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A current APRIL Industry Placement Program awardee, Samantha Sterndale at Westpork.

Apply for an APRIL award

THE Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited is committed to enhancing the overall human capacity base for science, innovation and training in the pork industry.

To this end, APRIL is currently seeking eligible applications from anyone wishing to extend their study or training in the pork industry.

Chief executive officer Dr John Pluske said that APRIL offers a range of awards for undergraduate and postgraduate study, as well as for the Industry Placement Program.

“The IPP is all about retaining graduates who have had support from APRIL, Pork CRC, Australian Pork Limited and other relevant organisations, by sponsoring their placement in a commercial pork production organisation or an affiliated business in a structured and enhanced

development program,” Dr Pluske said.

A successful IPP 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.

More information on exactly how to apply can be found on the APRIL website.

With regard to undergraduate and postgraduate student support, there are a number of opportunities with varying eligibility according to the different scheme being applied for.

So, all interested people should check the guidelines and application forms on the APRIL website.

Dr Pluske said that anyone interested in welfare and tail biting is particularly encouraged to apply for an award and, if successful, they will have the opportu-

nity to work with the Tails CRC-Project team.

“There are opportunities for Honours students, DVM undergraduate veterinary science projects and MS/MSc/MPhil students, where a research project is an incorporated component of the program of study,” Dr Pluske said.

“Invaluable applied industry training will be gained throughout the Tails Project, with around 10 students and early career researchers already contributing to various areas of research.”

All applications close on January 26, 2024 and must be lodged electronically.

The instructions are well documented on the APRIL website at april.com.au/education-and-training-opportunities, however feel free to contact Dr John Pluske on j.pluske@april.org.au if you have any queries.

Industry achievements and challenges

AS we enter 2024, it's a good time to reflect on the highs and lows that shaped the landscape of the Australian pork industry in 2023.

The pork industry made good strides in various areas last year, including sustainability, research and development, consumer engagement and animal care.

In the area of sustainability, in March Australian Pork Limited launched the consumer-facing campaign ‘Bring sustainable to the table’.

This initiative spotlights the ongoing research and implementation of innovative farming practices that align with community expectations to promote a climate friendly farming image for the pork industry.

Among concerns about the cost-of-living and inflation in Australia, our research indicated a growing recognition of the quality of Australian agricultural products.

APL is dedicated to increasing community awareness of the pork industry, aligning pork consumption with social sentiment.

In April, we introduced the campaign ‘For true Australian quality, just pick pink’, focusing on the quality and provenance of Australian pork.

By encouraging consumers to look for the distinctive pink Pork-Mark logo, we aim to guide them towards choosing locally grown Australian pork.



AUSTRALIAN Pork
Point of View
by MARGO ANDRAE
CEO



These initiatives not only promote pork consumption in line with social sentiment but also work to position pork as the preferred protein, emphasising its high quality, sustainable and ethical production credentials.

In the areas of research and development, our industry remains at the forefront.

We are nearing the market release of a pig-specific Japanese encephalitis virus vaccine this year.

This ground-breaking vaccine will enable early planning and preventative measures, mitigating health risks and minimising production losses for Australian pig producers.

Investing in the development of our people remains a core priority, as expressed by the Pork Leadership Course.

This course fosters resilience, teamwork and problem-solving skills, preparing participants for leadership roles within the industry.

Witnessing our leaders inspired and engaged is a rewarding testament to the talent across our pork supply chain.

Workforce labour shortages continue to pose a significant hurdle, impacting production efficiency and requiring innovative solutions to address staffing needs.

At the same time, volatility in grain prices and input costs is adding an additional layer of uncertainty, affecting the overall cost of production for pork.

Globally, the unpredictability of changing geopolitical landscapes is an area we continue to monitor, with potential issues in supply chain logistics and market access concerning for many global agricultural commodities.

Going into 2024, we're cautious that the pork supply chain may be indirectly impacted by these challenges and we are working vigilantly with govern-

ment and peak industry bodies to keep a finger on the pulse.

In May, at APL's Senate estimates hearing, our stance on activist harassment was crystal clear – we will not engage with radical activists resorting to harassment, torment or illegal activities, causing disruptions across the pork supply chain.

We made it clear that any continued harassment towards our industry and people would not be tolerated.

This sentiment has been reiterated in APL's submission to the Victorian inquiry into pig welfare this month.

In response, we have continued to take a matter-of-fact approach, highlighting the industry's positive impact on Australian communities, emphasising the robust quality assurance and welfare regulations that govern the industry and, despite what these radical groups spruik, that we do in fact care for our pigs.

Openness and transparency about the pork industry's farming practices will continue to be crucial in building and maintaining community trust and fostering positive perceptions towards our people.

As we look forward to 2024, APL remains firm in fostering growth and prosperity while addressing critical issues to ensure a sustainable and thriving Australian pork industry.



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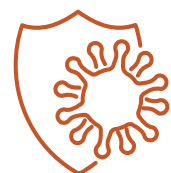
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Letter to the Editor

It is the responsibility of those making submissions to ensure the correctness of their claims and statements. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the publisher.

BEN, further to our discussion on January 2, 2024, I was writing to express my concern with the 'Inquiry into pig welfare in Victoria'.

This inquiry was initiated following the illegally gained footage shown on the ABC's *The 7.30 Report*.

Though this was isolated footage, it was continually repeated.

Nobody likes to see animals die, so as an industry we are immediately on the back foot. The inquiry is being

chaired by Georgie Purcell MP, who represents the Animal Justice Party in the Victorian Parliament.

This party is against the farming of animals, as well as the slaughter of animals for meat.

I find it hard to see how Ms Purcell can perform her duties in this role with no conflict of interest.

More concerning is the inclusion in this inquiry of "current breeding and housing practices", particularly

in the use of different terms of confinement.

Farrowing crates increase the number of piglets that survive – is this not good animal welfare?

Worldwide best practice in countries that produce any large amounts of pork include gas stunning and farrowing crates.

This said, our chances of a positive outcome for our industry from this inquiry seem limited.

Animal activists, in-

cluding the Animal Justice Party, are very well organised and will have all members and affiliates ready to make a submission.

This inquiry has not been widely circulated through the press.

Some of us – who are extremely busy with our businesses at this time of year – may have overlooked this inquiry.

This may have something to do with the timing of this inquiry.

We all want the best welfare for our pigs.

Poor welfare represents poor production and poor meat quality.

Obviously, it is in all our best interests to look after the welfare of our pigs.

While this is only an inquiry, I have heard a lot of noise from the animal activists and not a lot from the pig industry.

Please express your opinion, and thank you Ben for allowing me to express mine.

Jim Willis
0448 681 420

Inquiry seeking submissions on pig welfare

A PARLIAMENTARY Committee is seeking submissions to an inquiry into the welfare of farmed pigs in Victoria.

The Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee inquiry will focus on regulatory frameworks, stunning methods, the impact of the 2017 industry-led phase-out of sow stalls, breeding and housing practices, and international industry best practice standards.

The committee is seeking submissions from the public, industry stakeholders, experts and advocacy groups to gather insights into the current condition of pig welfare in the state.

Committee chair Georgie Purcell said, "We're interested in hearing from all stakeholders about whether Victoria is following international best practice when it comes to the humane treatment of these animals."

"Our inquiry will look into the extent

and effectiveness of existing regulatory frameworks to understand how these regulations are applied, measure industry compliance and evaluate the enforcement mechanisms in place, with a view to their ability to promote positive pig welfare outcomes," Ms Purcell said.

The committee is also seeking the public's input through a short five question survey that can be accessed on new.

parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-pig-welfare-in-victoria/submissions

You can find the terms of reference and make a submission via the committee's website – new.

parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-pig-welfare-in-victoria

Submissions close on January 12, 2024.

The committee intends to table its final report, including recommendations, to the Victorian Parliament by May 31, 2024.

