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The Steelers were in full flight preparing a tantalising range of value-added butchery products.

Australian Steelers too sharp for the Kiwis

THE Australian Steelers have turned the Kiwi Sharp Blacks into minced meat at the inaugural Trans-Tasman Express Series butchers competition recently held in Wellington, New Zealand.

The competition is a faster, slicker, express version of the World Butchers' Challenge and pitted the two teams of six against each other in a two-hour test of skill, innovation and presentation.

Aussie team captain Adam Stratton of Tender Gourmet Butchery said the victory was sweet – particularly as they beat the current champions and

hometown heroes, the Kiwis.

"This Australian Steelers team has come together with a focus on value-added product that helped us secure the win," he said.

"While the Kiwis are always strong, I was confident coming into this competition that we were going to do Australia and butchery proud.

"These guys worked hard to create value-added products that would be best-sellers in any butcher's shop and showcased the meat beautifully."

Head judge Todd Heller said both teams were extremely professional and innovative, but it was the

Steelers' "absolutely inspiring" final display that gave them the cutting edge.

"We are just so thrilled to be able to take out this competition, particularly as we prepare for next year's World Butchers' Challenge in Ireland," Mr Stratton said.

"I congratulate my fellow team members and urge them to enjoy the victory.

"To the Kiwis, you're always tough competition and we have such a friendly but feisty rivalry and we hope that continues into the future.

"Thank you for hosting this competition."

Team sponsor Australian Pork Limited congratulated the Steelers on their win.

General manager of Marketing Peter Haydon said, "Our world-class butchers showcased their broad range of skills and impressed the judges."

"Congratulations Adam, Colin, Tom, Nick, Gareth and Luke on this great achievement!

"We are proud of our Aussie Steelers, powered by pork!"



The victorious Australian Steelers team.

Strong crowd at the Adelaide Oval pitching in

MAY 18 saw the Australian Pork Limited Delegates' Forum held at the Adelaide Oval in South Australia, the day after the APL Board meeting.

Considering the present state of the industry, it's not a surprise that pig prices were the main point of discussion and the conversations were enthusiastic.

The quality of those conversations at the Delegates' Forum was enhanced by having the perspectives of a couple of those involved in the secondary processing and wholesaling side of the industry.

Ted Campbell from B E Campbell was invited to be on the agenda and give his views on what has been going on in the pig meat trade.

One of our newer delegates, elected last year, was Darren Wilson from Wilpak Wholesale Meats who was present to give a different perspective from those closer to the production end.

Since the Delegates' Forum, Peter Haydon (APL general manager Marketing) and I have also travelled to South Australia (Tanunda) and Victoria (Shepparton) to speak with pig producers about what is going on in the pig meat trade.

Our ability to see situations developing in the future that threaten the pig price scenarios depends on understanding what is going on now.

While I have written a lot in this column about the reasoning behind pig prices dropping by up to \$1/kg carcass weight equivalent in only a few months, we continue to hone our understanding of the contributing factors.

In summary, I believe



Point of View

by ANDREW SPENCER CEO



there are three things we can point to as causes of this pricing crisis, none of which on their own would have had the same impact.

Supply

We now have the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures to the end of March for pig slaughters.

March was a big month, with 472,000 pigs slaughtered, about 8.5 percent higher than the previous March, and 11.5 percent higher in terms of pork produced.

In year on year terms, the increase is now close to 4 percent for slaughters and 5.2 percent for pork produced.

March is really the first month where the numbers have jumped significantly enough for it to be clearly out of kilter with our normal production cycle.

So what's caused this increase?

Higher sow numbers are part of the reason but they have grown year on year only between 3 and 4 percent and some of the newer sows are not in full production yet.

It seems that some parts of the country have had very good conditions for pig production and this has helped farrowing rates and even born alive results.

Carcasses were 2kg heavier this March than

March 2016, and the reason for the heavier carcasses has more to do with the next impact.

Capacity and trade issues

It seems clear now that the Swickers Kingaroy fire last November continues to cause issues for the whole of the eastern seaboard trade in pig carcasses and cuts, despite an incredible effort by those responsible to minimise the impact of the fire on their business.

Chilling speed and capacity, boning capacity and demand for export as opposed to domestically accredited slaughter have all been issues.

For those farms that normally send their pigs to the Kingaroy facility, these factors have meant hold-ups in pig delivery, resulting in larger carcasses.

