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Very substantial welfare practices go on behind the scenes, it's not a façade. Photo: Lauren McConachie

Vic pig welfare consistent with standards elsewhere

ACCORDING to Agriculture Victoria, the state's pig welfare standards are "broadly consistent" with those of other countries.

Executive director of animal welfare at the department Dr Trevor Pisciotta said the pig husbandry and slaughter practices used in the state line up with those elsewhere.

"There is a wide range of different animal husbandry practices that are practised across various jurisdictions," Dr Pisciotta said.

"What's permissible under the Victorian

regulatory system is broadly consistent with both the other Australian jurisdictions and the other international jurisdictions."

Dr Pisciotta was speaking during a day of hearings as part of the Victorian Parliament's Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee's inquiry into pig welfare.

The committee had heard from farm representatives and animal welfare groups previously.

Bev McArthur, a member of the com-

mittee overseeing the inquiry, questioned Agriculture Victoria officials over suggestions by animal welfare groups that there was no way to farm pigs ethically.

The department's biosecurity executive director Dr Katherine Clift said complaints from the public about pig welfare and within this, pig slaughter, were minimal.

"Since 2018, Agriculture Victoria has received nearly 8000 animal welfare complaints in total, across all of the complaints that we receive, not just for the pig sector," Dr Clift said.

Only 179 of these complaints involved pigs, she added.

"In those, we had 41 substantiated complaints and the majority of those were related to pigs on farms."

"We had six that involved pigs at abattoirs."

Dr Clift explained this meant that only 0.1 percent of the substantiated animal welfare

continued P2



Agriculture Victoria executive director biosecurity Katherine Clift.

Food with Purpose 2024

IN a world where the demand for food is steadily increasing, the need for sustainable and efficient agricultural practices has never been more crucial.

Recognising this, the Poultry Information Exchange, Australasian Milling Conference and Australian Pork Limited are proud to present Food with Purpose 2024, a collaborative event aimed at shaping the future of the poultry, pig and milling industries.

With evolving consumer preferences, geopolitical and economic challenges and environmental concerns continuing to rise, the event is a platform for industry leaders, experts and stakeholders to come together, explore the current issues facing our sector and discuss advancements in science and technology.

Held over three days – from May 13-16, 2024 on the Gold Coast – the event features a lineup of keynote speakers, each offering unique perspectives and insights into key aspects of the industry.

The pork focused sessions include themes such as 'Prosperity - Future focus', which promises to be an insightful discussion with keynote speakers such as Australian National University Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions director Professor Mark Howden.

Under the theme of



Point of View

by MARGO ANDRAE
CEO



'People - Drivers affecting the food industry and the consumer', attendees will hear from leaders such as Ogilvy Public Relations chief executive officer Richard Brett and renowned futurist Melissa Clark Reynolds.

Topics will delve into the evolving landscape of consumer behaviour and its impact on the food industry.

Another significant focus of the event is the welfare of pigs, both present and future.

Experts such as Professor Paul Hemsforth and organisational heads including RSPCA CEO Richard Mussell will explore crucial issues surrounding pig welfare, alongside discussions on vaccination strategies for future-proofing animal production led by Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's John Power with insights from Department of Primary Industries leader of pigs and poultry agriculture Peta Easey.

The global impacts of pig farming will also take centre stage, with speakers such as

Farmer-Citizen Movement party leader Caroline Van Der Plas, Animal Agricultural Alliance manager Abby Kornegay and DanBred knowledge transfer specialist Ashley Norval providing perspectives on international developments and challenges.

Under the theme 'Planet', discussions on carbon-neutral pork initiatives – led by representatives from Coles and Milne AgriGroup, with insights from Integrity Ag's Dr Stephen Wiedemann on lifecycle assessments – will explore sustainable practices within the pork industry.

Food with Purpose is more than a conference – it's a call to action.

As challenges such

as climate change and global food security loom, the need for collective action and shared responsibility is important.

By joining together across the poultry, milling and pork sectors, we're aiming to communicate research, create discussion and thought leadership, and inspire our industries in creating a more sustainable and resilient future.

As we look ahead to Food with Purpose 2024 later this month, APL invites all stakeholders – producers, policymakers, researchers and supply chain businesses – to join us in this important conversation.



RSPCA CEO Richard Mussell.



Ogilvy Public Relations CEO Richard Brett.



Renowned futurist Melissa Clark Reynolds.



COME VISIT US AT FOOD WITH PURPOSE

The Stockyard Team are looking forward to catching up with all our customers at Food with Purpose 2024 from May 13 to 15.



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Pork Industry Calendar of Events

2024

MAY 13-15 – Food with Purpose 2024, A PIX, AMC & APL Event – Gold Coast, Australia. <https://pix.au/>

JUN 4-7 – IPVS and ESPHM – Leipzig, Germany. <https://www.ipvs2024.com/>

JUN 5-7 – World Pork Expo – Des Moines, Iowa, USA. <https://www.worldpork.org/>

JUN 19-20 – Ontario Pork Congress – Ontario, Canada. <https://www.porkcongress.on.ca/>

JUL 7-10 – National Pork Industry Conference – Wisconsin Dells, USA. <https://www.porkconference.com/>

AUG 17-18 – Kingaroy BaconFest 2024 – Kingaroy, Australia. <https://www.kingaroybaconfest.com.au/>

SEP 4-6 – 2024 Australian Pig Veterinarians Conference – Wollongong, Australia. <https://www.ava.com.au/education-events/education-and-events-search/event-detail/?eid=EV001648>

OCT 16-17 – Dutch Pork and Poultry Expo – Evenementenhal Hardenberg, Netherlands. www.porkpoultryexpo.nl/

OCT 25-27 – The 13th Leman China Swine Conference & World Swine Industry Expo – Chengdu, China. <https://www.lemanchina.com/>

NOV 12-15 – EuroTier 2024 – Hanover, Germany. <https://www.eurotier.com/en/>

NOV 20-21 – Pig Research Summit 2024 – Copenhagen, Denmark. <https://pigresearchsummit.com>

How to supply event details:

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

porknews.com.au

07 3286 1833

Ag ministers commit to National Statement on Animal Welfare

STATE, territory and Commonwealth agriculture ministers have met and confirmed their commitment to jointly lead the renewal of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy, and to develop a National Statement on Animal Welfare.

It also marks the formal launch and commencement of public consultation on the renewal of the AAWS – closing May 20, 2024.

The national statement will reflect the shared commitment by federal, state and territory ministers to jointly lead the renewal of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy and to work together with animal industries and non-government organisations to demonstrate Australia's strong commitment to animal welfare.

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Murray Watt said the national statement will signal to Australians and our international trading partners that national collaboration on animal welfare priorities is a shared goal of all governments.

"The National Statement on Animal Welfare will provide a snapshot of the challenges and opportunities in animal welfare in Australia, while cementing a commitment to working towards a vision for sustainable improvements," Minister Watt said.

Animal welfare is the responsibility of all governments, and we know that a strong animal welfare system relies on collaboration across the board.

Minister Watt added that this included state and territory governments, who largely regulate animal welfare, and all levels of government, together with everyone who interacts with animals in their everyday life, whether an animal owner, carer, researcher, veterinarian, transporter, fisher or farmer.

The Australian Government committed \$5 million across four years (2023-2027) to the development of a renewed AAWS in the May 2023 budget,

with the objective of providing a framework for a national approach to animal welfare in Australia.

Ministers have agreed on a framework for the development of the strategy, including a set of overarching principles for a national governance model to ensure the strategy includes priorities and actions that are responsive and adaptive to modern challenges, opportunities and science.

The National Statement on Animal Welfare will be a key milestone in the strategy's development and will also acknowledge the good work already underway in promoting strong animal welfare outcomes across a broad range of animal species.

The National Statement on Animal Welfare will be developed during 2024.

Consultation for the renewed Australian Animal Welfare Strategy closes on May 20.

This new version will be released in chapters, each dedicated to one of six animal groups with the final strategy expected to be released in 2027.

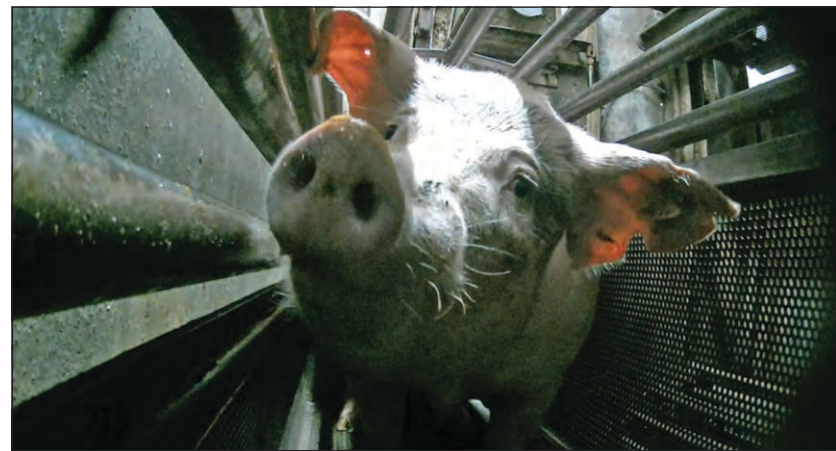
"Animals are important for Australia socially, culturally and economically," Minister Watt said.

"They are our companions, providers of assistance, contributors to health and ecological well-being, and suppliers of essential food and fibre resources.

"The renewed strategy will provide a future plan for animal welfare in Australia to address community and international expectations – helping us gain greater market access and maintain current trade wins by showcasing and maturing Australia's national approach to animal welfare.

"I encourage stakeholders and the public to get involved and provide their feedback on what the development of the renewed AAWS will look like."

Feedback can be submitted through the Have Your Say platform at haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/aaws



A pig inside a gondola prior to slaughter.

Abattoir admits responsibility for animal welfare breaches

THE Victorian abattoir from which activists released footage in early 2023 has been charged over its pig slaughtering methods and accepted responsibility for animal welfare breaches.

Charged with two counts of breaching Victoria's Meat Industry Act in October 2023 by meat industry regulator PrimeSafe, Australian Food Group's practices were made public after farm activist group the Farm Transparency Project shared video footage from inside the company's facility.

The footage of pigs undergoing carbon dioxide gassing prior to slaughter was obtained from inside three abattoirs after the activists allegedly broke into the facilities, one of these being Australian Food Group

in Laverton, Victoria.

An investigation into what was described as "serious and disturbing allegations" of mistreatment of animals commenced after Animals Australia filed a complaint with PrimeSafe about the footage taken at AFG.

AFG ceased operating as an abattoir shortly after, with PrimeSafe revealing in October 2023 that in May the company had given notice that it "intended to cancel its licence to operate as an abattoir."

In October, AFG was charged and last year faced preliminary hearings in the Sunshine Magistrates' Court.

Recently, the company accepted a diversion program, involving the acknowledgement of responsibility for the offence and agreeing to

abide by set conditions, including paying PrimeSafe's court costs.

AFG will no longer face charges if the conditions are met.

PrimeSafe chief executive Michael Coffey said, "Prosecution sends a message that meat processors are expected to comply with all licence conditions, including those that relate to animal welfare."