National Farmers Federation statement on outcomes from COP28

I HAD the privilege of representing Australian farmers at the COP28 summit in Dubai for the first time as National Farmers Federation President.

My time there highlighted to me how critical it is that farmers are represented in these global discussions where

decisions are being made about our livelihoods.

We're proud of the leadership Australia demonstrated at this year's COP – both at an industry and government level.

We saw advocacy by Minister Bowen contribute to a more ambitious plan to tackle cli-

mate change in a meaningful and equitable way.

We also saw a global alliance of farming groups led by Australia call for genuine action, including through investment in research to deliver lower emissions agriculture without sacrificing productivity.

It's critical that we step up and be part of these discussions and help steer the agenda.

The risks if we don't are real – both in terms of the impact of climate change and the impact of policies that might limit food and fibre production in the pursuit of net zero.

This was evidenced at

COP28 by a report from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The FAO's report was a shallow desktop study that defaulted to lazy recommendations about shifting food sources.

These ideas ignore the facts and science supporting sustainable rangeland grazing systems in places such as Australia, which play a critical role in feeding the world in a climate friendly way.

It is critical that Australia continues to demonstrate its climate leadership on the world stage.

This includes ad-

vancing evidence-based pathways to net zero that take into account Australia's unique and world-leading farming systems.

I'm proud that the NFF, in partnership with the Australian Government and farming organisations around the world, is starting to have an impact in the global climate debate.

We can rise to the dual challenges of climate change and global food security, and farmers having a seat at the table is critical to ensuring we do this in a responsible way.

David Jochinke
NFF President



Sue Ogilvy, Su McCluskey, David Jochinke, Keith Currie and Ágide Eduardo Meneguette at COP28.

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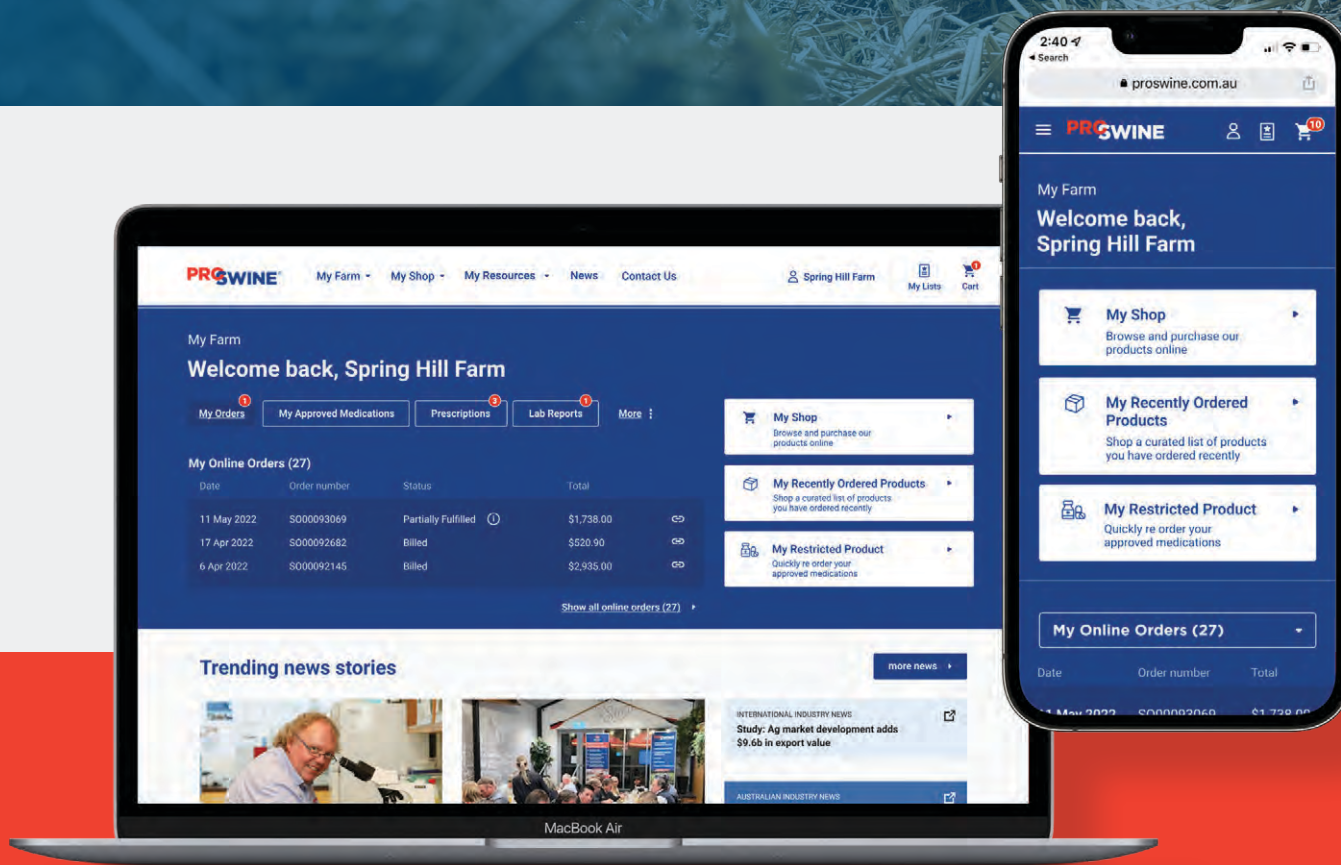
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This little piglet is enjoying a good start to life. Let's hope it stays that way, right up to the ultimate point, which we hope is handled with welfare as priority one.

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Pig welfare is priority one

THE festive season for we human animals typically involves feasting on our preferred proteins.

In many Australian households, including mine, Christmas Day lunch had leg ham as its centrepiece.

The very next day, for the annual Boxing Day cricket test match at the MCG, leftover ham with mustard sandwiches bowl me over.

Perhaps ironically, in 2023, Australia played Pakistan, consisting predominantly of Muslim players, who therefore wouldn't have partaken in any pork products.

Fair enough too. Having reminded myself of our annual ham indulgence, I reflected

Cant Comment by BRENDON CANT



on the lives of the pigs and what they may or may not enjoy and experience up to the point of being stunned, killed and processed into those yummy hams. To get a handle on that, I chose to visit RSPCA Australia's website. Here I'll share with you its well-developed and typically reasoned positions – albeit considered not so reasonable for some in the big end of pork town.

Whose doubts typically focus on any potentially negative cost implications to their businesses.

Anyway, back to RSPCA.

Here's what it had to say...

RSPCA believes that in all farming systems, animals must be provided with freedom of movement and the ability to satisfy their behavioural, social and physiological preferences and needs.

The RSPCA opposes high-confinement systems, including the use

of sow stalls, farrowing crates, boar stalls and mating stalls.

Pigs must be provided with adequate space throughout their lifetime and be able to root, forage and explore, while pregnant sows must be able to exhibit nesting behaviour.

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme Standard for pigs does not permit confinement in sow stalls, farrowing crates, boar stalls and mating stalls, or painful husbandry procedures for piglets.

Under the scheme, pigs must be housed in enriched indoor and or outdoor systems with space to move, forage, socialise and explore.

Curious and clever, pigs are certainly remarkable animals.

Many Australians appear to agree, taking an interest in pig welfare by, for example, choosing to look for higher welfare pork products.

But what does a pig actually need for higher

welfare and a better quality of life?

Here are a few interesting facts about pigs and their needs on farm.

Pigs need adequate housing with room to roam as they love to forage and explore their environment, and having adequate space is important so that pigs can be active and express these natural behaviours.

In Australia, pigs may be housed in intensive indoor, semi-indoor (outdoor-bred) or outdoor (free-range) farming systems.

Intensive farming systems often keep pigs closely confined in barren environments, limiting their movement and ability to carry out natural behaviours, which can lead to pigs experiencing both physical and psychological stress.