These capacity issues have also been exacerbated by the particular way the public holidays worked this year (mainly in Queensland), creating many short weeks in a row.

Other changed trading arrangements in the south of the country have also contributed to an unstable trade environment.

Pre-cooked imports

Pig prices over the past 18 months or so have at times for some produc-

ers approached \$4/kg for prime product.

Wholesalers buying pigs at these prices clearly had to try to lift the prices of their products to be able to make a profit under their high cost conditions, and this led to historically pretty high prices for ribs and bellies in particular.

Rib prices became so high that someone asked the question about whether sterilised imported cooked ribs originating out of the US or Europe could be competitive and provide more attractive profits.

As we all know, this is now happening and it is painful for our industry.

Ted Campbell presented calculations at the Delegates' Forum that showed the impact of cheap imports on prices for domestic shoulders, bellies and ribs, whereby the price per kilogram of a carcass at wholesale level could be affected by up to \$1/kg.

This is clearly a new area of competition from imports different to the traditional bacon and ham business.

I thank the delegates for their strong engagement at the recent forum.

We took a lot of ideas and actions away from the meeting, which we are now focused on implementing.

One of these is to bring forward slightly the next Production Survey and requests will be sent to all members in the next couple of weeks asking them to complete the forms and submit back to APL.

Our ability to give you the best possible information depends on your information contributions to us, so please help by sending your forms back.

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**Pig Industry
Calendar of Events**

2017

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

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

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

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

SEP 5 - 8 – International Conference on the Assessment of Animal Welfare at Farm and Group Level, Wageningen, The Netherlands www.wafl2017.com

SEP 12 - 15 – SPACE, Parc-Expo de Rennes, France uk.space.fr/en/welcome.aspx

SEP 19 - 22 – Allen D. Leman Swine Conference, Saint Paul, Minnesota US www.cceeevents.umn.edu/allen-d-leman-swine-conference

OCT 22 - 24 – Leman China Swine Conference, Nanjing, China www.vetmed.umn.edu/news-events/leman-china-swine-conference

NOV 7 - 9 – Pig Welfare Symposium, Des Moines, Iowa US www.pork.org/pig-welfare-symposium

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

NOV 20 - 22 – International Tropical Agriculture Conference, Brisbane, Queensland www.tropagconference.org

2018

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

JUN 18 - 20 – IPVS, Chongqing, China

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

OCT 17 - 19 – Vietstock Expo & Forum, Saigon, Vietnam www.vietstock.org

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

porknews.com.au

New National Environmental Guidelines for Piggeries on their way – changes proposed

As many of you are aware, Australian Pork Limited's 'National Environmental Guidelines for Piggeries' provide a national approach to the environmental management of Australian piggeries.

To ensure the information in the NEGP remains current, APL is committed to regularly updating the guidelines to ensure they include changes in the way piggeries are designed and managed as well as incorporate expanding environmental knowledge and community expectations.

The first NEGP was released in 2004, the second in 2010 and the third edition is currently in development.

The guidelines have been widely used for the preparation and assessment of applications for planning permits and environmental licences, by industry and regulators in addressing environmental concerns and by producers wanting to implement environmental practice.

Previous editions have demonstrated the commitment of the industry to adopt best practice and facilitated the development of many applications, saving time and money, assisting producers and overall bolstered the industry's environmental reputation to regulators, federal, state and local government and the general community.

The guidelines are recognised by many state and local government agencies and industry as a source of up-to-date siting, design and management information to ensure producers understand best practice and industry expectations.



They have also been used to guide environmental assessments for developing piggeries and options for existing piggeries to achieve positive outcomes.

The NEGP provides information on topics including planning, site selection, separation and buffer distances, cleaner production, housing design and management, effluent management systems, reuse areas, nutrient content of effluent and manures, carcass disposal, monitoring, chemical storage and environmental management plans.

So that these guidelines remain up to date and incorporate the latest environmental science and information, APL commissioned a project to review all the environmental research undertaken since the release of the 2010 NEGP.

This project has made specific recommendations to incorporate recent environmental findings into the third edition of the NEGP.

While it is expected that the structure of the NEGP will largely remain unchanged, the inclusion of a number of new sections, updates and expansion of current information are proposed, with the removal of the majority of the

outdoor production information.

The removal of the outdoor production information is a consequence of the 'National Environmental Guidelines for Rotational Outdoor Piggeries (revised) 2013' being released.

