4 to weaning	0.4 ± 0.1	0.3 ± 0.1	0.4 ± 0.1	0.386
Number of ill thrift piglets	1.0 ± 0.1	1.0 ± 0.1	1.2 ± 0.1	0.193

Table 2: Mean ± SEM reproductive output from sows fed a standard lactation sow mash (CONTROL), and those provided with additional magnesium (MgSO₄ and ACIDBUF) from about five days prior to farrowing until three days post-farrowing.



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– Errol Hardwick, Farm Manager

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Preparing for rainy days in the middle of summer

from P1

mand and prices are up at present comes down to the dynamics of the sheep and, in particular, cattle industries.

Restocking of cattle numbers after the drought of a year or two ago will mean for at least a few years that available numbers of cattle for processing will be lower than usual and prices will thus remain high.

This has given pork an on-the-shelf price advantage that will come under pressure at some time in the future.

Having our own promotional campaigns ready to roll out (pre-tested through surveys of our target segments) when our demand levels start to come under pressure is a priority for our marketing division at present.

These campaigns are being planned, produced and shelved, ready for execution at the time that best suits their optimal impact.

With the high demand presently experienced for fresh Australian pork (and its price premium over pork from other parts of the world), imported pork volumes remain high, and importers are even motivated to look for new kinds of



business in Australia.

We see more imported pork being sold in cooked form, but outside the traditional formats of ham and bacon.

For example, retorted ribs originating from the US and entering Australia via New Zealand are being used in the food service industry here.

Cooked imported pork belly is also finding its way into the food service industry.

When you think about it, no one eats pork raw, so theoretically, almost all our fresh pork market can be substituted by cooked product and thus imported product.

We're trying to get a handle on exactly how much imported product is entering the market through these new channels and then formulate a strategy to regain our market share at the right time.

Ultimately our pork industry is only as successful as the community will

allow us to be.

Continuing to tell our story, outline how we share the values of the community in how animals need to be looked after and ensuring that our production methods align with the desires of our consumers is mandatory for our continued ability to be successful.

Difficulties in some states with planning approvals for new or expanding pig farms are in some ways a reflection of hitting speed humps in gaining full community support for what we do.

Managing this situation is a journey and not a destination and remains an area of focus for APL in representing our producers.

Good financial times are an opportunity to look at the resilience of your business model and the 'next big thing' that you'd like to happen for your business.

It might be reinvesting in your infrastructure to improve productivity levels, investing in a biogas plant for your piggery or expanding your production capacity.

Whatever the next big thing is for your business, it's not an option to sit back and expect today's prosperity to be the default for tomorrow.

Pig Farm Perspective by Bruce the brainy pig



IN the past decade, producers in the pig industry have been subject to increased scrutiny surrounding the use of antibiotics.

As such, many are looking for alternatives to antibiotics and for ways in which they can reduce their antibiotic usage.

One way in which producers are often looking to reduce their antibiotic usage is through the use of dietary or in-water acidifiers.

Various organic acids or their salts are commercially available to aid in the prevention of scours and high mortalities post-weaning and to improve growth performance of pigs.

Acids used in the diets of pigs are either organic acids (or salts), inorganic acids or blends of all of these.

Of late, acids are being coated with lipids (that is, fat) to delay release until the lower digestive tract.

Following weaning, piglets often have a period of low feed intake, poor growth and diarrhoea as they transition onto solid feed.

It is also thought that the separation of piglets

from the sow at weaning subjects piglets to stress.

These factors, along with the immature gut of a newly weaned piglet, results in these pigs being at high risk of digestive disorders and post-weaning diarrhoea.

It is thought acids primarily assist with direct killing of bacteria and reduced gastric pH.

This results in reduced survival of pathogens through the stomach and increased nutrient digestibility.

Interestingly, while acidifiers in the feed reduce the diet pH, they have no effect on reducing stomach pH.

Currently available studies indicate that the use of acidifiers in the diet can improve dry matter digestibility by 0.82 percent and crude protein digestibility by 1.33 percent.

Different acid types have been found to have little effect on dry matter digestibility.

However, formic acid has been found to have the greatest effect on crude protein digestibility, increasing CP digestibility by 1.64 percent compared to 0.57 percent for fumaric acid.

The effect of organic acids in feed on growth performance has also been shown to be greatest in younger pigs (just after weaning).