While the majority of pork producers in Australia have voluntarily phased out sow stalls, in intensive indoor housing systems, sows are still commonly confined to farrowing crates just prior to giving birth and until her piglets are weaned.

In farrowing crates, a sow is confined to a small pen unable to turn around, freely interact with her piglets

continued P7

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Though these sows have room to move, there's a lot of room for improvement.

Bulletproof pumps for Bush's Proteins

BUSH'S Proteins is part of Australian family company group, A J Bush & Sons.

The business has been operating since 1909, and in the 'rendering' industry since the 1950s in NSW and the 1970s in Queensland, providing the essential service to the meat processing sector.

Rendering is the hygienic treatment of high moisture material from the meat industry that is not sold for human consumption.

At its Bromelton site, Bush's Proteins collects organic animal material from butcher shops and abattoirs in and around the greater Brisbane metro area and nearby regional centres. From this material,

Bush's Proteins manufactures nutrient-rich protein meals and tallows (oils).

Rendering contributes to the circular economy by diverting putrescible material from landfills into an organic recycling process.

The Bush's Proteins team has always looked for equipment that offers the best return on investment, in that the selected equipment should offer features and benefits commensurate or greater than the price it pays.

For wastewater pumps, the business choose Gorman-Rupp.

Bush's Proteins Bromelton plant engineering manager Byron Boyers said, "I have more than 10 Gorman-

Rupp T3s, and the T10 we got recently is doing a great job."

"They're pretty much bulletproof pumps."

Gorman-Rupp Super T Series self-priming wastewater pumps are mounted at ground level, above the wastewater pits.

This makes them easily accessible for monitoring and maintenance.

Their internal clearances can be adjusted in minutes, allowing operators to keep pumps at their peak efficiency for the life of the pump.

They are also capable of pumping solid materials such as rags, ear tags, gloves and other debris that may block other pumps.

The large removable cover-plate also allows a single operator to remove any larger blockage in minutes, without disturbing piping or having to employ lifting devices such as cranes.

Gorman-Rupp wastewater pumps can deliver flow rates from 5l/s through to 200l/s, with pressures to 90m.

They can also be provided in materials of construction to cater for abrasive and or corrosive wastewater streams.

More information about these pumps can be obtained from Hydro Innovations, contact info@hydroinnovations.com.au or visit hydroinnovations.com.au



With more than 10 Gorman-Rupp T3 pumps at Bush's Proteins, the recent T10 addition "is doing a great job. They're pretty much bulletproof."

Pig welfare is priority one

from P6

or perform natural behaviours such as nest building.

For higher welfare, sows should be housed in appropriate groups and when close to giving birth, moved to individual housing with nesting material, where they can move freely, comfortably rest and nurse their piglets.

Pigs are very social, forming strong bonds with one another and becoming stressed when alone.

For this reason, housing pigs in groups is a key factor in providing a positive environment for them.

Being able to socially interact is important enrichment for pigs and, like us, each pig has unique personality traits, with some more vocal and rambunctious and others more laid-back in nature.

Social interaction however is only one of the enrichment provisions these intelligent creatures need.

Pigs are incredibly clever and need a variety of stimulation to keep active, otherwise they can become bored and or aggressive towards other pigs.

As an example, pigs enjoy foraging and so it's very important they are provided with the right materials to engage in this natural behaviour.

Foraging materials need to have certain qualities to satisfy pigs – they need to be safe to ingest, destructible, manipu-

lable and chewable.

New and different materials should be provided regularly to keep pigs interested and to make sure their foraging needs are being met.

Lastly, pigs enjoy playing.

Play is important for piglet development and includes energetic running or hopping, social play and play fighting.

Even once they're adults, pigs enjoy playing with each other and with items such as straw or chewable toys.

Pigs are clean animals.

They like to keep themselves clean and, when given the option, they won't soil the areas where they eat or sleep.

They do however enjoy muddy wallows to help regulate body temperature in warmer weather and protect themselves from sunburn, flies and external parasites.

Wallows are an important provision for pigs reared outdoors and provide another form of social enrichment because pigs will often wallow in groups.

There's a reason we have the saying 'as happy as a pig in mud', as being able to wallow in mud is an important part of pig welfare.

So, well said RSPCA.

Let's never 'muddy the waters' when it comes to pig welfare.

It must always be priority one.

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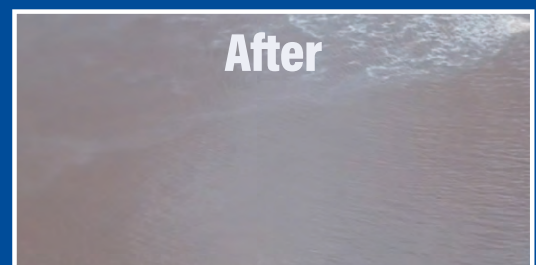
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Cornelius van Dyk, Jean Chagnon, Alex Turney and Bruce Parncutt.

NEM partners with Lallemand

NEW Edge Microbials, a business started by microbiologist Sandy Montague 20 years ago, has partnered with Canada's Lallemand Inc in a deal that will contribute significantly to transformation in the productivity and sustainability of broad acre and horticulture farming in Australia and New Zealand.

The NEM-Lallemand partnership brings to-



gether NEM's powerful platform in Australia and Lallemand Plant Care's extensive world-class product range. NEM has developed, manufactures and markets more than 50 proven biological products used across one million hectares each year.

Lallemand is a global leader in the development, production and marketing of yeast, bacteria, fungi and related solutions across the baking, food ingredients, human and animal nutrition and health, crop protection nutrition, winemaking, brewing, alcohol and biofuel sectors.

It has a presence in 50 countries, operating 48 production plants and employing over 5000 people.

Under an exclusive partnership, NEM will introduce an extensive range of Lallemand Plant Care products to Australia and New Zealand, starting with initial field trials in 2024 and a steady stream of new product launches from 2025 onwards, in collaboration with NEM's long-standing distribution partners.

The company anticipates that this will lead to significant market growth in the biological segment and help farmers in Australia and New Zealand increase soil health, crop yields and quality.

Used throughout Australia, NEM's current products include a full range of rhizobia-based seed and soil treatments that support nitrogen fixation in legume crops, and an emerging range of bio-stimulants for fruit, vegetables and horticulture.

NEM remains majority Australian-owned and regionally based and expands its commitment to harnessing the best Australian and global science for soil and plant health.

Lallemand and NEM are committed to substantial investment in new product development.

NEM has grown from a business providing an initial range of rhizobia products out of a small factory in Albury in 2004 to its recent move to a modern high-quality facility in Wodonga with 42 employees, embodying Australia's leading capability for end-to-end development of bio-stimulants and bio-fertilisers from research to commercial supply.

The partnership with Lallemand Plant Care, a leading global organisation, is an important next step for the business.

Lallemand Plant Care chief executive officer Frederic Chagnon said, "The future of farming lies in scientifically proven biological products that enhance yield, profitability and soil health, without harm to the environment."

"Our experience globally indicates a rapid adoption of biological products, a trend which is currently underway in Australia and New Zealand, where NEM is the leading independent player and the ideal partner for Lallemand in this region."



The New Edge Microbials Wodonga team hosted key people from Lallemand.