The use of carbon dioxide to stun pigs before slaughter is legal and widespread, yet activists believe the industry doesn't want the general public to know what that looks like.

About 85 percent of Australian pigs are stunned by being lowered into a carbon dioxide gas solution before slaughter, with limited affordable alternatives open to the industry.



An aerial shot of Australian Food Group's abattoir. Photo: Farm Transparency Project

Pig welfare consistent with standards

from P1 complaints made by the Victorian public since 2018 involved pig abattoirs.

Ms McArthur said this seemed like a "very small number given we're led to believe this is a dreadfully cruel industry."

"Certainly, it's a very small proportion of the complaints that we receive," Dr Cliff responded.

"The most common complaints that we receive relate to matters of availability – food,

water and shelter."

She said if welfare issues do arise, there is generally a high resolution rate on pig farms and in abattoirs.

"We have a range of regulatory outcomes that we employ that can include the provision of educational materials, advisory letters."

"In some cases, we take further regulatory action if necessary."

Speaking on behalf of the Australian Veterinary Association, pig vet Andrew Morris agreed with the outlook from

Agriculture Victoria.

"In my experience, Victoria and by extension the rest of Victoria has very high welfare standards that are adopted willingly," Mr Morris said.

Therefore, it's not a façade, he added.

"It's very substantial the welfare practices that go on behind the scenes."

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

Australian
Pork

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Pork imports from the US were valued at \$A96.17 million, up 229 percent. Photo: Karolina Grabowska

US pork exports to Australia more than triple in a year

ACCORDING to data released by the US Department of Agriculture, and compiled by the US Meat Export Federation, January-February US pork exports to Australia more than tripled from a year ago.

Pork exports climbed 232 percent

to 17,553mt and were valued at \$A96.17 million (up 229 percent).

Due to import restrictions, most US pork shipped to Australia was raw material for further processing, but value-added processed US products have also gained traction in the market.

Respected brand D'Orsogna 75 years on

LEADING Australian smallgoods producer D'Orsogna Limited recently celebrated 75 years as an innovative family-owned business supplying quality food nationwide from its Palmyra, Western Australia headquarters and Merrifield, Victoria production plant.

D'Orsogna chair Tony Iannello said the longevity was a credit to the company's founders, D'Orsogna brothers Tommaso and Giovanni and the second-generation family members who have transitioned the company from a local food manufacturer to a significant national manufacturer and well-respected brand.

"The ongoing sup-

port of the D'Orsogna family, together with the loyal committed staff, suppliers, customers and consumers have been behind this proud history," Mr Iannello said.

"It's also pleasing to now see the third generation of the D'Orsogna family becoming involved in the business."

It was March 7, 1949 that D'Orsogna commenced as a butcher shop in Stone Street, West Perth, trading as T D'Orsogna Family Butcher.

D'Orsogna smallgoods moved from West Perth to Palmyra in 1973.

Headquartered in Perth WA, the 75-year-old family-owned business is nationally recognised as a market leader in the produc-

tion and distribution of a range of cured and cooked whole and sliced hams, gourmet continental goods, bacon and cooked sausages.

Today, D'Orsogna employs approximately 800 people, comprising 550 in WA and 250 in Victoria.

The landmark WA premises at Palmyra, near the port of Fremantle, has been D'Orsogna's home since 1973 and retains its head office status, staff and production.

Nationally, it is complemented by D'Orsogna's 2019 \$65 million state-of-the-art 11,000sq m food manufacturing facility in Victoria.

Mr Iannello acknowledged the vision and

hard work of the company's family, board members and staff, all of whom shared a steadfast commitment to a food business focused on producing and supplying quality products, many of which still honour and reflect the Italian heritage of D'Orsogna's founding fathers.

"While there have been challenges along the way, they've always been met with appropriate due diligence, reinforced by ongoing ethical family business values and continued emphasis on product quality," Mr Iannello said.

"D'Orsogna's reputation nationally in business circles and beyond is second to none and the board, executive and

staff have always prioritised integrity.

D'Orsogna continues to invest in new and upgraded infrastructure to lift volume and quality at its Palmyra WA and Merrifield Victoria plants.

Product development is also core to D'Orsogna's business and its dedicated product development team constantly reviews product offerings to develop new lines to fit market niches and meet emerging consumer eating and buying patterns.

Mr Iannello said the board, family members, executive team and all employees wished to acknowledge and thank suppliers, customers and consumers for their ongoing support.



D'Orsogna managing director Jason Craig and board member Marco D'Orsogna celebrated the company's seventy-fifth anniversary at a function at its Palmyra headquarters.



Enjoying D'Orsogna's seventy-fifth anniversary celebration at its Palmyra headquarters were board member Marco D'Orsogna, Eleonora Kailis, Loreta D'Orsogna Valentini, managing director Jason Craig, Tina D'Orsogna, Marisa D'Orsogna and board member Giorgio DiGiulio. Siblings Marco, Eleonora and Marisa are the children of Giovanni D'Orsogna, co-founder of D'Orsogna with his brother Tommaso. Loreta and Tina are Tommaso's daughters. Giorgio is Giovanni's grandson.



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Veolia goes with new technology for DAF plant

VEOLIA Northern Territory was looking for a simple, low maintenance, cost-effective and low operator engagement solution to provide a large amount of micro-sized air bubbles for the dissolved air flotation system at their wastewater treatment facility at Berimah, according to Veolia technical services engineer Dion Meta.

The options

"An article was published which outlined the benefits of the Edur DAF pump," Mr Meta said.

"This then prompted me to look into the product, as we needed something simple and reliable."

In that article, Australian distributor for Edur Pumps, Hydro

Innovations, described how the single Edur pump could replace not only the existing recycle pump but also the air saturation vessel and the compressor.

How does the Edur 'multiphase' pump work?

The Edur multiphase pump has the unique ability to handle a gas/liquid mixture.

This enables the pump to draw in atmospheric air when pumping recycled water from the DAF tank, where it mixes the air with the water being simultaneously drawn from the DAF tank.

A discharge throttle valve puts the discharge air/water mix under pressure – about 6 bar – which forces the air into the solution with the water.

When the solution

reaches the DAF tank, the reduced pressure in the tank causes the air to come out of solution to form microscopic bubbles – 30-70µm – which then attach to fats, oils and grease, and floats them to the surface.

The results

Mr Meta said, "The results have been very good."

"We are producing a significant amount of dissolved air and our treatment results have improved, with for example a reduction in sulphide and a reduction in hydrocarbons."

The benefits of the installation

Besides the simplicity of the system, according to Hydro Innovations, asset owners can expect a reduction in running costs also.

Though Veolia did not have a compressor previously, other DAF plant asset owners can cut the costs associated with running a compressor, cut the yearly certification costs of the air saturation vessel and won't need the more complicated control systems.

How the results improve sustainability at the plant

When asked what he expected from the new Edur pump asset, Mr Meta said, "Long term benefits are that our results continue to improve."

"I am also hopeful that the DAF pump will last for a long period of time with little maintenance requirements."

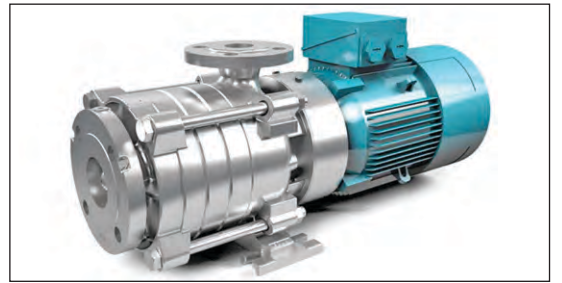
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Edur LBU DAF pumps liquid/gas mixture.



With the Edur multiphase pump, Veolia is producing a significant amount of dissolved air and its treatment results have improved.

ASF vaccine projects underway in Europe

TAKING different approaches, two recently launched research programs based in Europe aim to develop effective vaccines against African swine fever virus.

A new project recently got underway with the aim to develop an orally administered African swine fever vaccine for the European market.

Titled ASFaVIP – ASF attenuated live vaccines in pigs – the new project is led by Dr Sandra Blome of the German national veterinary agency, the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute.

Conventional disease control approaches based on biosecurity have been fairly successful in protecting Europe's commercial pigs from ASF infections.

However, it is recognised that these are ineffective when it comes to wild boar.

It is hoped that the successes achieved with oral vaccines against classical swine fever can be replicated for ASF in the region's wild population.

At a first meeting of the group, plans were agreed for the testing of existing experimental vaccines, as well as future methodological approaches.

Funded by the European Union, the FLI-led project includes main partners from Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Spain.

Furthermore, associated partners have joined from Switzerland and the US, and Zoetis is the industrial partner.

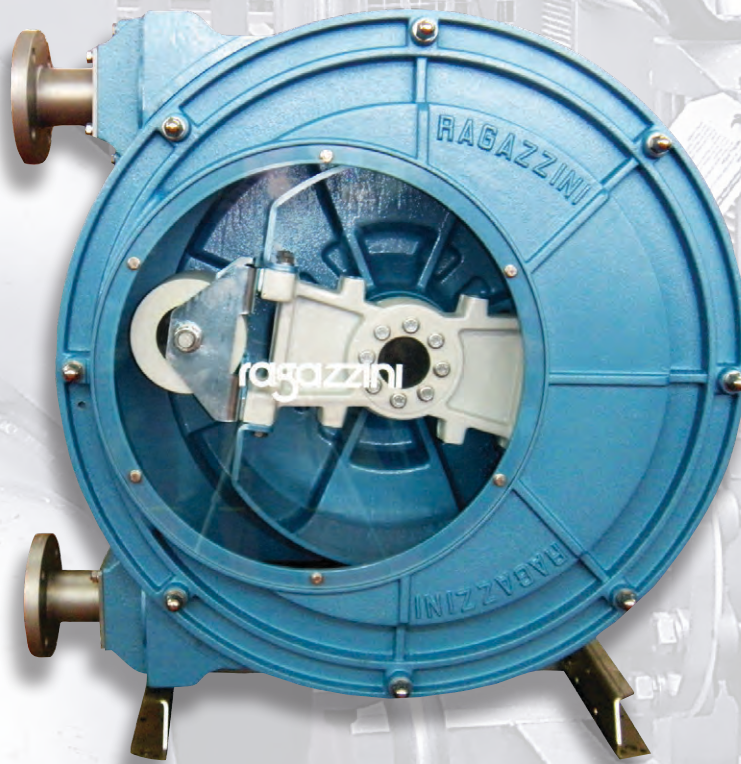
Last month, the Pirbright Institute in the United Kingdom announced a new project aimed at combating the devastating effects of ASF in Africa.

With new funding from the Medical Research Council, the group will explore further how a promising modified live vaccine candidate against the genotype II ASF virus works, and whether it is effective against the other 23 virus genotypes known to be present on the African continent.



Two recently launched research programs based in Europe aim to develop effective vaccines against African swine fever virus. Photo: Sarai Zuno

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Quiet achiever and rare breed, Bruce Mullan



With producer Dawson Bradford of Hillcroft Farms and Mario Zaza of D'Orsogna, Bruce Mullan at a 2015 Western Australia producer function.