On average, use of dietary acidifiers has been shown to improve growth rates by 12.25 percent in the first two weeks post-weaning and 6.03 percent two to four weeks post-weaning.

Organic acidifiers, such as formic acid and its salts have also been found to increase growth rates of grower (3.51 percent) and finisher (2.69 percent) pigs.

This is however to a lesser degree than newly weaned pigs.

Use of inorganic acids such as hydrochloric and sulphuric acids has been found to reduce growth rates.

Organic acids are also effective at reducing the risk of salmonella in-feed.

A reduction in pH to 4.2 has been found to be optimal to stop salmonella growth and also has a carryover effect, preventing recontamination of feed and reducing the incidence of salmonella in the gut of pigs.

Hot tips for planning expansions or new sites

WHEN I'm at home on the farm I really struggle with paperwork.

I would much prefer to be out in the paddock, up at the yards, checking water and fences or taking the dogs for a run.

Taking time to think about paperwork, let alone interpreting legislation and local government planning rules, isn't something we would prefer to be doing, especially when we can hear outside calling.

To make matters worse, it's probably something not all of us are used to dealing with every day, so interpreting planning requirements isn't quite like determining spray rates.

However, getting it wrong could have a big financial impact on my business, so it does pay to focus!

When it comes to the expansion of your business, there is always a lot to consider.

Return on investment, workload increases, do you employ help or go it alone?

In this article we look at the benefits of employing help when it comes to submitting planning applications to your local council for either the expansion of a current operation, a new site or retrospective licence application.

State environmental and planning regulations are difficult to decipher – particularly for those who are unaccustomed to interpreting planning laws.

Not only is it difficult for a producer who just wants to get on with an expansion to an existing piggery, but also to those who are looking to enter the industry or alter the conditions on a current licence.

Under the current requirements, a new planning proposal, proposal for extension or a retrospective permit (approval obtained after establishment of operation), is required to be submitted to the local planning authority.

In each state, that is your local government council.

As our industry is spread nationally, assessment of planning proposals differs from state to state.

Some of the governing legislation can be cumbersome and in some cases conflicting.

These are also overlaid by rules around local development, zoning of land and land use, environmental impact and amenity impact that differ between council areas.

Given the challenging task of getting your head around these requirements, I recommend seeking professional advice.

After all, investing in

the expansion of your business, starting a new one or determining retrospective licence requirements to operate really shouldn't be treated any differently to chatting to the local agronomist or your accountant.

Where there is expertise that will make your life easier in the long run, use it.

It can often significantly reduce the planning timeframes and minimise additional information requests.

Another piece of friendly advice I can offer through experience is to call in the support early and communicate often.

A consultant can provide objective advice including identifying risks and mitigation options for you up front and throughout the application and approval process.

Consultants have the experience and practical understanding of the requirements for planning applications.

They also appreciate the legislative ins and outs applicable to your situation.

Experience and expertise allows a consultant to address any misinformation during the application process and mitigate any potential excessive conditions on planning applications, allowing you to get on with what you do best.

In addition, council staff don't always have a great understanding of intensive agricultural land uses.

Lots of local planners don't deal with this type of application on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis.

This can lead to local councils placing prescriptive or irrelevant conditions on the development.

Many local councils are also subject to community pressure, potentially resulting in overly conservative positions on planning applications.

Having a qualified consultant prepare an application will often result in local council decision makers feeling more comfortable with a proposal.

It reassures them that the application is well thought through, addresses all the requirements fully and is defensible in a public forum.

Don't forget, councils have strategic objectives that support economic development and growth through business, including agricultural businesses.

Each local council usually indicates how it intends to meet its objectives through a local government strategic plan.

These documents can be easily obtained from your local council website or by request.

Using a consultant ensures your plans meet the strategic objectives of the council.

More importantly, your plans will then demonstrate how your development contributes to the betterment of your local community.

It's important to remember there are flow-on effects to the local community, which includes employment, increased revenues for local produce stores, supporting veterinarians and associated businesses, and even as far as supporting local schools if your plans include housing a family on site or on farm as part of labour hire.

For larger expansions or start-ups, a full economic benefit analysis may be

worth looking into.

When you sit down to think about the work you have to do behind the scenes to prepare your plan, investing in a consultant isn't a bad idea.

For a start, consultants bring an objective view to your plans.

More importantly, their expertise frees you up to use your skills and expertise in the areas where you can achieve your goals.

Using a consultant can save you time and dollars.