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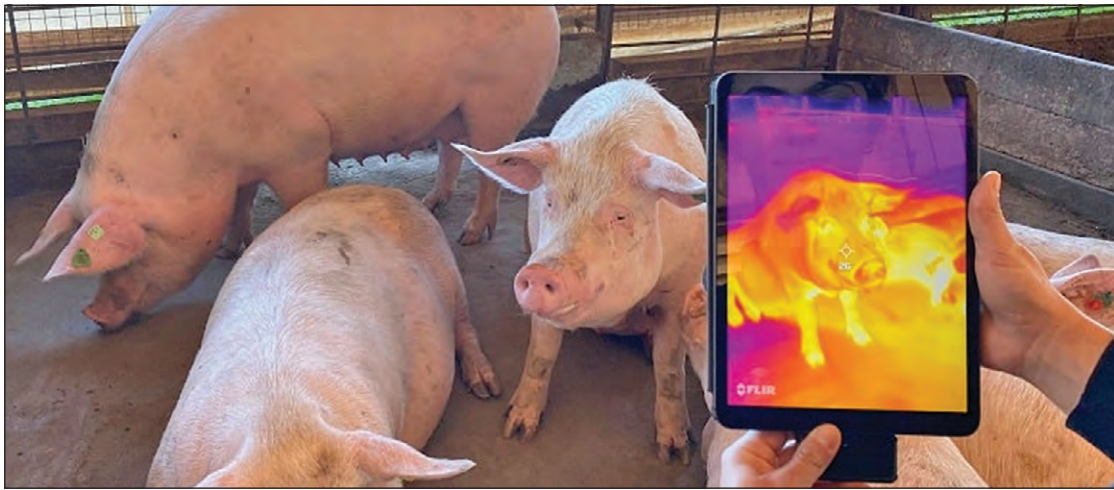
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The free African swine fever surveillance and sampling course was developed by Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and is applicable Australia-wide.

ASF surveillance and sampling course

THE National Biosecurity Training Hub was established in response to rising pressures on Australia's biosecurity system, with concurrent responses to animal, aquatic, environmental, plant and natural disaster incidents across the country driving the need to build and support biosecurity preparedness and response capacity and capability.

Created to address the need for a centralised coordinated approach to national biosecurity training, the hub provides a national repository of online biosecurity training for industry, government and community, connecting biosecurity training providers across Australia.

About the course

The free African swine fever surveillance and sampling course has been created by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to provide anyone who interacts with domestic or feral pigs with information on disease surveillance and diagnostic sampling to help protect Australia from the threat of ASF.

It provides information about how you can help in the early detection and response to ASF should it enter Australia and infect pigs.

Effective surveillance and sampling of domestic and feral pig populations will support ASF early detection and response efforts, so the potential impacts of an outbreak can be minimised.

While the training was developed by the Queensland DAF, most of the information is applicable Australia-wide.

Throughout the course, links are provided to additional resources and online videos to assist learning.

Registered veterinarians who complete modules within the course are eligible to claim 1 VetEd continuing professional development for each hour of learning.

What you'll learn

The first three modules provide foundational information on surveillance and sampling of

pigs and are relevant to anyone who owns or interacts with pigs, including feral pigs.

Module 4 provides information on swab and blood sample collection from live pigs and is relevant to pig industry workers, veterinarians and government animal biosecurity officers.

Module 5 provides guidance on how to undertake a post-mortem examination and collect samples for ASF disease exclusion testing.

This is relevant to veterinarians, para-veterinarians, pathologists and other specially trained people including some stock people and animal biosecurity officers.

Module 6 provides information on sample submission and transport, which is relevant to veterinarians and government biosecurity officers who submit samples for laboratory analysis.

The course takes approximately 2.5 hours to complete.

Course content

The course provides an overview of surveillance fundamentals and important information about how to safely and effectively collect and submit samples for ASF diagnostic testing.

Completing the course will enhance capacity to contribute to surveillance activities for early detection and response to serious pig diseases such as ASF.

The ASF surveillance and sampling course includes the following modules:

- Module 1 – Surveillance and sampling fundamentals (15 minutes)
- Module 2 – Health and safety for ASF sample collection (30 minutes)
- Module 3 – Preparing for ASF sample collection (15 minutes)
- Module 4 – ASF sample collection from live pigs (30 minutes)
- Module 5 – Pig post-mortem examination and ASF sample collection (40 minutes)
- Module 6 – ASF sample submission and transport (20 minutes).

The course enables you to explore different topics, depending on

your learning needs.

However, Modules 1, 2 and 3 provide valuable foundational information and must be completed in order before accessing Modules 4, 5 or 6.

A certificate of completion is provided for each module completed.

Visit biotraininghub.com.au/courses/asf-surveillance-and-sampling-course for more information. 📞

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British pork now California-ready

THE leading global public health and safety organisation, NSF has become one of the first United Kingdom certification bodies to offer

California's Proposition 12 certification for British pork producers.

In addition to its unique position as the only Red Tractor Certification Body for pork in the UK, NSF continues to pioneer in industry certifications, offering British farmers a comprehensive solution for certifying their pork production.

Proposition 12 is a ground-breaking animal welfare law from California that sets higher standards for confining certain farm animals.

The law became effective from January 1, 2024, making Prop 12 certification critical for British producers eyeing the lucrative US market, as it ensures their compliance with Californian animal welfare standards.

NSF director of supply chain food safety Dale Newitt said, "NSF's Prop 12 certification means British pork producers can now access the Californian market with greater confidence."

"This aligns perfectly with NSF's mission to improve and protect human health, as healthier animals mean safer higher quality meat for consumers."

"Despite accounting for nearly 15 percent of total US pork consumption, California only produces 1 percent of it, making it heavily dependent on interstate and

international imports."

In 2022, the total import of pork in the US exceeded \$A2.45 billion, making the Prop 12 certification a significant market opportunity for UK pork producers.

NSF also offers the unique advantage of bundled auditing, allowing Prop 12 and Red Tractor audits to happen simultaneously, which reduces the audit burden on British farmers and makes certification more efficient and cost-effective.

"Bundled auditing is a game-changer for British farmers," Mr Newitt said.

"By conducting Prop 12 and Red Tractor audits at the same time, we can cut down on the time and expenses usually associated with gaining these important certifications."

As a trusted name in the industry, NSF emphasised the importance of animal wellness as part of its broader commitment to public health.

Its dual certification services underscore its commitment to supporting British farmers and the industry at large, offering them a streamlined approach to meet the increasingly rigorous standards of domestic and international markets.

Red Tractor chief executive officer Jim Moseley said, "Market ac-

cess is a key goal for food chain assurance and Red Tractor has been working closely on this with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and NSF over recent months."

"Californian legislation requires the independent assessment and certification body to be certified by CDFA.

"That's why news that NSF has now been certified by CDFA is so significant.

"It makes it very easy for pig farmers and their processors to access the California market from January."

Mr Moseley added that as part of their existing Red Tractor assessment, farmers will be able to simply add the Prop 12 checks, where required, and have access to this important market for their pork.

"This is an important milestone for the pig sector in this country," he said.

"Hopefully it can be the start of a productive and ongoing new trading relationship.

"We're encouraging the CDFA to visit the UK so that they can see first-hand the high standards our Red Tractor farmers work to."

For more information about NSF's Prop 12 and Red Tractor certification services, visit nsf.org



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WHOLE HERD HEALTH
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Pork features at West Australian Good Food Guide Awards 2024

THE *West Australian Good Food Guide* awards were held in Perth recently to acknowledge industry excellence in food service.

More than 700 industry professionals gathered for the night of celebration, with winners from a wide range of categories announced over the course of the evening.

PorkStar has been a long-time supporter of these awards, and proudly sponsored the Chef of the Year category.

The winner of the Chef of the Year award at the WAGFG 2024 event was the very tal-

ented Paul Bentley.

Paul runs restaurants Casa in Mount Hawthorn and Mount Lawley's ever-exciting Si Paradiso.

Based on the prosciutto pizza and bucatini all'amatriciana (pork pasta), the PorkStar team can confirm Chef Bentley deserving of the prestigious award.

For anyone headed to or residing in Perth, Si Paradiso is most definitely one to add to the foodie list.

Sponsoring the Young Chef of the Year award and celebrating Western Australia's emerging talent, Linley Valley Pork was featured

throughout the night's menu.

The winner of the Young Chef of the Year award at WAGFG 2024 was Brian Cole from Hearth Restaurant and Lounge, located at The Ritz-Carlton in Perth.

Australian pork was well represented and truly highlighted at the event.