The major recommended changes to the NEGP third edition are:

- To incorporate the PigBal 4 standard pig unit live weight regression method into NEGP in place of age groups for progeny.

- To expand the energy efficiency component of the 'Cleaner Production' section.

- To modify the housing section to cover sows on litter and outdoor pigs (nutrient accumulation/management).

- To modify the pond sizing information section to recognise that PigBal 4 includes sizing for large anaerobic ponds, heavily loaded ponds and covered anaerobic ponds CAPs.

- To update the sludge accumulation rate and expand the pond desludging section by adding the various methods (pump, dredge, excavator) and details around managing removed sludge.

- To include information on engineered digesters and hybrid systems (such as stirred and/or heated CAPs).

- To add new findings around reuse, particularly spent bedding management and soil health information.

- To add a separate section on practical odour minimisation.

- To include a range of practical and cost-effective greenhouse gas options.

- To update and expand the sections on GHG reporting and regulation.

- To introduce PigBal 4 as the accepted industry standard for manure estimation.

- To tweak some of the S factors in the odour guidelines.

APL is now seeking industry feedback and input into the recommendations for incorporation into the third edition of the NEGP.

The document containing the specific recommendations for incorporating a new research finding into the NEGP will also be available on the APL website australianpork.com.au

If you would like to view the specific recommendations for incorporating a new research finding into the NEGP document, it can be viewed on the APL website.

A copy may also be obtained from Janine Price, manager Environment at Janine.price@australianpork.com.au or 02 6270 8827.

Consultation workshops will be held in Melbourne on June 20 and 21.

The workshop on June 20 will provide industry and producers with the opportunity to provide input, feedback and suggestions into the recommended changes.

State government agencies will be targeted in the workshop on June 21.

APL has invited three or four producers from each state to attend and similar numbers from state government agencies.

Feedback is welcome from all interested parties.

The NEGP aims to provide a consistent national framework for piggeries that has been tailored to the circumstances and conditions that are commonly encountered.

Site-specific conditions and state and local government legislation and policies must be considered.

APL continues to strongly encourage state and local government to utilise the industry-specific guidelines, and the science that underpins it, to complement, develop and update state requirements.

APL also continues to work with these agencies and individuals to support the guidelines to ensure they are utilised and the science and guidelines are accepted and/or replace the use of outdated or non-industry-specific guidelines.

These new up-to-date guidelines and consultation process with the state agencies aims to improve acceptance of the NEGP.

It is expected that the third edition of the 'National Environmental Guidelines for Piggeries' will continue to demonstrate the pork industry's commitment to ensuring pig production in Australia is environmentally sustainable.

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

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Naturally ahead

CRC sees challenges and solutions ahead

PREDICTABLY, declining prices for pork producers was top of mind at the recent Australian Pork Limited Delegates' Forum.

Also no surprise was that the theories advanced for the price decline were many and varied, including importation of cooked ribs and products such as pulled pork produced from imported pork, the fire at Swickers Kingaroy and its impact on boning and freezing capacity, and increased production through expansion and productivity.

Killer fact

Take a look at APL's published figures for March and you will see slaughtering hit an all-time high, hence a number of people at the meeting suggested volume has reached a similar level to that when the last marked decline in prices occurred.

I can tell you there was no Nostradamus in the room, with not one person predicting the decline in prices seen since December 2016.

The delegates suggested a number of actions by APL and industry to more accurately monitor production numbers and to understand the main cause for the decline.

The big unanswered question is if it's temporary or will some industry consolidation be required to achieve what might be termed more sustainable prices?

A sustainable price, of course, depends on what your cost of production is.

All agreed we need technologies and strategies to achieve a marked reduction in COP.

I think a reduction of 40-60 cents/kg was suggested by APL.

And this is where Pork CRC and our dedicated band of researchers can come into it by wrapping their smart, creative minds around this.

However, we know the low-hanging fruit lies around increased carcass weight, which requires a market change rather than research, selling more pigs/sow/year and improving feed efficiency or reducing feed costs.

CRC benchmark

Our Pork CRC benchmarking project demonstrates that productivity is increasing all the time (see March APN Initiatives column) and the best producers generally far exceed the average.

So where do we set the initial targets for researchers?

For example, average herd feed conversion for benchmarking participants in 2015/16 was 3.78.