I often think the investment in help is more effective because it frees me up to use my time where I like to be, and that's outside doing a fun job in the paddock!

Johanne McKiernan

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Past and present pig personalities

AS many of us tend to do at this time of year, I recently reflected a little on the year just past and my place in the big picture of life.

Having not come up with any life-changing answers, I turned my attention to the more mundane, dare I say it, and focused my attention on writing this inaugural 2017 'Cant Comment' column.

In doing so, I happened to revisit my equivalent monthly APN column from back in January 2008.

Then known as 'Words From WA', it was headlined 'Pig personalities' and opened with the following words:

"Some say pigs have personalities.

While not wishing to engage in that debate, I'm happy to commentate, with tongue in cheek in some cases, on pig personalities, as in the human form.



Cant Comment
by
BRENDON CANT

In other words, what makes some of the drivers of our industry in WA tick at a time when alarm bells are sounding in pessimistic circles and opportunity is knocking in optimistic circles.

Let's commit, to paper at least, in no particular order, a few thoughts on

WA pig personalities."

Well for the purposes of my January 2017 column, I've chosen to reprint most of my 2008 list and simply note what each of those 'pig players' is up to these days.

Dr Bruce Mullan, DAFWA

Then: A quiet achiever on the world's pig nutrition stage.

The Clark Kent (Superman) of WA's pig industry. Capable of leaping eco-shelters and landing at an overseas symposium in a single bound.

The spectacles, trim beard and quiet manner are deceiving.

Under the 'disguise' is a tough nut with scientific clout.

These days: Bruce is DAFWA's director of Sheep Industry Development and project manager for the Sheep Industry Innovation project – a \$10 million project made pos-

sible by the WA government's Royalties for Regions program.

Bruce is still active in porcine circles and makes the odd appearance at pork and pig functions, where he remains a highly respected figure.

Brad Thomason, D'Orsogna MD

Then: Sometimes scary, but always honest, he has been around long enough to know what goes around and why it does so.

For many years he headed George Weston Foods Meat & Dairy Division (best known in WA for Watsonia), he now runs a family owned company that truly values its family traditions.

If he was Italian, he'd be the industry's Godfather.

These days: Brad, the big West Coast Eagles fan, remains MD of D'Orsogna, but has recently focused considerable effort on spreading D'Orsogna's wings eastward, with a significant presence on the east coast about to mature, just like a delicious D'Orsogna salami.

Ron Penn, PPC GM

Then: A big man with big ideas, he works for a big company, Craig Mostyn Group, which backs his big ideas.

A former top basketballer, 'Penny' enjoys having little Lui Rinaldi (PPC Agribusiness manager) alongside, always ready to pick up the ball and run with it too.

The 'shooter' and the 'guard' are a good combo, well coached by CMG CEO David Lock.

These days: Ron is GM, Meat & Livestock with CMG, reporting to CMG CEO Mark Wray, who last year replaced David Lock.

Lui Rinaldi, these days, is Sales manager of CMG's Linley Valley Pork.

Daph Kavanagh, APL

Then: The smiling face of Australian Pork Limited in WA for more years than she (or me) cares to remember.

Works well at the pointy end, enthusing retailers, foodies and consumers of the virtues of pork.

All the right doors are open to Daph and dare not any be slammed in her face.

A tough 'cookie' with energy and passion to burn, she likes things to be well done, but not overcooked.

These days: Daph is long gone from APL, but still consults to industry

continued P9

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Back in 2008, Dr Bruce Mullan (centre), aka the Clark Kent (Superman) of WA's pig industry, flew across the country to attend the Pan Pacific Pork Expo on Queensland's Gold Coast. He was flanked by Simon MacGugan, Pastoral Pork Company, Victoria and David Roberts, Think Livestock, Victoria.



A hands-on D'Orsogna managing director Brad Thomason checked the quality of some perfectly cured Christmas leg hams.



Enjoying WAPPA's 2008 industry day were Rick Fice of Wesfeeds, Daph Kavanagh of APL and Ron Penn of PPC.



Socialising after WAPPA's 2008 AGM were WAPPA Life Member Dr Rob Wilson of Wandalup Farms, former WAPPA president Stuart Coole of Boyup Brook and retiring WAPPA president Graeme Dent of Cuballing.

Past and present pig personalities

from P8

and her smiling face remains a welcome sight at industry functions and events, where she tirelessly promotes pork to anyone who'll listen and even to those who won't.