If you enjoy good food, check out the *West Australian Good Food Guide* top 100 restaurants – wagoodfoodguide.com/top-100

Nicole Gleeson
APL Marketing
Coordinator



More than 700 industry professionals gathered for the *West Australian Good Food Guide* awards held in Perth recently.



Winners from a wide range of categories were announced over the course of the evening.

Have your say on Animal Care and Protection Bill

PUBLIC feedback is sought on the draft Animal Care and Protection Bill and its supporting regulations by the Victorian Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate.

If the draft Bill is passed by the Victorian Parliament to become an Act, the new Animal Care and Protection Act would replace the current Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 – the POCTA Act.

A new Act would not come into force for at least two years to enable the development of supporting regulations.

The regulations would set more detailed requirements for specific species and activities involving animals, where needed.

The draft Bill has been informed by previous public consultations, as outlined.

This is the last opportunity to provide feedback before the Animal Care and Protection Bill is finalised for consideration.

This is the first consultation on the regulations and seeks feedback to inform the priorities and the approach to developing the regulations.

Previous public consultations

The draft Bill has been informed by previous public consultations.

In 2020, a Directions Paper setting out high-level policy proposals for the new laws was released for public comment.

Feedback on the Directions Paper informed the development of more detailed policy proposals for the new laws.

In 2022, the Plan for Victoria's new animal care and protection laws was released for public comment.

The Plan proposed policies on how to achieve the objectives of the new laws, and explained how things would change and not change.

These documents can be accessed via the document library at engage.vic.gov.au/new-animal-welfare-act-victoria

How to participate

To read the draft Bill and make a submission and to complete the regulations survey, visit engage.vic.gov.au/new-animal-welfare-act-victoria

You can make a submission on the draft Bill, complete the regulations survey or you can do both.

This consultation closes at 11.59pm Friday March 8, 2024.

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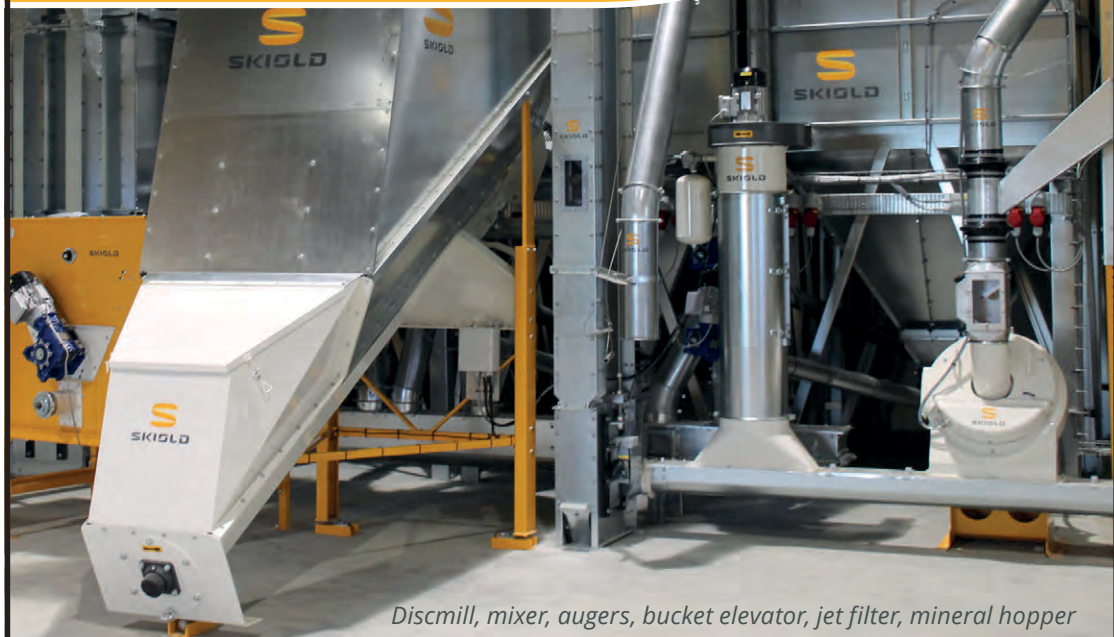


Alltech was awarded three EcoVadis sustainability medals.



Alltech global vice president of ESG Tara McCarthy with president and CEO Mark Lyons.

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Alltech awarded three sustainability medals

A LEADING global animal health and nutrition company, Alltech has been awarded a silver medal from EcoVadis – putting it in the top 25 percent of sustainable companies globally.

The EcoVadis silver medal testifies to Alltech's purpose of 'Working together for a planet of plenty' and its commitment to prioritising the efficient production of nutritious food, while minimising environmental impact, implementing environmentally and economically sustainable solutions, promoting fair labour practices and fostering ethical business conduct.

Alltech has also earned the EcoVadis platinum medal for its production site in Springfield, Kentucky in the US, which puts it in the top 1 percent of over 200,000 businesses assessed by EcoVadis.

Alltech Coppens – which produces industrial feeds for the aquaculture sector – earned gold-medal status,

putting it in the top 7 percent of sustainable companies globally.

Alltech global vice president of ESG Tara McCarthy said: "We are delighted to have received multiple EcoVadis medals as an external endorsement of Alltech's ongoing commitment to the journey that is sustainability."

EcoVadis is the world's most trusted provider of business sustainability ratings, intelligence and collaborative performance improvement tools for global supply chains.

Backed by a powerful technology platform and a global team of domain experts, EcoVadis assesses companies on environmental, social and ethical performance in over 200 purchasing categories and 175 countries.

Alltech president and chief executive officer Mark Lyons said, "At Alltech, we see opportunities in every challenge."

"We are dedicated to delivering smarter more sustainable solutions to advance the health and per-

formance of animals, while also lowering their impact on the environment.

"These awards from EcoVadis recognise the actions we are taking to align our business with our 'planet of plenty' purpose – working together to provide nutrition for all, revitalise local economies and replenish the planet's natural resources."

Earlier this year, Alltech released its sustainability report, which demonstrated the actions the company has taken to align its business with its commitments to the United Nations Global Compact, the UN's Ten Principles and its Sustainable Development Goals.

Additionally, the report outlines the steps Alltech has taken to promote an inclusive work environment, highlighting its team members' efforts to make a difference in the communities in which they live and work.

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Delving deeper into swine dysentery

AS you wander down the meat aisle and view the variety of available pork cuts, you're probably not thinking about the people and the work behind getting the meat to the supermarket.

But behind the scenes, the pork industry has been greatly affected by swine dysentery, a disease that still lacks an effective vaccine.

That's an important concern for producers as they strive to keep their animals healthy while reducing the use of antibiotic treatments.

Researchers at the University of Saskatchewan

Western College of Veterinary Medicine are optimistic that a vaccine is within reach, as they investigate the disease mechanism of swine dysentery by capitalising on the advancements of DNA sequencing technology.

Led by Dr Matheus Costa from the WCVM's Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences, the team is focused on brachyspira bacteria, the culprit behind swine dysentery.

Brachyspira infects a pig's large intestine and causes lesions, which results in watery to mucoid

diarrhea – often with traces of blood.

As the affected pigs get sick, they lose their appetites and become dehydrated and thin.

Dr Matheus Costa said: "If we understand exactly how brachyspira infection leads to swine dysentery, we'll have a better chance at making a vaccine that works, and we'll also get a better chance to develop other tools – non-antibiotic alternatives that will prevent disease."

One ongoing project for understanding the disease mechanism is investigating the pathway

by which brachyspira affects the response of B cells – the cells responsible for producing antibodies.

Since vaccines are typically aimed at stimulating B cells to produce these antibodies and the scientists have learned that brachyspira affects B cell activation, they're looking for a different approach to developing vaccines for SD.

"In the 1970s and 1980s, there were some brilliant experiments using the technology available at the time to investigate the disease," Dr Costa said.

"Now we have much better methods and we understand the molecular changes that happen in the colon and the pig in general.