WHILE many scientists and researchers – dare I say it, even in the pig/pork discipline – like to publicly make far too much of their academic qualifications, honorifics, salutations and publications, those who go quietly about the business of improving the lives and businesses of producers are a rarer breed.

One such individual is Bruce Mullan, who has recently retired after more than 30 years of impeccable public service to Western Australian and national agriculture, much of it in the porcine paddock.

Tongue in cheek, I once portrayed Bruce in this column as the Clark Kent of WA's pork industry, referencing his mild understated demeanour and bespectacled visage, while acknowledging how, when called upon to problem solve, he could quickly change into his superman-esque persona.

Though Bruce has never been one to readily spruik his professional and academic achievements, I think the occasion of his retirement merits all must be revealed.

So, let's record here and now, once and for all, what this modest scientist and researcher has achieved and contributed, with our beloved pork industry the main beneficiary.

Key achievements:

- Guided the formation of a very successful pork innovation group within the Department of Ag-

Cant
Comment
by BRENDON CANT



riculture and Food WA that continues to have a major impact on both the WA and Australian pork industries

- Developed a strong network among the commercial and research sectors of the livestock industry, in particular the pork and sheep industries
- In 2013, he was awarded the prestigious APSA Medal for the many years he served the Australasian Pig Science Association, being the only person to serve two terms as president
- Developed a reputation within the WA and Australian pork industry as someone who demonstrated a high level of diplomacy
- His research helped improve the eating quality of Australian pork and reduced the cost of production by improving the utilisation of grains
- Awarded the Moir Medal in 1995 for his work in enhancing collaboration within the WA livestock scientific community.

Employment and education history:

- 2021 to now – Principal research scientist with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (decided after 10 years as a director to voluntarily step down to concentrate on special projects)
- 2018 to 2021 – Director Livestock Research and Industry Innovation
- 2013 to 2018 – Director Sheep Industry Development
- 2010 to 2013 – Director of Livestock Innovation
- 2000 to 2010 – With permission from government, worked part-time as a private consultant to the animal feed and production industry in Australia and overseas

External appointments:

- 1992 to 2010 – Research officer, senior research officer and subsequently principal research officer with the Department of Agriculture and Food WA
- 1989 to 1992 – Research scientist, Victorian Institute of Animal Science, Werribee, Victoria
- 1987 to 1989 – Post-doctoral fellowship, Institute for Grassland and Animal Production, Shinfield, United Kingdom
- 1983 to 1987 – Studied for a PhD in Animal Science at the University of Western Australia
- 1979 to 1983 – Regional services advisor, WA Department of Agriculture, Three Springs
- 1975 to 1978 – Studied for a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Honours) at UWA.
- 1979 – Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Honours) at UWA
- 1987 – PhD at UWA
- 2001 – Graduate diploma in frontline management
- 2012 – Diploma of project management.

- 1992 to 2010 – Research officer, senior research officer and subsequently principal research officer with the Department of Agriculture and Food WA
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Training WA (2001-current)

- Sub-program leader, Pork Cooperative Research Centre (2005-2011)

- Member, Editorial Advisory Board for CAB Abstracts (2008-2012)

- Member, Editorial Advisory Board, Animal Feed Science and Technology (2009-2013)

- Chair, Technology Transfer Advisory Committee for Australian Pork Limited (2010-2015)

- Member, Research and Development Committee for Pork CRC (2011-2014)

- Adjunct Senior Lecturer, University of Western Australia (2010-2015)

- Adjunct Associate Professor, University of Melbourne (2010-current)

- Councillor, Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia (2014-2019).

Sixty-five-year-old Bruce has kept his future plans, both personal and professional, typically close to his chest, though I do know he is considering revisiting and reversing his amazing 1000km trek from Perth to Albany on the very challenging Bibbulmun Track.

He completed that a few years ago and these days volunteers to care for a 7km stretch of the Bibbulmun near Dwell-in-up.

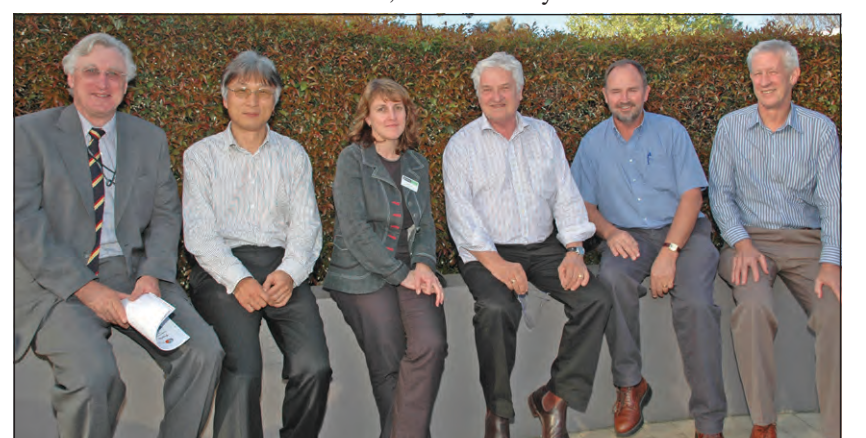
I've liaised with and worked with Bruce in a range of capacities during his career and always found him to be calm, considerate, knowledgeable and informative, and also a good listener.

He's long done a great job advising farmers on how best to be productive and profitable.

Importantly, he's always done so with modesty and humility, all quietly underscored by the knowledge and confidence that comes from experience and a very considerable scientific pedigree.

You will be missed Bruce.

Please keep us all on track with your whereabouts. 🐷



Second from right, Pork CRC sub-program leader Dr Bruce Mullan was a speaker at a 2008 Pork CRC seminar on cereal grains at Technology Park in Western Australia. Pictured with Associate Professor Dennis Wise of Curtin University, Dr Jae Kim of WA Department of Agriculture and Food, Dr Jo Pluske of the University of Western Australia, Pork CRC chief executive officer Dr Roger Campbell and Pork CRC program manager Dr Ray King.

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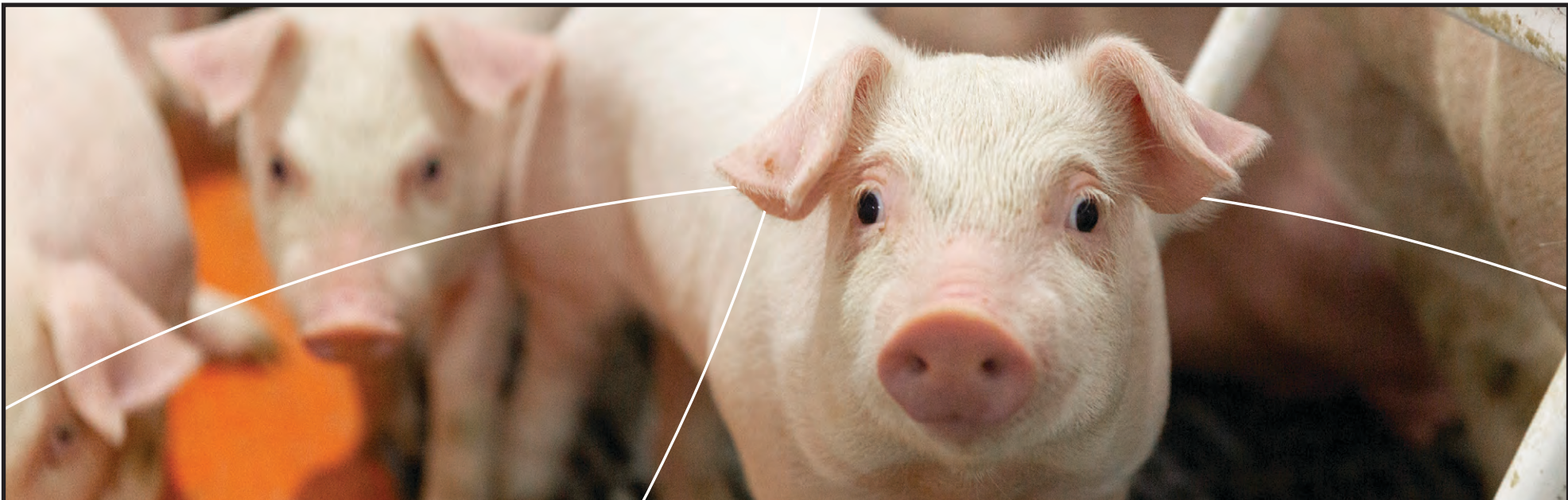
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Agri-Food Outlook | 2024

The 2024 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook revealed global feed production survey data and trends.

2024 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook

Global feed production survey data

GLOBAL animal feed production remained steady in 2023 at 1.29 billion metric tons, a slight decrease of 2.6 million metric tons – or 0.2 percent – from 2022's estimates, according to the 2024 Agri-Food Outlook released by Alltech recently.

The annual survey, now in its thirteenth year, includes data from 142 countries and more than 27,000 feed mills.

The overall lower demand for feed was due in part to the more efficient use of feed made possible by intensive production systems that focus on using animal nutrition, farm management and other technologies to lower feed intake, while producing the same amount of protein or more.

A slowdown in the overall production of animal protein, in response to tight margins experienced by many feed and animal protein companies, also contributed to lower feed demand.

Changing consumption patterns caused by inflation and dietary trends, higher production costs and geopolitical tensions also influenced feed production in 2023.

Top 10 countries

The top 10 feed-producing countries are China (262.71 MMT, +0.76 percent), the US (238.09 MMT, -1.13 percent), Brazil (83.32 MMT, +1.84 percent), India (52.83 MMT, +13.43 percent), Mexico (40.42 MMT, +0.02 percent), Russia (35.46 MMT, +3.83 percent), Spain (27.53 MMT, -11.88 percent), Vietnam (24.15 MMT, -9.63 percent), Japan (23.94 MMT, -1.15 percent) and Türkiye (23.37 MMT, -11.48 percent).

Together, the top 10 countries produced 63.1 percent of the world's feed production (same as in 2022), and almost half of the world's global feed production is concentrated in four countries – China, the US, Brazil and India.

Notable species results and outlook

Poultry experienced an increase in broiler feed production (385.04 MMT, +13.10 MMT,

+3.5 percent) and remained steady with a slight increase for layers (170.88 MMT, +0.01 MMT, 0 percent).

Some markets around the globe were significantly impacted by macroeconomic challenges and disease outbreaks, which can disrupt production cycles.

The global pig feed production sector faced many challenges in 2023, which led to an overall decrease in pig feed production of 1.23 percent (320.80 MMT, -4.01 MMT).

Latin America stood out as the only region that achieved an increase in pig feed production in 2023, while Europe, Asia-Pacific and North America – which have traditionally been the top pig feed-producing regions in the world – all faced challenges.

African swine fever continues to wreak havoc on pig production in China and southeast Asia, where repopulation efforts are slowly proceeding.

The trends highlight the complex relationship between economic factors, supply dynamics and disease management in the global pig feed industry.

Addressing these challenges will be crucial for sustaining animal agriculture and ensuring food security.