For the best three it was 3.56, with the best herd at 3.45 and all the top three recorded wean to sale (105kg) feed: gains below 2.3 – pretty



Initiatives

by DR ROGER CAMPBELL
CEO



much world class.

I want to see technologies that reduce HFC consistently to 2.3 or below.

This will require inherent changes to the pig's capacity for protein deposition and might be achieved through 'advanced' genetics and/or other means of manipulating the animal's physiology.

Similarly, for reproduction the average pigs weaned per sow for Australian herds in 2015/16 was 23.25, with the best three at 24.6 and the best at 25.6.

Good for what we have to work with, but not world class, due largely to our average born alive sitting at 12.4, about two piglets less than the US and one less than the best herd in the benchmarking project.

Interestingly, the best herd (from New Zealand, using US genetics) weaned 29.75 pigs/sow in 2015/16, starting with only 13.5 born alive, so there's more than one way to skin a cat.

Nevertheless, raising born alive to 13.5 and weaned to 12.5 or above is a challenge for researchers and new science and ideas are required.

I expect genomics of the type implemented recently by PIC to have quite a marked effect on reproduction and number weaned, but what else is out there waiting to be tapped?

Sharing essential

In the short term, we can learn from the best in benchmarking.

This certainly occurs within the Pork CRC benchmarking group and I am sure it also does within the PIC and Queensland groups.

Our participants have willingly shared the reasons for their success with industry in general.

Even publishing the results allows other producers to see where they sit and provides targets and often strategies for improvement.

Pork CRC will hold its last benchmarking meeting in October this year.

The project will then be handed over to APL.

While APL might want to consider expanding it, the team must ensure the results are available to industry as an excellent means of putting our industry in context with the

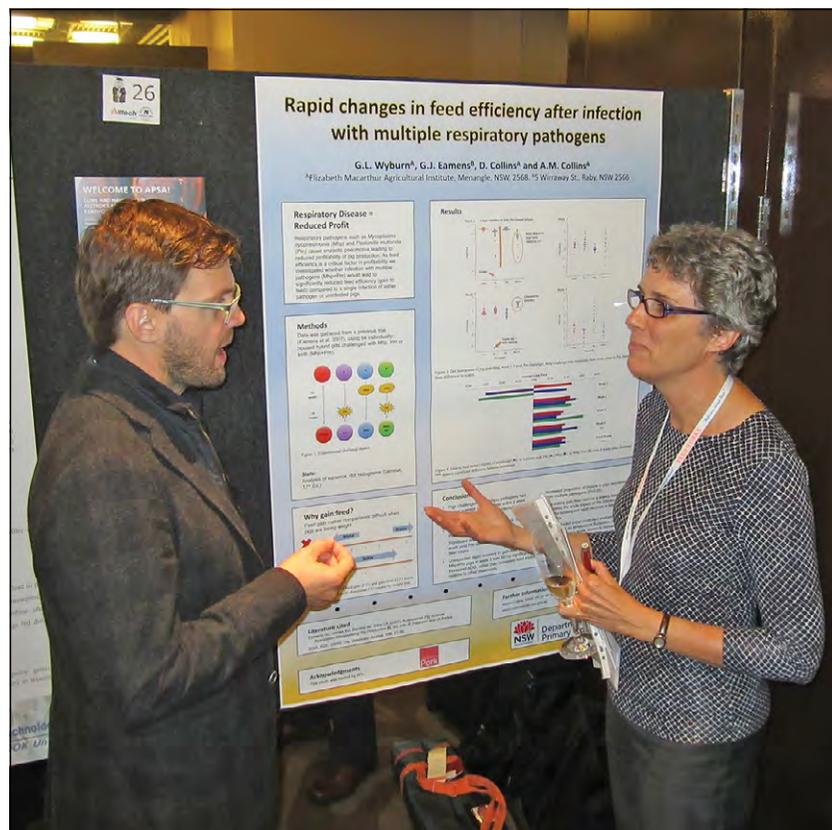
researchers and veterinarians.

However, we have very smart people in the field and I am impressed with the advances being made in understanding and manipulating the gut microbiome to improve health and performance.

We have seen some interesting outcomes using non-starch polysaccharides to alter the gut microbiome and animal performance from John Pluske and his group at Murdoch University and from Alison Collins at NSW Trade & Investment, who is investigating the effects of antibiotics and alternatives on antibiotic resistance and the gut microbiome.