"So, we're in a better place to develop a vaccine that will be efficient and that will protect pigs, or at least prevent severe disease."

Until a vaccine has been developed, producers can lower the risk of infection by maintaining standards of biosafety and checking for signs of disease from incoming pigs.

Unfortunately, brachyspira is oxygen-tolerant and can survive outside the intestine for extended periods of time, so that it's easily transmitted through manure or carriers such as rats.

As a result, biosafety measures can only go so far as long as the bacteria's infection mechanism remains a mystery.

Since the first description of swine dysentery was published a century ago, the disease has severely affected animal welfare and caused global production losses.

Aside from animal welfare concerns, producers face significant financial losses as diseased pigs experience slower growth rates, forcing farmers to spend more resources feeding them and adding antibiotic drugs to their feed.

In addition to the significance of this research for the livestock industry, the development of a vaccine is also critical to public health as a means for maintaining food security and sustainability and for decreasing antibiotic use.

"It's the One Health concept that I believe should always interest anyone who is human," Dr Costa said.

"You don't live on this planet alone – you live here and you interact with billions of organisms every day, from bacteria to trees to the animals or plants that you eat.

"If you don't think about them and their health, people are not going to be healthy either."



Australia's new chief veterinary officer Dr Beth Cookson. Photo: Andrew Watson

New ACVO appointed

DOCTOR Beth Cookson has been appointed to the role of Australian chief veterinary officer.

The appointment comes after an external recruitment process to fill the position following Dr Mark Schipp's retirement.

Dr Cookson brings a wealth of diverse experience across the agriculture, fisheries and forestry portfolio.

Her work on the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy and in the Biosecurity Animal and Operations divisions, before being appointed deputy ACVO in March 2022, was vital to the ongoing success of the department.

She has extensive experience in the design and delivery of animal health surveillance programs in northern

Australia, delivering biosecurity capacity building programs in near neighbouring countries, biosecurity import risk analysis and international trade negotiation.

The ACVO works to address major animal health issues of national interest, such as the threat of antimicrobial resistance, and enhancing trade and market access for animals and animal products.

Dr Cookson brings a wide range of experience from more than 15 years in policy and operational roles that will greatly benefit the ongoing achievement of these goals.

Her important focus on northern Australia, including working with industry and strengthening partnerships with our near neighbours, will continue as ACVO.



The pork industry has been greatly affected by swine dysentery, a disease that still lacks an effective vaccine. Photo: Kathleen Trigg

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Early life piglet experiences and impacts

A FEATURED speaker at APSA 2023, Dr Megan Lucas presented on the subject of the early experiences and adaptability of pigs.

Following are excerpts taken from the published paper, 'Review: Early life piglet experiences and impact on immediate and longer-term adaptability', which can be viewed in full at [researchgate.net/publication/371791758_Review_Early_life_piglet_](https://researchgate.net/publication/371791758_Review_Early_life_piglet_experiences_and_im)

experiences_and_im
pacts_on_immediate_
and_longer-term_adaptability

Abstract

Pigs in production systems are routinely exposed to challenging situations, including abrupt weaning, painful husbandry procedures, intense contact with stock people and exposure to novel social and physical environments.

The resilience of pigs to these stressors has implications for animal welfare and productivity and can be affected by early life experiences.

In rodents and primates, early experiences with stressors that the animal can adequately cope with confers future stress adaptability, leading to less abnormal behaviour, lower behavioural and physiological responses to stressors and faster recovery after stress exposure.

Early experiences that can affect the ability of pigs to overcome challenges include interactions with the dam, conspecifics, humans and the overall complexity of the environment.

Farrowing crates limit the sow's ability to show maternal behaviour towards piglets and negatively affect piglet social behaviour during lacta-

tion, with less play and more manipulation of pen mates in crates than in large pens.

Rearing in pens has been proposed to improve the ability of pigs to cope with routine stressors but the evidence for this is conflicting.

The early housing environment can affect general fearfulness and fear of humans and, surprisingly, most studies have shown fear responses to be greater in pigs reared in pens than in crates.

Given the potential for fear to affect animal welfare and productivity, more detailed research on early housing effects is needed.

While there is limited evidence that early housing influences fear in the longer term, human contact early in life appears to have a more profound and sustained effect, with regular positive human interaction early in life having an enduring effect on reducing pigs' fear of humans.

The practicality of positive human-pig interaction in a commercial environment needs to be examined further, but only a small amount of positive human contact early in life can improve the resilience of pigs to routine husbandry stressors.

Early social experience with non-littermates reduces stress at weaning and mixing, while early weaning before 3-4 weeks of age increases abnormal behaviours.

Environmental enrichment such as foraging substrates and increased floor space reduces abnormal behaviour in piglets, but housing in

an enriched environment early in life and subsequently in a non-enriched environment can increase abnormal behaviour if these environments are dramatically different.

Though the latter environment can modify the influence of the early environment, overall, early life experiences can be important in shaping how pigs cope with stress in both an immediate and longer-term capacity.

Implications

Pigs routinely encounter challenging situations in commercial production systems, and the ability of pigs to cope with these situations has implications for animal welfare and productivity.

Early life experiences can shape future stress-coping responses, and in pigs, key early life experiences shown to affect stress adaptability in both an immediate and sometimes longer-term capacity include housing, human and social factors – such as interactions with the sow, conspecifics and humans – and the overall complexity of the environment.

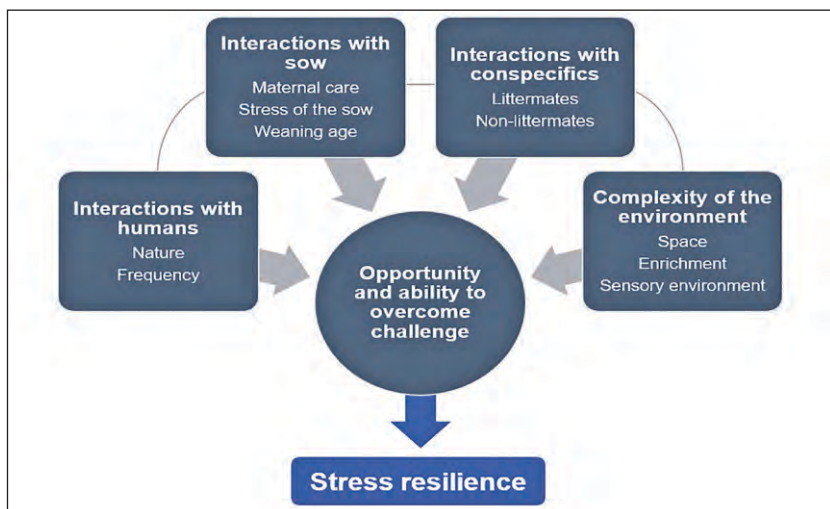
Introduction

Early experiences have been shown to affect later life physiology, behaviour and cognition in a number of species.

The variety of early experiences and their range of effects on farm animals is extensive.

In calves, maternal deprivation from 20-40 days of age increased plasma cortisol concentrations and heart rate

• continued P15



Key early life housing, human and social experiences that can affect the development of stress resilience in piglets.

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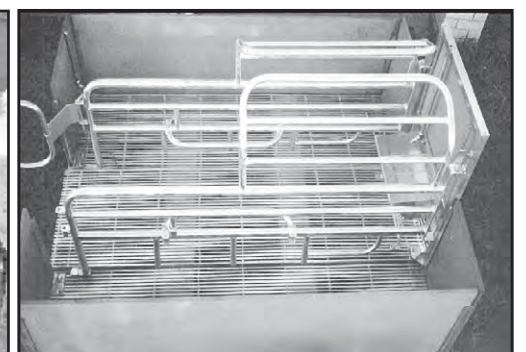
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Early life piglet experiences and impacts on adaptability

from P14 during restraint at six months of age. In lambs, stroking during feeding from 1-3 days of age reduced fear of humans at 25 days of age.