Dairy feed tonnage decreased by 2.3 percent (126.23 MMT, -2.28 percent), primarily due to the high cost of feed combined with low milk prices, which led farmers to make strategic adjustments that included reducing their cow numbers and/or relying more on non-commercial feed sources.

In Europe, dairy producers will continue to grapple with stricter environmental policies in the years ahead, and they will need to find new ways to continue growing.

Asia-Pacific managed to buck the downward trend and emerged as the only region that increased its dairy feed tonnage in 2023.

This growth was fuelled by a continued increase in the consumption of milk products, as

well as an expansion of feed production in cooperatives.

This shift reflects the delicate balance between economic factors and the need to sustain dairy production.

Lower feed costs and higher milk prices would help right the ship.

Beef feed production decreased by 4.36 percent (117.49 MMT, -5.35 MMT) globally – the most pronounced downward change among all species sectors last year.

Changes in cattle cycles in the US and stricter sustainability policies in Europe had major impacts, with the Asia-Pacific beef sector notably surpassing Europe's in 2023.

The substantial decline in North America was the result of lingering droughts and high production costs, among other issues.

While the European and North American beef industries are expected to continue declining in 2024, growth is expected in China, Brazil and Australia – highlighting the complex dynamics and landscape of beef-feed production around the world.

The aquaculture sector experienced a decline of 4.4 percent (52.09 MMT, -2.42 MMT).

This decline was driven in part by a significant drop in China's supply of aqua feed due to lower fish prices, which had a far-reaching impact.

Latin America grew by 0.27 MMT (3.87 percent).

Despite adverse weather conditions in that region, the demand for aqua products is still strong in Latin America, which helped aqua producers there remain resilient.

The global pet feed industry continues to grow, albeit at a slower pace of 0.74 percent (34.96 MMT, +0.26 MMT) in 2023.

Demand for high-quality pet products and services remains high from pet owners who want only the best for their animal companions.

The Latin American and North American markets were the pri-

continued P9

2024 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook

from P8

major drivers of this growth, with the pet food sector in North America surpassing Europe's this year.

Europe was the only market experiencing a decline in pet food production in 2023.

Supply-chain disruptions and inflationary pressures were the key factors contributing to this decrease.

The equine feed industry experienced a decrease of 3.9 percent (7.98 MMT, -0.32 MMT) in 2023.

The top challenges in the equine sector include high labour and material prices.

The top technologies impacting the sector are biosecurity, micro-chipping, genetics and nutritional solutions.

Survey respondents said the biggest opportunities for nutritional solutions are gut health management and feed efficiency.

Equine feed is expected to decrease both in price and in volume during the coming year.

Notable regional results

North America saw a decrease of 2.8 MMT (259.26 MMT, -1.1 percent), with beef feed tonnage down significantly.

The pig and dairy

sectors also slipped slightly, but the broiler, layer and pet sectors more than made up the difference.

Feed tonnage in the broiler sector was up nearly 2.9 percent.

Latin America experienced growth in 2023 by 2.46 MMT (200.67 MMT, +1.24 percent).

Despite high production costs, geopolitical tensions and changing consumer behaviour due to economic reasons, the region continues to lead global growth, mainly because of its export-driven aquaculture, poultry and pork markets.

Europe continued its downward trend in feed production, with a decrease of 10.07 MMT (253.19 MMT, -3.82 percent) due to issues that included the invasion in Ukraine and the spread of animal diseases such as African swine fever and avian influenza.

Asia-Pacific led feed production growth in 2023, with an increase of 6.54 MMT (475.33 MMT, +1.4 percent).

Feed production growth in the region's ruminant sectors offset a setback in the aqua sector.

The region is home to several of the top 10 feed-producing coun-

tries, including China, India, Vietnam and Japan.

Africa experienced continued but slower growth with an increase of 1.95 percent, nearly 1 MMT to total 51.42 MMT.

The Middle East saw a slight decrease of 0.12 MMT (35.93 MMT, -0.32 percent).

Oceania had the third-highest growth, 3.71 percent or 0.39 MMT to total 10.78 MMT.

Alltech works together with feed mills and industry and government entities around the world to compile data and insights to provide an assessment of feed production each year.

Compound feed production and prices were collected by Alltech's global sales team and in partnership with local feed associations in the first quarter of 2024.

These figures are estimates and are intended to serve as an information resource for industry stakeholders.

To access more data and insights from the 2024 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook, including an interactive global map, visit alltech.com/agri-food-outlook

Alltech



Check with your service provider to confirm if you will be impacted before the 3G network closures. Photo: Hassan Ouajbir

Australia's 3G networks are closing down

ACT now, don't delay – here's what you need to know.

Australia's 3G networks are closing down.

It is important that Australians know if they will be impacted and have time to upgrade their phones and other devices before the 3G networks close.

If you receive notice from your service provider to upgrade your device, don't put off taking action, contact your service provider.

The closure has already commenced

TPG Telecom/Vodafone has already switched off its 3G mobile network services as of January 2024.

If you're a Vodafone customer or business reliant on the 3G network, it's crucial to upgrade to a device compatible with 4G or 5G networks. Visit vodafone.com.au/support/network/3g-closure for more information.

Telstra will close its network on 30 June 2024 – visit telstra.com.au/support/mobiles-devices/3g-closure for more information.

Optus 3G network will be shut down from September 2024 – visit optus.com.au/support/mobiles-tablets-wearables/important-changes-3g

All 3G devices will be affected, not only phones

If you have an older device that relies on a 3G network, you must upgrade your device now. This includes mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, eftpos machines, personal emergency response solutions and medical alarms.

More details can be found at amta.org.au/3g-closure

Some 4G devices will be affected

Some early 4G handsets don't support 4G voice calling, which means they use the 3G network and, after the closure, these devices will not be able to make a call.

There are also a number of devices that support normal 4G voice calls, but force emergency 000 calls to 3G.

If you have devices that don't support 4G and 4G emergency calling, you should upgrade your device, otherwise you will not be able to make an emergency call to 000 after the 3G networks close.

Contact your service provider to check your device

It's important that you check with your device manufacturer or service provider to confirm if you will be impacted

before these network closures.

Get in touch with your service provider to check your device – amta.org.au/3g-closure/service-providers

While service providers are advising customers through a variety of communications forms, including text, email and post, it is important to reach out to your service provider and check if you need to take any action.

Further information

Visit the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts 3G network switch off website, infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/phone/mobile-services-and-coverage/3g-network-switch, or the ACMA's 3G network switch off website, acma.gov.au/3g-network-switch, for further advice.



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zoetis



The University of Melbourne is seeking the expertise of Victorian pig producers. Photo: Agriculture Victoria

Check your parasites now

THE University of Melbourne is seeking to tap the experience of Victorian pig producers to develop valuable insights into parasite control practices used on farm.

Funded by Victorian pig producers through the Swine Compensation Fund, the University of Melbourne has launched a research project into the 'Sustainable control of parasites in Victorian pigs'.

Victorian pig producers are encouraged to contribute by providing their knowledge and expertise through a questionnaire survey.

The survey is open to all Victorian pig producers, regardless of their size, production

system and the internal parasite status of their farm.

By participating in this study, producers will be contributing to a larger project exploring the prevalence of internal parasites in commercial and backyard pigs, assessing current control practices and evaluating the use of a new serological test for early detection of roundworms in pigs.

Internal parasites can cause significant production disruptions by blocking the intestines or damaging the gut wall.

Clinically, signs of inappetence, respiratory infections, bloody diarrhoea, poor feed conversion, decreased weight gain and increased sus-

ceptibility to diseases are seen.

If left undiagnosed and untreated, internal parasites will cause considerable economic losses.

Once they become established, it can be very hard to eradicate internal parasites on pig farms.

Both roundworm and whipworm eggs have incredible survivability in the environment with roundworm (*ascaris suum*) eggs surviving on pastures and even concrete floors for up to 10 years.

This presents a further risk to pig herds, so educated management decisions are vital.

The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

It is anonymous how-

ever, if producers are interested in a free faecal analysis for their pigs, they can provide their contact details at the end of the survey.

The free faecal analysis will determine what types of parasites are prevalent in commercial and backyard piggeries.

Producers will be provided with the necessary support for faecal sample collection.

Participate now by scanning the QR code above or visiting redcap.

If you would like more information and/or to register interest in the free faecal analysis, contact project officer Dr Ghaz Abbas on g.abbas@unimelb.edu.au

FutureAg Expo and conference summary

I HAD the opportunity to attend the FutureAg Expo and conference in Melbourne in April, which showcased an impressive display of new agricultural technologies, including large machinery such as tractors, headers, harvesters, effluent sprayers and rippers.

However, the event was not only about flashy equipment, as it featured a diverse line up of speakers discussing the future of agriculture, sustainability and emerging technologies in farming.

One of the standout presentations was delivered by GoTerra founder and chief executive officer Olympia Yarger – the company specialising in insect waste management, protein and fertilisers.

Ms Yarger's insights into the Australian agricultural landscape resonated with the audience.

She discussed the tribal nature of agriculture and how it intersects with our sense of identity and belonging.

And highlighted the need for Australian farmers to break out of silos and embrace new ideas, despite a risk-averse culture in the industry.

She drew inspiration from the pig industry, which faces criticism yet manages to deliver

excellent products, and urged the audience to view Australian agriculture as a model of resilience and innovation.

A key theme throughout the two-day event was sustainability.

Australian Farm Institute executive director Katie McRoberts shared insights into the Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework.

She emphasised the importance of being willing to stop certain practices and focus on new approaches to achieve sustainability.

Ms McRoberts also cautioned that the long-term benefits of sustainability may not necessarily translate into immediate financial gains but are crucial for future-proofing the agricultural industry.

Speakers and panel discussions further explored the role of Australian agriculture in the global political landscape.

With trade accounting for half of the country's gross domestic product and 70 percent of agricultural products being exported, concerns were raised about the absence of agriculture in the new Australian defence strategic review.

The recent disruptions caused by supply chain breakdowns and conflicts highlighted the need to consider agriculture when developing

defence strategies.

The event stressed the importance of adopting a proactive stance and garnering support for the contributions of agriculture to the Australian economy and society.

The event also emphasised the significance of investing in the well-being and development of agricultural workers.

As farms are increasingly managed by fewer staff and more autonomous machines, it is crucial to support and engage workers to enhance productivity and foster social connections within local communities.

The event showcased innovative programs such as the Autism in Ag project, which helps promote inclusive practices in the industry.

Apart from the informative presentations and discussions, the expo provided an opportunity to connect with tech-

nology suppliers such as MuckRunner and Bardee.

Exhibitors showcased equipment for low spray-drift effluent irrigation, black soldier fly products and the latest designs for pressure and truck washers.

The expo served as a platform to learn about innovative solutions that could improve agricultural practices and to demonstrate the potential for the pork industry to lead the way in innovation and sustainability.

Overall, the FutureAg Expo and conference offered valuable insights into the future of Australian agriculture and highlighted the importance of embracing innovation, sustainability and inclusive practices to ensure the industry's continued success.

Gemma Wyburn
APL Climate Friendly Farming Program



GoTerra founder and chief executive officer Olympia Yarger.



Australian Farm Institute executive director Katie McRoberts.