Graeme Dent, WAPPA president

Then: As a big grain producer, he's happiest when he has a good harvest (like the current one) and as a pig producer, he's unhappiest when he finds 'foreign objects' in amongst his beloved Aussie pork.

While unhappy with the level of imported pigmeat, he is also commercially savvy enough to understand why this is currently the case.

These days: 'Denty' remains active with WAPPA, albeit no longer as president, but he's still a member of its executive committee.

With an earthy cocky's gunsight commitment to ensure WA's pork industry gets in the ear (and sometimes up the nose) of NGOs and governments of all persuasions, he typically calls a spade a shovel.

Chris Keene, former producer and former WAPPA president

Then: Recently exited the industry, he's been around so long that, despite his short frame, he'll always cast a long shadow.

Although not often looking that presentable, particularly when holding higher office, he always presented well.

These days: Chris continues to enjoy a well-earned retirement, I believe somewhere on WA's northern coast, where fish are probably his favoured 'farming' activity these days.



Former WAPPA president and Gingin producer Chris Keene admired some of his pork carcasses at a Singapore boning room during a 2007 PPC producer trip. At the time, he said he believed effectively measuring belly fat and better matching carcass specifications to Singaporean requirements would enhance Australia's reputation.

Certain veterinary medicines exempted from labelling requirements

SAFE Work Australia has amended the model Work Health and Safety laws to exempt certain veterinary medicines from the labelling requirements for hazardous chemicals.

As of January 1, 2017 the following veterinary medicines are exempt from labelling requirements for hazardous chemicals under regula-

tion 335 of the model WHS Regulations 2011:

1. All veterinary medicines listed in Schedule 8 of the Poisons Standard.

2. Veterinary medicines listed in Schedule 4 of the Poisons Standard that are in a form and packaging consistent with direct administration to animals, for example, small contain-

ers, tablets, syringes and chewables.

All information relating to these amendments to the model WHS laws has been updated on the Safe Work Australia website at safeworkaustralia.gov.au

These updates were complete before January 1, 2017 when the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

came into full effect.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact

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NSW farmer Fiona Simson elected as NFF president

NSW mixed farmer and grazier Fiona Simson has been elected as president of the National Farmers' Federation at the NFF AGM held in Canberra recently.

Ms Simson is based on the Liverpool Plains where she, her husband Ed and family run a mixed farming enterprise including broad acre farming as well as breeding commercial poll Hereford cattle.

Fiona becomes the first female president of the NFF in its 37-year history.

She has previously served the NFF as vice president for two years and as a director since 2011.

Fiona was also the first female president of NSW Farmers, retaining that position for a full four-year

term from 2011 to 2015. "It is an honour and privilege to represent Australian farmers at the national level and to be elected as the NFF's first female president," Mrs Simson said.

"To me, it's a great acknowledgement that women contribute tremendously on farm, along the value chain and increasingly as thought leaders and public advocates for agriculture.

"My focus will be on developing and advocating for policy that makes farmers better off – not just in terms of what they produce but also reaping the rewards of any increases in value along the food and fibre supply chain.

"I also want to make sure that farmers, produc-

ers and rural and regional-based agribusinesses have access to communications technology that gets them better connected to their customers and allows them to reach out to global markets.

"The NFF has a big agenda for agriculture.

"Issues such as transport infrastructure, digital connectivity, tax reform, Australia's energy mix, sustainable development and trade reform will all be issues high on my agenda as president."

To achieve this agenda, Fiona will be focusing on strengthening the NFF's capacity to provide a strong and united voice and be the sector's leader in addressing industry challenges and creating opportunities in the new economy.

"I also believe we need to work smarter and beyond our traditional alliances, and include other stakeholders and the community in our conversation in ways that are engaging and effective," she said.

The NFF Board for the next year was also elected at the AGM, with rice grower Les Gordon elected as vice president.

Mr Gordon has been the NFF Water Taskforce chair for the past eight years and served as president of the Ricegrowers' Association of Australia for eight years until 2015.

Two new Board directors have been elected – NSW grain grower and president of GrainGrowers Limited John Eastburn and NSW Farmers executive councillor and cattle producer Tony Hegarty.

They join three directors who were re-elected to their positions – current Victorian Farmers Federation president, mixed cropping and prime lamb producer David Jockinke, Queensland cattle producer and AgForce president Grant Maudsley and sheep and cattle producer and vice president of NSW Farmers Mark Horan.