And in chickens, exposure to stress in the first day of life – involving hatching in noisy incubators, handling for sex sorting, vaccination and transport – resulted in a higher corticosterone response to restraint at 6 weeks of age, more pessimistic judgement bias at 10 weeks of age and more tailfeather damage at 20 weeks of age.

These effects on later behaviour, physiology and cognition reflect differences in the ability of animals to cope with challenges in their environment that arise due to differing experiences early in life.

A strong ability to cope with environmental challenge demonstrates resilience, which is characterised by lower behavioural and physiological responses to stressors and quick recovery to anormal state of functioning after stress exposure.

Resilience can be primed by maternal care and by experiences with stress during periods of heightened brain plasticity early in life, whereby variations in the amount and intensity of early stress exposure shifts animals towards becoming resilient or vulnerable to stressors later in life.

Exposure to severe stress early in life leads to later life stress vulnerability, evidenced by impaired cognitive function, increased fear and anxiety and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis dysfunction.

The opposite effect is observed as a result of early life ‘moderate’ stressors, such as those of relatively brief duration or mild intensity that the animal can adequately cope with.

Rodents exposed to moderate stress in the form of handling and or brief maternal separation as pups show improved learning performance, greater behavioural flexibility, lower basal corticosterone concentrations and increased activity, less defecation and lower corticosterone responses in an open field test in adulthood.

Parallel research in humans and non-human primates has revealed similar findings, indicating that early experience with stressors that are ‘challenging but not overwhelming’, fosters stress resilience by allowing animals to learn adaptive coping strategies for future stressful situations.

In contrast, a lack of challenge in early life leads to stress vulnerability as there are too few opportunities to learn to cope with stress effectively, though the outcome is less severe than with chronic stress exposure.

Parker and Maestriperi conceptualise exposure to early life stress and the associated outcome on stress vulnerability and resilience as a quadratic function.

In summary, brief intermittent stress exposure early in life enhances stress-coping ability, while the opposite effect is seen in response to chronic stress exposure or a severe lack of stress exposure altogether.

This model of early life stress exposure has primarily been studied in rodents and non-human primates, and based on the literature presented in this review, we propose this model can also be used to explain the effects of early experiences on later life stress adaptability in pigs.

The ability of farm animals to cope with stress is of great significance given the frequency of stressors animals encounter as part of routine management.

Pigs in modern indoor production systems are challenged with stressors such as abrupt weaning, transport, confinement, painful husbandry procedures, close human interaction of a negative nature and exposure to novel situations and environments.

Pigs may live in large and dense groups with limited agency over their social environment, in barren housing where highly motivated behaviours such as foraging, seeking variety and avoiding highly fearful stimuli are restricted.

Furthermore, pigs may be exposed to extreme temperatures, disease and restrictions in feed supply.

The ability of pigs to cope with and recover from these routine stressors has implications for animal welfare and furthermore, implications for animal productivity, since the cost of coping with stress can impact growth, immune function and reproduction.

Therefore, understanding the types of early experiences that shape pigs’ adaptability to stress and promote resilience is of great interest.

Conclusion

Several housing and management factors early in life can affect how well pigs cope with challenging situations.

Weaning before 3-4 weeks of age increases belly nosing and can dis-

rupt the development of social skills.

Rearing in loose lactation pens and providing environmental enrichment early in life reduces abnormal behaviour and improves piglet social behaviour but does not always confer longer-term benefits to stress resilience and pig welfare.

Limited evidence suggests that fear and stress responses are greater in piglets reared in loose lactation pens, but a better understanding of how the early housing system modulates behaviour and physiology in pigs is greatly needed.

When considering early housing effects, there is substantial variation between studies in terms of factors such

as space, flooring, substrate provision and physical complexity, and this warrants experimental research to determine specific features of housing systems that shape stress responses in pigs.

Social experience with non-littermate pigs during lactation leads to less social stress at weaning and mixing and, along with the provision of enrichment materials, reduces piglets’ fear of novelty.

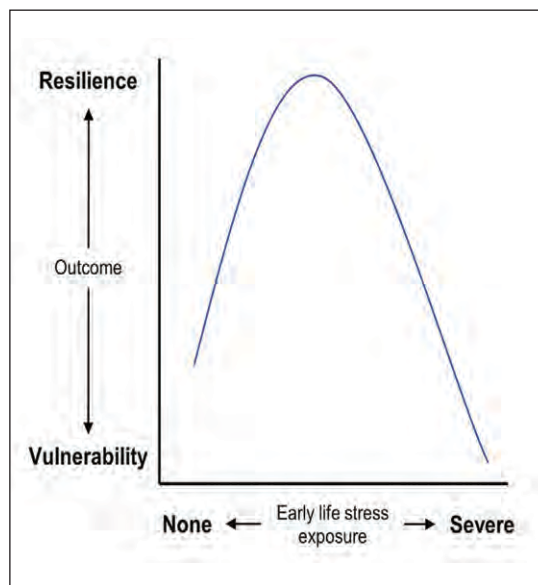
Positive human interaction early in life has an enduring effect on reducing pigs’ fear of humans and, when experienced regularly, may provide a small challenge for pigs to overcome that improves their general adaptability to different

stressors, including routine husbandry practices.

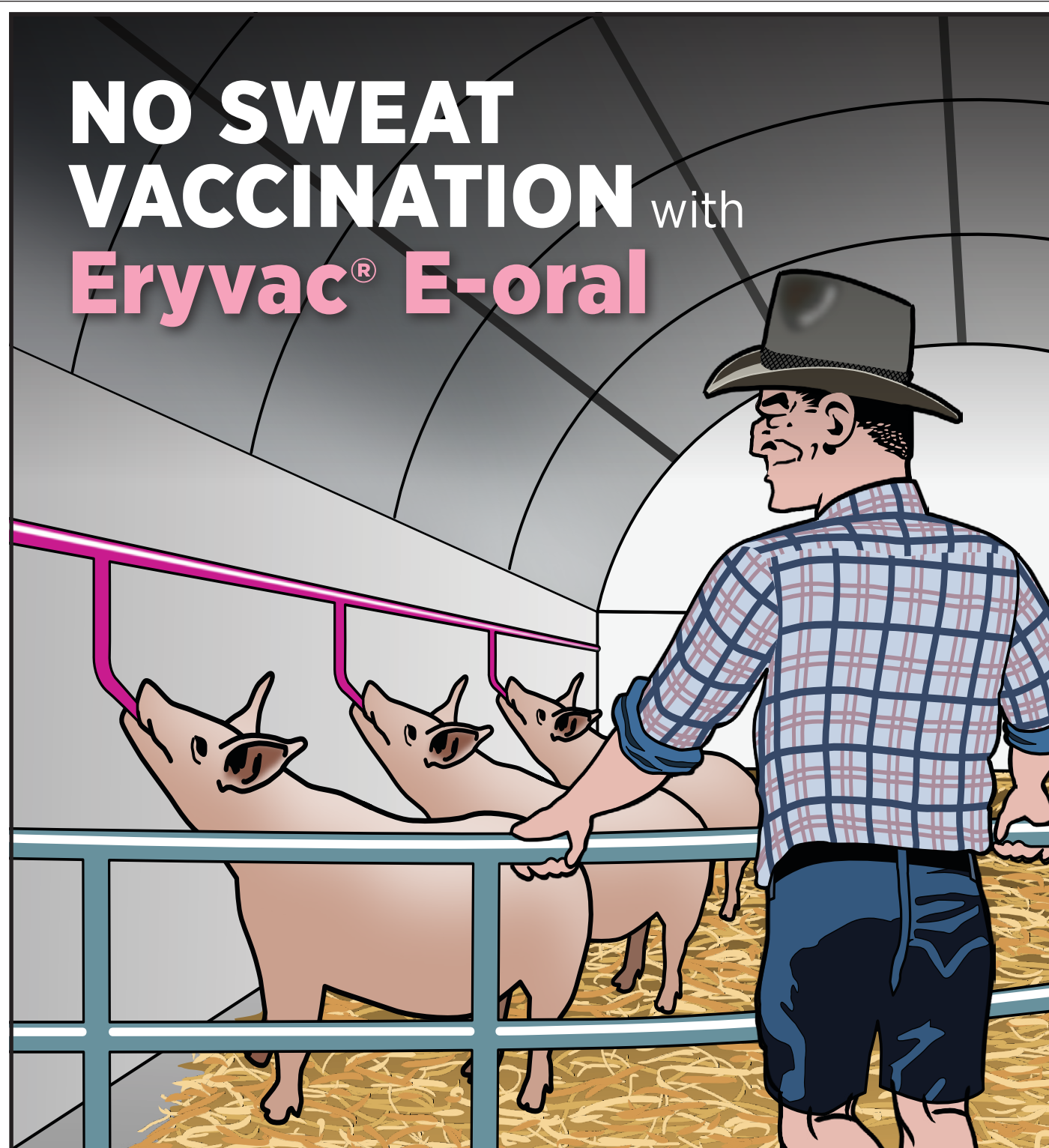
More detailed research is needed to determine the specific timing and duration of positive human interaction that would produce the greatest benefit in terms of sustaining reduced fear responses throughout the pig’s life in production.