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New resources to help cultivate next generation of agricultural workers



A RANGE of new resources released recently will help teachers and advisors encourage young people to consider a career in Australia's constantly evolving and modern agriculture industry.

The resources make up the second part of the 'Cultivating the Next Generation' research project, compiled and delivered by

AgriFutures Australia and CQUniversity, with funding from the Australian Government.

Stage one of the project, carried out in 2023, aimed to better understand educators' perceptions and knowledge regarding the agriculture industry and subsequent careers in the industry.

It offered valuable insights into the perspectives and challenges faced by teachers, career advisors and school leadership, including the need for more resources and support to help educators fully understand the breadth of job opportunities across Australian agriculture.

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Murray Watt said the agriculture sector has a great opportunity to redefine itself in students' minds.

"A career in ag is exciting and diverse, whether you want to work with your hands or in an office, in the country or the city,"

Minister Watt said.

"So many young people are interested in sustainability and technology and that's exactly what ag careers offer."

"I'm proud to see Aussie schools and AgriFutures working hard to foster our next generation of agriculture workers and can't wait to see the footprint they make on the industry."

New resources and learning opportunities

The new resources released include all five recommendations put forward as part of stage one of the project.

They are:

- Curriculum-aligned lessons for five subject areas, including agriculture, science, food technology, business and digital technology

- Twenty video case studies of agriculture industry ambassadors showcasing the diverse range of jobs available in the sector

- Work placement guides for industry, schools and students to

assist with organising valuable work placements for students

- In person and online professional development workshops that delivered training to 247 educators to increase their confidence to promote careers in agriculture

- Industry excursions across every state and territory that involved 19 schools, over 500 students and 35 teachers.

Each resource was trialled through a national outreach program designed to enhance Year 9-12 students' and educators' knowledge and perceptions of the numerous agricultural career opportunities across Australia.

AgriFutures Australia managing director John Harvey said the agriculture industry, including fisheries and forestry, must do more to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce.

"Our future workforce is dependent on the next generation seeing agriculture as an industry of choice, and critical to this is the role educators play in encouraging students towards a career in agriculture, and we want to do everything we can to make that happen," Mr Harvey said.

"It's crucial that students are informed about the diverse career opportunities within agriculture, and more importantly view it as an attractive employment choice.

"We need to show young people that careers in agriculture are not only rewarding, but also essential for our future, playing an important role in environmental management and food security."

CQUniversity Australia lead researcher Associate Professor Amy Cosby said the responsibility for promoting careers in agriculture extends beyond career advisors and emphasises the role industry can play in connecting students to agricultural careers.

"It's important that the agriculture industry provides support to the education sector to enable opportunities and provide knowledge," Assoc Prof Cosby said.

"There are so many unique and varied roles in agriculture and they all require different skills-sets and interests, but the difficulty is in getting people to go beyond their thinking of what a career in agriculture could look like – that's where face-to-face interaction and learning experiences are so important."

The resources from both stages of the project are available at agrifutures.com.au/cultivating-futures

Associate Professor Amy Cosby said it was important the agriculture industry provided support to the education sector to enable opportunities and provide knowledge.



The Cultivating the Next Generation project aims to better understand educators' perceptions and knowledge regarding the agriculture industry and subsequent careers in the industry.



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Hygiene is key in liquid feed systems to maintain good pig health.

How to ensure liquid feed hygiene

IN Europe, liquid feed is particularly popular for swine in northern and western countries – including Denmark, the Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden – where a huge proportion of finishers and sows are fed liquid feed.

Liquid feed can be associated with lower costs, improved feed intake, increased palatability and better animal growth.

However, liquid feed provides the perfect environment for microorganisms to grow and the liquid feed system harbours a complex and dynamic microbial ecosystem.

Hygiene is key in liquid feed systems to maintain good pig health.

Ensure good quality raw materials

Little is known about the microbiological quality of cereals.

The composition of the microbiota present on the cereals helps determine the liquid feed quality and its evolution in time.

Depending on the balance between positive and undesired microbes, the nutritional and sanitary qualities of liquid feed can be degraded.

Performing regular analysis on raw materials will help decrease the risk of contamination of the liquid feed.

A study conducted in 2017 gathering 66 samples of cereals across Europe demonstrated the ability of the specific microbial inocu-

lant *pediococcus acidilactici* CNCM I-4622, Bactocell, to positively affect the microbial profile of different types of cereals when mixed with water.

Adopt proper cleaning procedures

The surface of the tank and pipes are usually coated with biofilms.

When biofilms contain pathogenic bacteria, they can be detrimental to liquid feed quality and animal health.

Adapted cleaning protocols can help manage biofilms inside the liquid feed system.

A complementary strategy consists of using a specific microbial inoculant able to support the establishment of a positive biofilm.

Using a specific microbial inoculant

A study, presented at the Pig Research Summit, monitored the acidification and hygiene enhancing properties of *pediococcus acidilactici* CNCM I-4622 in pig liquid feed.

After 10 hours incubation at 30C, the feeds containing *p acidilactici* CNCM I-4622 were better and faster acidified than control feed.

Feed pH was significantly lower.

Similarly, the concentration of l-lactic acid in the feed was significantly higher with the lactic acid bacteria.

This enhanced lactic acid production ensured better feed hygiene as indicated by the significantly lower total coliform counts. 🐷

Lallemand

Seven recipients receive APRIL education and training awards

GROWING human capacity in the pork industry is vital for progress.

A key objective for the Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited is to assist in boosting sustainability and skills for the pork industry by helping people further their knowledge.

APRIL chief executive officer Dr John Pluske said that following recommendations of the Education Advisory Committee, the APRIL Board recently approved the first round of 2024 education and training awards.

“Six people have received funding for their research projects and an additional person has been granted an Industry Placement Program award,” Dr Pluske said.

Tanishka Munjal plans to complete an Honours project at the University of Melbourne and will explore the effects of placentophagia on sow and piglet performance in confined and loose housing systems.

A colleague, Amelia Sofra, will investigate aspects of free-range pork production and quality assurance as part of her Honours work.

At the University of Melbourne too, Isabel Stanley is working on a Master of Agricultural



**Australasian
Pork Research
Institute Ltd
APRIL**

Sciences project, investigating pre-weaning tail biting behaviour in pigs reared with intact tails in an Australian commercial setting.

Dr Pluske said that this research will be a valuable addition to the Tails CRC-P research project.

“Additionally, in conjunction with the Tails CRC project, we are pleased to support two new PhD students from the University of New England with top-up scholarship awards, with both students focusing on genetic aspects associated with tail biting,” Dr Pluske said.

Abadi Reda expects to determine the genetic components of the incidence of tail biting and to estimate its correlated effects on productivity traits.

Also under the supervision of Professor Susanne Hermes, Dirk van Winden aims to identify genetic and genetic-environment interaction factors for pig tail biting.

The final PhD top-up scholarship award was given to Cintia Amaral from Murdoch Univer-

sity to investigate objective assessment technologies to measure pork carcass composition and estimate its retail value.

On behalf of APRIL, Dr Pluske wished all recipients the best of success with their individual programs of study and looks forward to positive outcomes to help the industry.

APRIL continues to assist with human capacity building in the Australian pork industry through the Industry Placement Program Award scheme.

A successful business applicant will receive \$75,000 to help cover salary and other costs associated with training an awardee for the three years.

In this round, Patrick Hurley from the SunPork Group will be supported in a development program.

The next call for applications will open towards mid-2024.

If you are interested in any education and training awards, regularly check the APRIL website apri.com.au so you don't miss out. 🐷



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Researchers at the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness.

Boost for research, investment and innovation for Australia's biosecurity

A LANDMARK new initiative, Catalysing Australia's Biosecurity, will see a forecast initial co-investment of more than \$55 million over six years from Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, government, industry and a range of partners to strengthen the nation's biosecurity defences.

This is in addition to the extra \$1 billion in biosecurity funding over the next four years, announced by the Australian government in the Biosecurity Sustainable Funding Package in the 2023-24 budget.

Co-led with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the CAB initiative is expected to scale over time, providing better coordination as well as alignment of biosecurity research development and extension outcomes in the National Biosecurity Strategy.

DAFF secretary and director of biosecurity

Adam Fennessy said the CAB initiative would help to transform research and innovation in the nation's current biosecurity system.

"This ground-breaking initiative between CSIRO and DAFF is a significant step towards achieving the National Biosecurity Strategy's long-term outcome of a connected, efficient and science-based biosecurity system," Mr Fennessy said.

CAB's initial suite of innovative projects include:

- Investing significantly to prepare for emergency animal diseases such as the Japanese encephalitis virus and lumpy skin disease
- Trialling the BeeRight and eDNA technology to detect varroa mites in bee hives

- Delivering a real-time biosecurity alerts service in partnership with Atlas of Living Australia
- Deploying advanced pest management systems

at the crop and landscape scale in collaboration with Hort Innovation

• Developing an Australian biosecurity research database to guide strategic investments and decision-making.

The initiative will draw on cutting-edge developments in artificial intelligence, machine learning, decision support platforms, genomics, robotics, drones, remote sensing, big data analytics and next-generation biological solutions, such as advanced therapeutics and genetic control options.

CAB also has a focus on empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to contribute their expertise towards national biosecurity efforts.

The initiative also has the potential to enhance regional prosperity and security, particularly through providing new funding opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Study reveals vehicle risk for ASF spread

A PROJECT funded by the Swine Health Information Center focusing on the role of vehicle movement in swine disease dissemination has recently been published in the *Journal of Preventive Veterinary Medicine*.

North Carolina State University principal investigators Drs Gustavo Machado and Jason Galvis studied a novel method to analyse the role of vehicle movement in swine disease spread by accounting for the variability around pathogen stability and vehicle cleaning effectiveness.

Specifically, the study investigated the moving vehicle's role in disease spread from farm to farm by considering the factors that may affect the pathogen stability on the contaminated vehicle, and the efficacy of the procedure to clean and disinfect the contaminated vehicle.

Knowing there are many methods for swine disease spread, the objective of this study was to increase understanding around the risk of vehicles traveling to and from swine farms for disease transmission across the US pork industry.

A goal was to define the contribution of moving vehicles in disseminating disease from farm to farm. The investigators collected vehicle movement data and vehicle cleaning efficacy data for the project.

Using the African swine fever virus as the pathogen of interest in the model, they reconstructed a vehicle movement network to evaluate the possible dissemination of the ASF virus between farms.

Investigators collected a year's global positioning system data on 823 vehicles moving between 6363 production sites across two US regions.

Region 1 consisted of 1974 commercial swine farms managed by six production companies, and Region 2 consisted of 4389 commercial swine farms managed by 13 production companies.

Farms were classified into 24 types based on swine production phase and simplified into categories such as a sow farm, which contained breeding age animals.

Five vehicle types were named by the type of use to include feed vehicle, pig-farm vehicle, pig-market vehicle, crew vehicle and undefined vehicle.

For each vehicle, 12 months of daily GPS tracker records were collected. Additional information was also collected, including company-owned cleaning stations for transportation biosecurity analysis and incorporation of vehicle cleaning and disinfection.