Mrs Simson paid tribute to outgoing president Brent Finlay who has served in the role for three years and been a NFF director since 2010.

"On behalf of the entire NFF membership and broader agriculture and food and fibre community, I thank Brent for his passionate and determined advocacy," she said.

"Brent has aggressively pursued policy outcomes that deliver a more productive, competitive and prosperous sector.

"He has put the needs of farmers front and centre in arguing for bold reforms to trade and the economy.

"He also led the initial internal soul searching and subsequent ongoing process for the establishment of a new national agriculture sector representative organisation – Australian Farmers – to strengthen the voice of farmers in public policy development and the political debate.

"In all facets of the role as president, Brent leaves an enormous legacy of achievements and a strong vision that I will pursue with as much vigour and determination."



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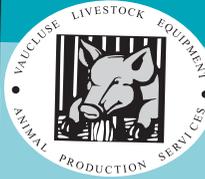
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AUSTRALIAN agriculture, like all industries, is engaged in fierce competition for the best and brightest.

Attracting and retaining great people is the key to ensuring a bright, profitable future for the sector.

Now, five organisations delivering agricultural research and development will give agriculture the edge after unveiling a go-to website for guidance and inspiration on employment in Australian agriculture.

People in Agriculture (www.peopleinag.com.au) was recently launched by Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Barnaby Joyce in Armidale, NSW.

The site offers compliance support for employers, promotes agriculture as a career choice and

provides a platform for employment information sharing.

Providing an overarching agricultural perspective, as well as sector-specific content, the website provides resources for employers and guides for employees via one centralised hub.

The collaboration includes Rural Research and Development Corporations covering pork, cotton, dairy, grains, cattle, sheep and goat industries, along with project partner Food and Agribusiness Solutions.

People in Agriculture offers practical tips, templates and examples across agriculture that can be easily applied to streamline employment processes developed to assist and inform best practice employment on farms.

The website breaks down questions commonly asked by Australia's farmers and food producers around employment law and staff management, and provides access to information on employment opportunities, entitlements and career

management in agriculture. The combined RDCs will support content for the multi-platform site with videos, profiles, news, events and links to other resources.

Visit peopleinag.com.au to see more.



Cotton RDC chair Richard Haire, Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Barnaby Joyce, Dairy Australia chair Geoff Akers, Meat & Livestock Australia GM Producer Consultation and Adoption Michael Crowley and Australian Pork Limited manager Technology Adoption & Industry Capability Ashley Norval.

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Aussie Pumps' Brad Farrugia with Honda's Charlie Lee and Christopher New discussing the new four-year Honda warranty on the Aussie Fire Chief.

Free extra warranty on Aussie fire pumps

AUSSIE Pumps is famous for being the only company that supplies fire pumps with a unique five-year pump warranty.

Now the company has added a four-year Honda engine warranty to its customer support program.

The new warranty applies to Honda engines fitted to Aussie fire pumps.

Aussie Pumps is proud of the fact that its pumps and Honda's engines are perfectly matched to provide consumers with the ultimate performance without engine overload.

Honda's endorsement means a lot to Aussie Pumps and the four-year guarantee – that's one year extra absolutely free of charge to consumers – is a real gift.

It's an indication of

Honda's great confidence in Aussie Pumps' product engineering capabilities.

The four-year engine warranty applies to the Aussie Fire Chief in its standard and Red Brigade versions.

It also covers Honda engines fitted to Aussie Pumps' big Mr T twin-impeller 9hp and 13hp fire pumps.

Aussie Pumps' Brad Farrugia said, "We work hard to make sure our designs deliver the best combination of flow and pressures to the user."

"It's not how much water you get at open flow, or how much head you get at shut-off, it's how much water you get at points on the performance curve at 50m, 60m or 70m."

Aussie Pumps' Mr T twin-impeller range

comes with a Honda GX270 or GX390 engine, now backed by the unique four-year warranty program.

"Mr T Honda-powered pumps all come with a free heavy-duty steel roll frame with anti-vibration mounts," Farrugia said.

Aussie Pumps appreciates the warmth and support received from the Honda engineering team.

"It is a pleasure to work with the boys from Honda," Farrugia said.

The success of the product range is closely linked to the positive relationship Aussie Pumps has with the Honda engineering team.