Though later life management and housing experiences can modify the effects of early experience, there is evidence that some early life experiences can have a prolonged effect on stress adaptability, highlighting the importance of the early environment to pig welfare.

Dr Megan Lucas
Animal Welfare
Science Centre



Model of early life stress exposure and associated outcome on later life stress-coping ability, adapted from Parker and Maestriperi (2011). The severity of early life stress is determined by features such as the type of stressor and the duration and frequency of exposure. Parker and Maestriperi developed this model based on research on non-human primates, but the model is also useful for explaining how early experiences affect stress adaptability in other animals, including pigs.



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Aussie Pumps new mobile jetter for piggeries

AUSSIE Pumps drain cleaning jetters have revolutionised the way drain chokes are cleared, and are particularly useful in piggeries.

Not only are blockages cleared in minutes but the build up inside the pipes is stripped away, improving efficiency and function.

Aussie Pumps, Australia's leading supplier of drain cleaning jetters, is experienced working with the pork industry.

Its latest development is a new compact trailer-mounted 'jet to go' jetter, based on the popular 5000psi King Cobra Class A.

The lightweight trailer is road registerable and, being self-contained featuring a 5000psi jetter, a stainless-steel double-stacker reel kit and a portable mini reel, can easily be

towed from site to site.

The double stacker kit includes a high-pressure reel of 60m of 5000psi-rated sewer hose and a low-pressure reel with 30m of supply hose to connect the jetter to town or tank water.

The unique trailer-mounted jetter comes complete with the portable mini reel, which contains another 60m of 5000psi-rated sewer hose – a total reach of 120m from the trailer.

The portable reel can be secured during transit and stored with a special locking plate.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said, "This nimble jetter is easy to move around onsite and efficiently clears chokes in drains and pipes in minutes."

"It can be a shared resource with other sites and doesn't require permanent installation."

All Aussie Pumps jetters feature a Big Berty Bertolini high-pressure triplex pump – the only high-pressure pump on the market that carries a four-year warranty.

The units are gearbox drive and are built for continuous operation, and the jetter is powered by a Honda twin-cylinder electric-start petrol engine.

The machines are designed for efficiency, with the average choke cleared in less than 20 minutes.

Piggery operators also benefit from the machine because it doubles as a very effective high-pressure cleaner.

It can be used to wash down infrastructure, prepare steel work for repainting and the other jobs required to keep premises clean and hygienic.

The high-pressure ma-

chines can also be fitted with accessories to improve efficiency.

These include a turbo lance for the gun that will double the effectiveness of the impact, cutting pressure cleaning times dramatically.

Flat surface cleaners that reduce up to 80 percent of the time needed to clean large paved areas are also an initiative of Aussie Pumps, with the Aussie Spinner covering a 20" surface.

The operator swings it from side to side for fast and efficient cleaning.

"We consider a jetter as being an essential part of any pork production operation," Mr Hales said.

"It can be a multi-purpose tool that can save many hours of back-breaking work."

For more information, contact Aussie Pumps on 02 8865 3500 or visit aussiepumps.com.au



Making it easy to get jetting, Aussie Pumps new compact trailer-mounted jetter for efficient drain cleaning and wash down.

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John Riley Memorial Travel Award

The John Riley Memorial Travel Award is proudly sponsored and supported by the Queensland Pig Consultancy Group.

Background

The **Queensland Pig Consultancy Group** was formed in 1993 and since that time has taken a leading role in the transfer of knowledge and new technologies to the group's members and, in turn, their clients in the pig industry in Queensland and beyond. It has 70 members drawn from the public, private and commercial sectors. Their expertise covers a wide range of interests including nutrition, veterinary science, genetics and business management.

John Riley was a passionate supporter of the pork sector. His influence, knowledge and guidance were appreciated by those who knew and worked with him. John began his involvement with the industry in the United Kingdom in 1960 and continued that association from 1993 in Australia. John worked closely with family businesses in Queensland and interstate and strongly encouraged the adoption of business principles to ensure industry longevity. He was a strong believer in travel to broaden the mind, increase knowledge and for personal growth and development.

Sadly, John Riley passed away on his eighty-fourth birthday in 2023.

In recognition of John's commitment to the Australian pork industry, the John Riley Memorial Travel Award has been established. The award will be offered every two years commencing in 2024.

Purpose of the award

The John Riley Memorial Travel Award has been designed to assist a member of a family pork business to travel overseas and investigate a topic or issue they are passionate about and that is of benefit to their business and the wider industry.

This award is not limited to any one specific topic, however the purpose of the trip must be innovative, benefit the business and have application to the wider pork sector.

Applicants can design their own trip to explore international best practice and innovation that can be applied in Australia. Air travel, in-country transportation, registration fees, accommodation and meals are applicable costs that will be covered by the award. The award can be used to wholly fund the travel or can be combined with other funds to enable the learning experience to be achieved.

Amount of the award

The total award is valued up to \$10,000.

Application guidelines

- The application must meet all the following criteria:
- The application must be from an individual, not a group
- The applicant must have at least two years' experience on-farm and the application must be supported by the applicant's employer
- The topic to be researched must be related to some aspect of the Australian pork industry, including but not limited to production, environmental management, waste management, biosecurity, welfare and such
- The application must detail how the funding will be used – indicative costs for travel, accommodation and such – and indicate how the investment will benefit the business and industry
- The applicant must only use the funds provided for reimbursement of actual travel expenses – this award must not be used to reimburse wages or gratuities
- The applicant must be willing to provide their time to present their findings to at least one producer meeting and a QPCG meeting
- The successful applicant must complete the approved travel and meeting presentations within 12 months of the award being announced, unless approved by the committee
- Within three months of completion of the travel, the applicant must submit a brief report listing findings and results of travel to the QPCG committee
- The applicants must make themselves available to give a presentation to the committee to support their application, if the committee deems this necessary
- The application must be supported by two industry related referees
- The application form is available at John Riley Memorial Travel Award Application Form
- For further information, contact sara.willis@daf.qld.gov.au or 0423 027 053

Closing date

Applications will close at 5pm on Friday March 8, 2024. Completed applications are to be emailed to Sara Willis. No late applications will be accepted. The successful applicant will be announced within two weeks of the closing date. The QPCG committee's decision is final, and no further correspondence will be entered into.



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- Site 2 - Currently run as a farrowing operation and weaning/gilts.

The aggregation is currently being run as a multi-site pig breeding operation, with scope to increase production (Coles accredited).

Option to remain operating as breeding units or convert into farrow to finish or purely as a contract growing-out operation.

Offers prior to auction will be highly considered.

**Detailed information memorandum
is available on request.**



For more information contact:

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