This study extended and updated a previously developed method for evaluating disease transmission across vehicle contact networks.

For the study, Galvis and Machado considered vehicle cleaning and disinfection efficacy uncertainty along with ASF virus stability decay in the environment.

"Our study revealed that though efficient cleaning and disinfection measures affected the number of farms connected through vehicle movements, simulations with 100 percent cleaning and disinfection still resulted in 88 percent of farms being in contact over one year," the investigators reported.

Of significance, achieving 100 percent cleaning effectiveness reduced the risk of between-farm contacts only when the ASFV stability was low (≤ 0.2).

"Conversely, there was an insignificant reduction in the number of between-farm contacts when the ASFV stability was still high (> 0.8).

ASF virus stability was measured on a scale from zero to one, with one being the greatest stability.

The investigators discovered vehicles visited different swine production companies' sites, enhancing the potential for between-company dissemination in the new study as well.

In their report, the investigators found that in the absence of cleaning, vehicles connected up to 2157 farms in Region 1 and 437 farms in Region 2.

Simulation results of the model provided valuable insight into how contact networks between farms could be reduced through vehicle cleaning, which was assumed to be 100 percent effective.

Specifically, contact networks were reduced as follows:

- Crew transport vehicles – 66 percent reduction
- Vehicles carrying pigs to market – 43 percent reduction
- Vehicles carrying pigs to farms – 26 percent reduction.

"The results of this study showed that even when vehicle cleaning and disinfection are 100 percent effective, vehicles are still connected to numerous farms," the authors said.

"This emphasises the importance of better understanding transmission risks posed by vehicles to the swine industry and regulatory agencies."

This study enhances understanding of the role of transportation vehicles in spreading diseases between farms and the risks involved.

The new methodology introduced in this study can be used to develop novel disease control strategies, including re-routing vehicles based on their infection and risk status.

The study 'The role of vehicle movement in swine disease dissemination: Novel method accounting for pathogen stability and vehicle cleaning effectiveness uncertainties' can be viewed in its entirety at doi.org/10.1016/j.prevetmed.2024.106168

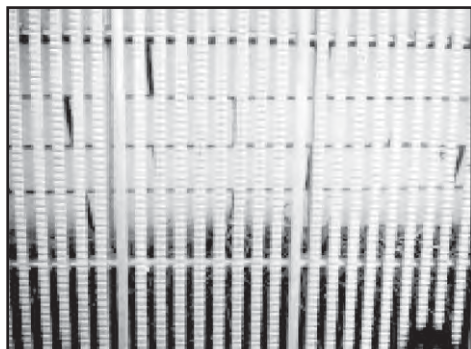
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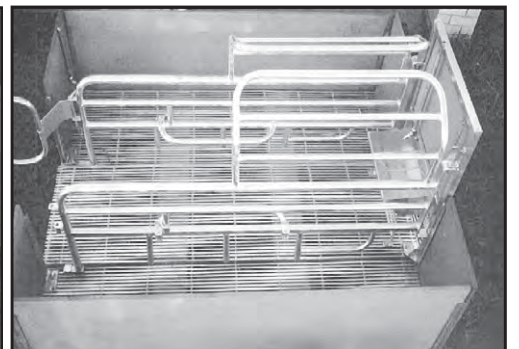
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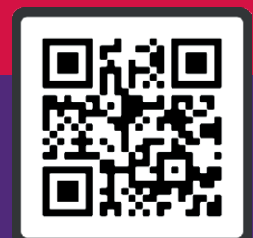
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1. Joachim et al., Parasites & Vectors, 2018.
2. Ceva internal data. 3. Sperling et al. Veterinary Record, 2018.

Tax time coming soon, don't miss out

WITH farmers focused on maximising yields and harvesting at this busy time, it's easy for the end of financial year to creep up unnoticed.

Aussie Pumps would like to alert farmers and small business owners to the Federal Government's instant asset write-off support, which finishes on June 30, 2024.

Instant asset write-off

Aussie Pumps is urging business owners to consult with their tax agent to determine if they are eligible.

Companies with a turnover of less than \$10 million can get the benefit of instantly writing off assets worth individually up to \$20,000.

The benefits are enormous.

Now is the time to buy and take advantage of

these tax incentives.

Aussie Pumps has some great suggestions for products to consider, which will appeal to farmers, businesses and tradespeople.

Focused on meeting market needs through research and user feedback, Aussie Pumps designs products to be more efficient, ultra-reliable and last a lifetime.

The inspiration is the feedback from a wide range of customers who use the company's products.

Effluent solutions

When surveyed about their requirements for effluent pumps, farmers stated that reliability and performance was key.

That resulted in the development of the Aussie GMP semi trash range of motor pumps for handling solids-contaminated water.

These cast-iron self-priming pumps are super robust, with big open impellers, making them ideal for moving effluent and wastewater.

Available in both single phase and three phase with port sizes from 1.5" up to 6", the range delivers exceptional value for money.

Move water fast

Water management on farms often means moving large volumes between dams or tanks to maximise storage or relocate resources.

That's where the Aussie QP Drought Buster range of water transfer pumps come into their own.

The company offers a range of self-priming transfer pumps from 2" (QP-2) to 6" (QP602), with maximum flows as high as 2900LPM.

The self-priming capability they offer, with vertical lifts up to 8.2m, means the pumps are fast to set up and simple to use.

Clean up with Aussie

Aussie Pumps has done a huge amount of research and development for quite unique engine and electric-drive pressure cleaners.

Conceived, designed and built in Sydney Australia's Norwest business district, the machines offer features that are significantly upgraded from imported options.

The big breakthrough was the company's unique 'Scud' frame design.

Built in stainless steel,

these ergonomically designed frames house either Honda petrol or Yanmar diesel engine-drive heavy duty pressure cleaners.

They are suitable for a wide range of tasks – from piggery washdown to contract cleaning, local government work or trades such as concreting, brick cleaning and of course plant washdown for those in the earthmoving or quarry industries.

The heart of the system is a 'Big Berty' Bertolini pump, gearbox drive running at slow speed, 1450rpm.

They are designed for a long and trouble-free life.

The latest introduction of the Scud is a high-flow version, which is particularly suitable for cleaning effluent in dairies, piggeries and similar applications.

Where do you get them?

Aussie Pumps has a wide network of distributors operating in the region.

Dealer contacts are listed on the aussie pumps.com.au website or call 02 8865 3500.



Aussie Pumps 4" effluent pump transfers up to 2300LPM.

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Socialised male piglets showed levels of aggression and mounting that were as low as in the female piglets. Photo: Christina Abken

Socialising entire male piglets

MALE piglets are routinely castrated in commercial practice because entire male pigs can display more aggressive and mounting behaviour than females, and this increases the risk of pigs being injured, particularly when mixing unfamiliar pigs together.

However, castration is a painful procedure, so there are potential welfare benefits to leaving males entire.

While socialising piglets prior to weaning has been shown in previous studies to reduce the injury risks, few studies have assessed the impact on the sows as well as on her piglets.

This research examined both piglet and sow health during trials of a system that aimed to be a cheap and simple way to create groups of familiar entire male pig-

lets in a conventional Swedish farm environment.

Swedish Yorkshire sows (n = 24) and their piglets (n = 235) were housed in individual farrowing pens without crates, and the male piglets were left entire.

Half of the sows had a small door opened between their two pens when their piglets were two weeks old.

The other 12 were kept in control conditions with their litters isolated from their neighbour.

At weaning time, the sows were removed and the socialised piglets were separated according to sex so that there were either eight males or eight females in the pens.

The control piglets were left in their family group without the sow.

There were no differences in measures of

sow health between the groups and no difference in piglets' daily weight gain before weaning.

Socialised piglets had a significantly higher growth rate during the week after weaning than control piglets.

Socialised male piglets showed levels of aggression and mounting that were as low as in the female piglets.

The researchers concluded that socialising entire male piglets was effective at reducing the rates of aggression between piglets, which was beneficial for piglet welfare and did not have any negative effects for the sows.

The study 'Effects of socialising piglets on sow and piglet performance and behaviour of entire male piglets' can be viewed in its entirety at doi.org/10.1016/j.imal.2024.101086

Authorities cooperate over ASF vaccine approval

WIDELY anticipated as a means of disease control, the approval of the first vaccine against African swine fever in the Philippines is not expected until the end of this year, at the earliest.

In the Philippines, the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration are collaborating to expedite the approval of one or more vaccines for the control of African swine fever.

Recently, the Philippine News Agency reported a senior DA official as saying that the cooperation was in line with a directive from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr to accelerate vaccine procurement to combat the disease.

Despite the latest push, the DA has said the vaccine will not be available before the end of 2024 or early 2025.

In July 2023, the world's first vaccines for pigs against ASF were authorised in Vietnam.

The Philippines is among a handful of states known to be seeking early approval for the registration and commercial

administration of an ASF vaccine.

The latest update from the Bureau of Animal Industry dated March 26, indicated active ASF outbreaks in 12 provinces in eight regions of the country.

For comparison, the country has 82 provinces and 17 regions, of which 73 and all 17 respectively, have recorded ASF outbreaks since 2019.

Since March 8, BAI added the Calabarzon region of Luzon and Caraga region of Mindanao as regions with active ASF cases, while Western Visayas has been dropped from the 'active' list.

Worst affected by the disease continues to be the western island region of Mimaropa.

Here, the disease is regarded as being present in 74 communities in two provinces.

ASF virus detected in Thai processing factories

After official inspections of three facilities in central Thailand, meat products have tested positive for the ASF virus.

Presence of the virus was found in samples of ground pork from three factories in Na-

khon Pathom province.

The inspections came after allegations that the operators of these premises were using meat from pigs that had died of unknown causes.

Processing of such products is illegal in Thailand, and all such facilities must be licensed.

As a result of these failings, the three facilities were ordered to close and all products were seized.

Based on official notifications to the World Organisation for Animal Health, there have been two series of ASF outbreaks in Thailand since the end of 2021.

The main one, and the country's first, began in November of that year and was closed at the end of 2022, after 114 confirmed outbreaks in village herds in all six geographical regions of the country.

In September 2023, there was a single outbreak in another village herd in the far north of Thailand.

This appears to have been an isolated outbreak and the disease situation was declared 'resolved' to WOA in February.

Other ASF developments in Asia

As of early March, 87 ASF outbreaks had been confirmed in Vietnam since the start of 2024.

This is according to the latest update on the ASF situation in Asia from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation dated March 21.

Cases have been reported in 21 of the country's provinces and 3030 pigs have been culled to prevent further spread of the virus.

The number of outbreaks is 36 percent higher than at the same time in 2023, according to this source.

Worst affected continues to be the central province of Nghe An, where 52 outbreaks have been confirmed so far this year.

Since ASF was first detected in South Korea in 2019, total cases among the wild boar population had reached 3867.

An increase of 54 compared with the situation on March 18, 51 of these recent cases were found in the eastern province of North Gyeongsang.

The country's total outbreaks in domestic pigs remains at 40. [Feedstrategy.com](https://www.feedstrategy.com)

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AAWCS mandatory video surveillance

THE Australian Meat Industry Council considers the application of sound animal welfare practices at processing establishments to be vital to the sustainable operation of the industry and its members are committed to proper, stringent and accountable animal welfare practices through the supply chain.