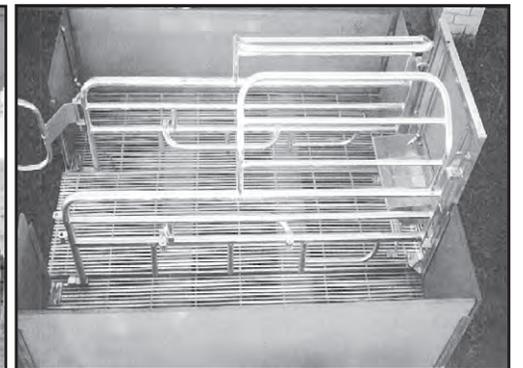
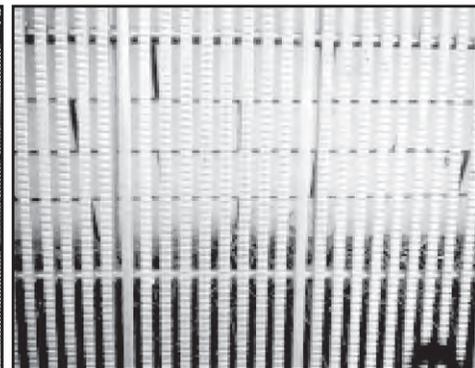
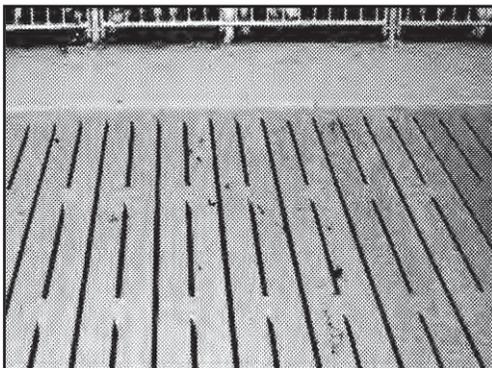
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Welcoming in the new year at APL

AS we step into 2017, we say goodbye to old friends and hello to all the new faces.

As many people already know, our 2016 Australian Pork Limited AGM and Delegates' Forum was a success.

Held in late November, it was the first meeting for the elected delegates representing the industry for the next three years.

At each AGM, APL also requires a rotation of directors as set out in rules 14.2 in the constitution.

As such, we saw the election of Ms Edwina Beveridge and re-election of Mr Andrew Johnson.



Mr Aeger Kingma

While we are happy to see the first female producer-elected director and to have retained the experience of Mr John-

son, we say goodbye to Mr Aeger Kingma as an APL director.

Mr Kingma has been involved in various representative roles for the Australian pig industry over the past 28 years, and involved with APL for the past 12 years.

He is a past president of the Victorian Farmers' Federation Pig Group (2002-2008).

Mr Kingma was on the APL Board's Audit, Risk and Corporate Governance Committee and chaired the APL Board's Human Resource & Remuneration Committee.

His contribution to the

growth and continuing strength of our industry is truly significant and valued.

Along with his family, Aeger remains involved in the Australian pork industry as a producer.

We would like to wish Aeger all the very best on his adventures and know we will still see his beaming smile, strong opinions and sage, well-considered advice for years to come.

To stay turned on what APL has planned for 2017, visit australianpork.com.au or follow us on Twitter @Australian_Pork.

To become a member, or for any membership inquiries, please contact the APL Events and Membership Officer on 1800 789 099 (toll free) or email members@australianpork.com.au

Meaghan Clack



Save the date for Victorian Pig Fair

THE biannual Victorian Pig Fair (VPF) at the Bendigo Exhibition Centre attracts 500 lo-

cal industry attendees each year.

The Victorian Pig Fair will be held on Tuesday, April 4 and Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at the Bendigo Exhibition Centre located at the Bendigo Showgrounds.

Entry for producers and their employees will be free.

As with previous Fairs,

in addition to the trade show, the Pig Fair program will be crammed full of many different events including the seminar program, cocktail party and networking session.

For questions about the Victorian Pig Fair, please contact committee president John Bourke on 0419 552 768.



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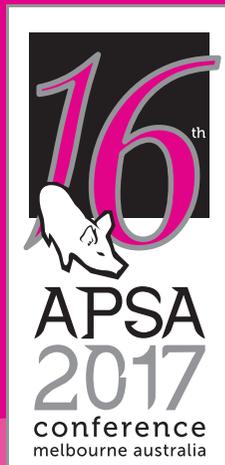


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