AMIC's National Processor Council has determined, after extended consideration, to endorse the incorporation of video surveillance systems as a mandatory requirement of the Australian Livestock Processing Industry Animal Welfare Certification System, known as AAWCS.

Within AAWCS, the move to integrate VSS is a reflection of the program evolving to ensure it remains a world-leading best-practice certification system.

When incorporated into quality management systems, VSS is a technology for processors to monitor and validate animal welfare in processing plants.

First and foremost, VSS is a tool to assist processors – not a blunt regulatory instrument.

The decision to mandate VSS as a component of AAWCS is an industry initiative made in consultation with other stakeholders, such as RSPCA Australia.

Animal rights groups that attack industry create an environment of hostility and mistrust and provide no room for balanced discussion, as they seek only to impose their anti-meat agenda.

Only through constructive dialogue between industry and reputable animal welfare organisations can sensible and evidence-based solutions be formed to improve welfare outcomes.

AAWCS is independently audited and underpinned by

best-practice animal welfare standards for processing livestock – standards developed in consultation with animal welfare groups, industry representatives and independent experts.

AAWCS has been in place for over a decade and is a prime example of industry self-regulating.

AAWCS accreditation is voluntary, however the program now covers over 80 percent of cattle, sheep and pigs processed in Australia and it has been adopted as a commercial requirement by many end-users.

AMIC will establish a drafting committee of experts, including RSPCA Australia, to update the AAWCS standards and work through necessary changes to the program over the coming months.

From 2026, AAWCS certified establishments will be required to have a functional VSS installed in their facilities to monitor livestock handling processes, from the point of receipt through to the point of slaughter.

AMIC strongly encourages all processing establishments to join AAWCS – a program that strives for best practice and world-leading animal welfare outcomes.

Yet, it also recognises that some facilities may not have the systems and personnel in place to meet all the requirements of AAWCS.

AMIC does not support VSS being a universal mandated



AMIC has endorsed the incorporation of video surveillance systems as a mandatory requirement of AAWCS.

requirement and/or incorporated into minimum standards.

There are more pressing priorities that such businesses should focus on to underpin animal welfare, notably staff training and basic quality management systems.

Australian Meat Industry Council chair Tom Maguire said, "This decision by AMIC's National Processor Council highlights that the Australian meat industry views animal welfare as a core pillar of doing business."

"As demonstrated by having RSPCA Australia chief executive officer Richard Mussell speak at our Meat Processing and Export Conference in October 2023, industry is happy to engage respectable animal welfare organisations to discuss ways to achieve better outcomes," Mr Maguire said.

"With industry providing greater transparency, AMIC will continue to call on state and federal governments and regulators to have zero tolerance of vigilante groups that trespass and illegally capture footage.

"Organisations that promote such activity to drive their own agendas should also be sidelined from legitimate forums designed to improve animal welfare.

"The red meat industry is dedicated to transparency and the high standards that Australian consumers and our international trading partners demand." AMIC



SunPork has access to nearly a quarter of Australia's pigs' ears, snouts, tracheas, pizzles and lungs for dog treats. Photo: James Lacy



Jim Tanner and Mighty Good Food Group CEO Emily Pullen.

SunPork and Mighty Good Food Group announce pork production partnership

TWO iconic Queensland agricultural and food businesses have announced they are forming a partnership to manufacture dehydrated meat products for the burgeoning pet and human snack markets.

SunPork and Mighty Good Food Group have joined forces to meet the growing demand for pet treats and protein snacks worldwide.

Australia's largest pork producer SunPork and the Mighty Good Food Group – the home of iconic family business Jim's Jerky – are jointly investing in Temba Meats to create best-in-class manufacturing capability in the Toowoomba region.

The manufacturing partnership will harness the shared commitment to customer service, operational excellence, innovation and talent development that defines the ethos of both businesses.

Mighty Good Food Group's data-driven drying process and technologies, coupled with SunPork's deep expertise in production efficiency, allows the manufacturing partnership under Temba Meats to service both customers and current and emerging markets, with a specialised and

state-of-the-art drying capability at scale.

The partnership evolved as both companies looked for ways to grow their operations, with a joint need for capacity and drying technologies that produced the highest quality products for both the lucrative pet market and the rapidly growing functional snack markets.

In making the announcement at a recent Rural Press Club presentation, SunPork chief executive officer and managing director Dr Robert van Barneveld said, "SunPork has access to nearly a quarter of the pigs' ears, snouts, tracheas, pizzles and lungs for dog treats in Australia, but has never found a suitable solution for conversion of these into high value dog treats."

"We needed a partner and involvement in a manufacturing facility to help us in that evolution and we found that with the Mighty Good Food Group," Dr van Barneveld said.

"In our search for manufacturing options, we were unable to match the product quality achieved using Jim's processing expertise and, as SunPork is a wholly Australian family-owned company, we were very well aligned

with the values of the Mighty Good Food Group, making this a natural partnership."

Mighty Good Food Group CEO Emily Pullen highlighted that SunPork's needs were complementary to the strategic evolution of the Jim's Jerky business and that the team were excited to partner with SunPork to provide a unique and unparalleled product and service offering to their customers.

"Working with a new protein to service a new market is an exciting challenge the team is eager to take on, with a great local partner," Ms Pullen said.

"And we are thrilled to explore the significant new innovation and new product development opportunities this will allow us to bring to our customers."

The two groups are in the final stages of completing legal agreements, with new products from the Temba Meats partnership expected to hit markets in the latter half of 2024.

About SunPork

The SunPork Group, with more than 52,000 sows and \$0.6 billion in revenue, is the largest fully integrated pork production company in Australasia.

SunPork has 48 farms, two abattoirs, a value-

add plant and four feed mills in Australia, with another seven farms in New Zealand.

Employing more than 1500 people in regional communities, SunPork produces more than 20 percent of Australia's pork from 1.2 million pigs per annum, totalling more than 90 million kilograms.

The business spans genetics, feed milling, farming, processing, value-adding, sales and marketing and distribution.

About Mighty Good Food Group

Mighty Good Food Group brings together a long heritage of technology-driven craftsmanship in the creation of premium beef jerky, with a modern health-oriented approach to world-class food manufacturing.

Using the best food science and technology available, MGFG is building a portfolio of nutritious delicious snack brands using premium Australian beef and other carefully selected proteins.

From the iconic legacy created by Jim Tanner 20 years ago in Toowoomba, regional Queensland, MGFG has been developed to proudly bring Australia's best dried meat snacks to the world.



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NFF backs government response to APVMA review

THE National Farmers' Federation welcomes the Federal Government's well-considered response to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority review.

NFF chief executive officer Tony Mahar said it was imperative to the farm sector the APVMA gets back on track and empowering Ken Matthews' review into the authority's future structure and governance was a step in the right direction.

"Access to safe effective innovative technologies underpins agricultural productivity, sustainability and competitiveness," Mr Mahar said.

"Timely access to world leading agvet chemicals is critical to

achieving agriculture's ambition of \$100 billion in farm gate output by 2030.

"Any reforms to the APVMA must seek to ensure a genuinely fit-for-purpose and efficient regulatory environment that manage risk without hindering access to safe technologies."

The NFF has long expressed reservations about the relocation of the APVMA to Armidale and the review confirms these strong concerns were realised.

"We 100 percent support building stronger regions but regional development must be strategic and part of an evidence-driven plan to build the entire economy," Mr Mahar said.

"The NFF supports the minister's decision

against relocating the APVMA back to Canberra.

"Reversing the decision would likely only cause further negative impacts for the organisation's ongoing services, performance and business."

"It is critical the APVMA manages long-term operational costs and risks to ensure that operating out of two offices, in Armidale and Canberra, does not impact the timely delivery of core services."

The NFF notes the minister's decision to retain the APVMA Board and maintain the independence of the organisation from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

"It's vital improved governance arrangements must translate

to improvement in the APVMA's consistent and timely performance," Mr Mahar said.

"Timely access to safe and innovative technologies and agvet chemicals is critical to farm productivity."

"Any delays to the assessment or registration of products can rake up millions of dollars in preventable losses."

The NFF will continue to work closely with the APVMA, the Federal Government and industry stakeholders to pursue robust reforms that support Australian agriculture to thrive.

"We urge the government to continue to work closely with the industry to inform decisions on the other recommendations," Mr Mahar said.



NFF CEO Tony Mahar said it was imperative to the farm sector the APVMA gets back on track. Photo: Jackie Cooper

AusScan Online		TABLE 1. AusScan Early Harvest Report												Australasian Pork Research Institute Ltd APRIL													
		Protein Moisture and Energy Values for Cereal Grains																									
														March				2024									
Barley																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
NSW1	9.1	0.60	8.1	10.7	11.7	0.28	10.8	12.1	13.2	0.16	13.0	13.7	10.6	0.35	10.3	11.8	0.80	0.80	0.86	12.1	0.20	11.8	12.7	70.0	2.0	67.0	76.5
QLD	10.1	0.58	8.8	11.2	10.2	0.78	9.1	12.1	12.5	0.16	12.2	12.8	9.9	0.10	9.8	10.1	0.79	0.80	0.79	11.4	0.21	11.0	11.8				
QLD1	10.0	1.31	8.0	13.9	10.9	0.81	8.9	12.8	12.6	0.14	12.2	12.8	10.2	0.28	9.5	10.5	0.81	0.78	0.82	11.6	0.34	11.0	12.6				
SA1	10.5	1.33	8.6	13.0	11.9	1.17	10.5	13.8	13.2	0.15	13.0	13.8	10.8	0.30	10.5	12.0	0.82	0.81	0.87	12.4	0.32	12.0	13.3	69.0	2.8	63.3	75.8
VIC	9.6	1.02	8.0	11.7	10.1	0.58	9.1	12.2	12.6	0.15	12.2	12.8	10.3	0.39	9.5	10.9	0.82	0.78	0.85	11.4	0.21	11.0	12.0				
VIC 1	10.2	1.20	7.7	12.4	12.0	0.73	10.7	13.4	12.5	0.11	12.2	12.7	10.4	0.36	9.9	10.9	0.84	0.82	0.86	12.1	0.21	11.9	12.7				
VIC 2	9.7	1.27	6.9	11.6	10.3	0.82	8.3	11.6	12.6	0.16	12.1	12.8	10.1	0.17	9.8	10.4	0.80	0.81	0.81	11.6	0.28	11.1	12.1				
VIC 3	9.7	0.83	8.3	11.5	10.6	0.85	9.5	12.9	12.5	0.27	11.8	12.9	10.4	0.28	9.8	11.1	0.84	0.83	0.86	11.7	0.35	11.1	12.4				
Sorghum																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
QLD	10.2	1.26	8.7	14.9	12.4	1.19	9.1	14.8	14.4	0.41	12.4	14.7	12.1	0.52	9.9	13.0	0.84	0.80	0.89	14.7	0.69	11.4	15.2				
QLD1	10.5	0.34	10.1	11.0	12.8	0.93	11.6	13.5	14.5	0.12	14.4	14.7	12.2	0.16	12.0	12.3	0.84	0.83	0.84	14.9	0.09	14.8	15.0				
Triticale																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
SA1	11.4	1.51	9.5	13.4	11.7	1.55	9.4	14.0	13.6	0.10	13.4	13.7	11.7	0.18	11.6	12.2	0.86	0.86	0.89	13.0	0.24	12.6	13.3	74.7	1.3	72.4	76.6
Wheat																											
Region*	Protein %				Moisture %				Pig Faecal DE MJ/Kg				Pig Ileal DE MJ/Kg				IDE/FDE Ratio			Broiler AME MJ/Kg				Broiler AME Index			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
NSW1	10.2	0.46	9.4	12.3	11.6	0.40	10.9	14.2	13.7	0.16	13.4	14.0	11.6	0.34	10.9	12.1	0.85	0.82	0.86	12.7	0.23	11.8	13.1	75.3	2.1	67.7	80.5
QLD	12.4	1.10	9.7	15.6	10.5	0.99	8.3	13.1	13.8	0.09	13.5	14.2	11.8	0.16	11.3	12.2	0.85	0.84	0.86	12.8	0.31	11.6	14.0				
QLD1	12.4	0.95	10.4	14.3	10.1	1.08	8.5	13.4	13.9	0.06	13.7	14.0	11.8	0.20	11.4	12.3	0.85	0.83	0.87	12.7	0.30	12.2	13.6				
SA	11.9	1.01	9.4	14.6	11.2	1.01	8.8	13.1	13.8	0.04	13.6	13.9	11.6	0.13	11.1	12.0	0.84	0.82	0.86	12.9	0.26	12.0	13.5				
SA1	11.5	1.04	9.5	14.2	11.2	1.42	7.1	14.1	13.8	0.11	13.5	14.1	12.2	0.19	11.8	12.7	0.88	0.88	0.91	13.2	0.38	12.5	14.1	75.3	2.2	70.6	79.4
VIC	10.7	0.60	8.8	12.5	10.7	0.72	9.1	13.1	13.8	0.07	13.1	14.0	11.8	0.23	10.8	12.2	0.85	0.83	0.87	12.7	0.20	12.2	13.5				
VIC 1	11.2	1.05	8.6	14.3	11.1	0.90	9.3	13.1	13.7	0.14	13.3	13.9	11.9	0.20	11.3	12.4	0.87	0.85	0.89	12.9	0.21	12.3	13.4				
VIC 2	10.7	1.15	7.5	15.9	11.0	0.87	9.1	13.3	13.8	0.17	12.7	15.2	11.6	0.25	10.0	13.1	0.85	0.79	0.86	13.0	0.33	11.6	14.8				
VIC 3	11.0	1.09	8.8	19.0	10.5	0.72	9.0	15.9	13.8	0.12	12.4	14.6	11.8	0.21	8.8	13.1	0.86	0.71	0.90	12.7	0.29	11.8	14.9				

* Each row represents a Feed Mill in the Region, for example QLD and QLD1 represent different feed mill companies within the state.

Stockyard Industries welcomes Mark and Niel

STOCKYARD Industries is excited to announce the appointments of Mark Manchip as its new project manager and Niel Snyman as technical sales representative.

Both staff have migrated to Australia from South Africa with their respective young families and will be based out of the Bendigo Victoria head office.

With a rich background in construction and project management, Mark brings to the team a wealth of knowledge and a proven track record of success.

His expertise spans across a diverse range of projects, including the construction of shopping centres, cold storage facilities and, of course, pig farms.

Mark's notable accomplishments include the development of a comprehensive turnkey pig farm project – en-

compassing breeder sites, weaner sites and finisher sheds, as well as constructing housing villages, dams and offices.

Mark's role at Stockyard Industries will involve travelling to project sites, liaising with builders and equipment installers regarding time schedules, monitoring work progression, managing cost control and communicating with the end customer, sales team and administration staff, with the aim of delivering a quality smoothly run project completed on time and within budget.

Stockyard Industries is confident that Mark's leadership, project management and overseeing the planning, coordination and implementation of building and equipment installation will result in benefits for all involved.

The entire team at Stockyard Industries is excited to work under his guidance and looks forward to achieving new milestones together.

Stockyard Industries has also added a technical sales representative to the team – Niel Snyman.

Niel has a background in sales and over 12 years' experience working in the agricultural industry in South Africa, fulfilling the role of sales manager at Big Dutchman for the past three years.

Niel is tasked with responsibilities of working with customers regarding farm hygiene, including demonstrating the use of equipment and products, preparing quotes, responding to enquiries and developing relationships to best service our pig and poultry customers across the country.

He will work closely with farm managers to address challenges and foster solid and productive partnerships, with his problem-solving abilities being set to enhance the company's service quality and customer satisfaction.

Niel began his career working in hatcheries in various roles, including agriculture manager and is looking forward to bringing his experience to the pig and poultry markets of Australia.

Stockyard Industries is confident that Niel's appointment will lead to innovative hygiene solutions and stronger customer relationships. The company looks forward to the positive impact he will make in his new role.

For more information about Stockyard Industries and its services, visit stockyardindustries.com



Across the different pig categories transport is a multifactorial stressor, with effects on all pig types. Photo: Mette Herskin

Risks of transporting cull sows to abattoir

IN Europe, a culling rate of around half of the sows per herd per year is not unusual, which means that millions of sows are transported to slaughter each year.

They are all transported by road.

The specific welfare risks of transporting cull sows to the abattoir are addressed in a European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare Pigs review.

Across the different pig categories transport is a multifactorial stressor, with effects on all pig types.

Some scientific attention has been directed towards the cull sow category, forming the basis of the EURCAW-review.

Among the primary concerns for the welfare of cull sows during transport are:

- The sensitivity of these animals towards heat stress
- Fitness for transport
- The tendency of sows to fight when mixed with unfamiliar conspecifics.

Based on findings such as increased mortality upon arrival at the abattoir compared with finishers, sows are considered more vulnerable towards transport than most other pig categories.

Heat stress

The reproductive status of sows affects their susceptibility to heat stress, and ongoing milk production probably is a risk factor compared to dry animals.

Sows can be sent to slaughter at all stages of the reproductive cycle (except for the last 10 percent of pregnancy, according to Council Regulation 1/2005), and in some countries sending sows to slaughter in the last 30 percent of pregnancy is prohibited by national legislation.

In the days just before and after weaning of the piglets, lactating sows

are especially sensitive to heat stress, as their milk production is very high at this stage.

Fitness for transport

In 2022, the European Food Safety Authority concluded that questions about fitness for transport were among the major concerns for sow welfare during transport.

Due to the general health impairment of a large proportion of cull sows, compared to average finishers, sows may experience a higher risk of worsening of pre-existing health conditions, as well as a higher risk of new health conditions occurring during transport.

Fighting between sows induced by the mixing of unfamiliar individuals

Under natural conditions, sows live in groups of related individuals.

Within a group, a hierarchy preventing overt fighting between group members exists.

Under production conditions, sows are frequently mixed with non-pen mates, a management practice that has received considerable scientific attention.

It is well documented that sows, when mixed with unfamiliar individuals, will fight to reestablish a hierarchy, and that the fighting can be severe and of considerable duration.

Consequently, the mixing of unfamiliar sows has long been recognised as a welfare problem, mainly due to inter-sow aggression.

Therefore, fighting among sows is considered a 'focus area' for inspection.

During transport of sows, mixing of unfamiliar animals is almost unavoidable and can have consequences for the animals' welfare.

Even though documentation as such is currently missing, it is highly likely that sows will fight during trans-

port when mixed with unfamiliar individuals.

This behaviour can challenge the continuous fitness for transport, increase the risk of heat stress and thus challenge the overall welfare of the sows.

In an unpublished study in Denmark, Kobek-Kjeldager et al found that almost 80 percent of the sows initiated aggressive interactions during the journey and only a few didn't receive aggression when they were transported to slaughter under commercial conditions with 12 sows per truck compartment.

Scientific evidence on reducing the level of aggression in pick-up facilities or pick-up vehicles was not available.

However, it has been suggested that the consequences of mixing in terms of aggression and injury can be mitigated to some extent by reducing group size and by ensuring enough space for subordinate individuals to move away from aggressive ones.

Further studies involving cull sows are needed to verify whether initiatives such as these can limit the occurrence of fighting during the preparation phase and later in the journey when sows are transported to slaughter.

In the review on transport of sows, the scientific knowledge about sow transport is reviewed against the background of the relevant European legislation, including a discussion of preparation for transport, how sows are picked-up by vehicles and the journey to an abattoir.

The final part of the review covers relevant legislation as well as the proposal of potential indicators of sow welfare during transport.

To view the review in full, visit edepot.wur.nl/587502



Mark Manchip is the new project manager at Stockyard Industries. Mark can be contacted on mark@stockyardindustries.com or 0487 743 322.



Stockyard Industries' new technical sales representative Niel Snyman.

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To be confident science has a chance over ideology, a strong evidence base is important.

Science and emotion needed by industry

WHILE science alone won't win the battle against anti-meat crusaders to influence Australian consumers, it is a key weapon the industry must use.

That's the message delivered by the head of Australia's largest pork producer.

At a Rural Press Club event in Toowoomba, SunPork managing director and group chief executive officer Robert van Barneveld said that even though he wasn't 100 percent confident science could win out over ideology, having a strong evidence base was important.

"I don't think it's going to be won on pure science, obviously emotion comes into this," Professor van Barneveld said.

"But without an evi-

dence base it's 'he said, she said', and it's not going to progress us anywhere."

One idea put forward by meat detractors that irritated Prof van Barneveld was that 'farming meat was taking food out of humans mouths', with the vegetarian argument being that grazing land could be put to better use growing crops and that grain fed to livestock could be fed to people instead.

That irritation prompted researchers from the SunPork Group to calculate its net protein contribution, coming up with a value of 3.26.

The finding means that the supply chain generates three times the human-edible protein it consumes in the process.

"If we're doing work where we have an evi-

dence base around our net protein contribution, then the onus is now on you to prove that's not right, and that's going to be a pretty difficult task when it's been done specifically for our supply chain and documented in a published journal," Professor van Barneveld said.

"If we do these things, it will help us get our story right – we just have to do that better."

Professor van Barneveld said providing an evidence base around animal welfare was becoming more difficult, with the push to move from the five freedoms model to the five domains model.

"The fifth domain is mental state so, as a farmer, I now have to demonstrate that all of my animals have a

positive mental state," he said.

"If that's the challenge, let's go and show some of our welfare-based initiatives are applying the five domains, including mental state, and we've done that, so I'm going to be in a much better position to put forward my point of view."

Professor van Barneveld said the agricultural industry needed to become better at controlling the narrative, to fight back against misinformation put forward by animal rights activists.

"We're never going to win the argument on an evidence basis alone, but we're going to have a great crack at making sure that if we say something, we can back it up with science," he said.

Queensland Country Life



SunPork managing director and group chief executive officer Robert van Barneveld.



The agricultural industry needed to become better at controlling the narrative, to fight back against misinformation put forward by animal rights activists. Photo: Stefanie Poepken

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