I really think there is something in this and it is an area taking off in human health, where some quite outstanding

continued P4

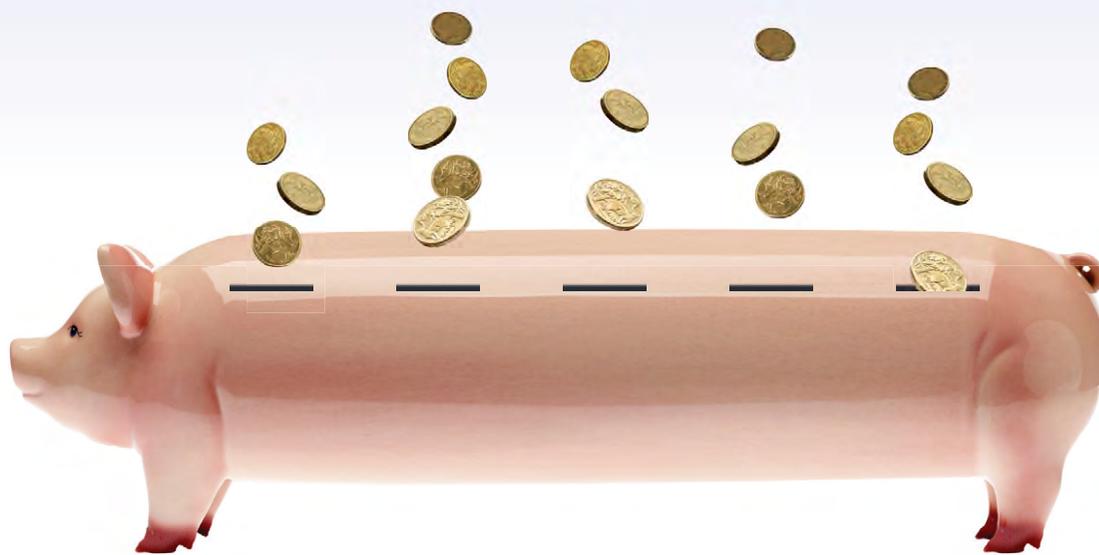


Dr Alison Collins, NSW Trade & Investment, is part of a Pork CRC-supported team doing important work into improving pig gut health.



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Dr Conny Turni, Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and associates are doing vital Pork CRC-supported research into improving pig health, including using vaccines for common pathogens.

CRC sees challenges and solutions ahead

from P3

outcomes have been reported.

We also have such people as Conny Turni at Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and David Hampson and Sam Abraham at Murdoch University working on vaccines for common pathogens and Darren Trott at the University of Adelaide and others developing means of reducing pathogen loads in sheds.

A lot is happening, but again new science and ideas will be required to enhance Australia's future competitiveness.

Grain mysteries

The unknown is grain and feed costs.

We know they can be volatile and this is best addressed when negotiating pig supply contracts.

Finding genuine alternatives to grains has always proven difficult, but this does not mean they do not exist, just that we need to think differently and APL is investigating a number of possibilities.

We can and should continue to develop ways of better utilising grains and feeds and I expect the commercial participants in Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited to come up with technologies that will achieve this.

We also have some large projects running at the University of Queensland to understand the effects of particle size, exogenous enzymes and fibre on feed utilisation.

These projects involve Mike Gidley, John Black and Ridley Agriproducts.

A good combination of science and industry, I think.

I have raised the question on where to next because APRIL is about to finalise its strategic plan and the R&D committee will meet in the near future to decide priorities for APRIL's first investment round.

We know we need new science across the areas raised here and some brave thinking.

The answers may lie overseas.

If they do, APRIL will collaborate rather than duplicate.

It will be a challenging but exciting time and will help accelerate Australia's uniqueness and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global industry.

Global prices

To keep you in touch with what is happening elsewhere, I have shown the latest global prices in Table 1.

US and Canadian prices have risen considerably since last month due to seasonal demand (summer) and increased packer capacity.

In China, price has fall-

en about 25 cents but is still above COP (\$3.20/kg carcass weight).

The EU has enjoyed continual price increases through 2017.

In Australia price seems lowest in Queensland and, depending on which APL report you read, highest in WA.

All prices are for progeny and, as such, the price received by producers when culls are included is 7-8 cents lower than those shown in the table.

The prices are all in Australian dollars/kg carcass weight.

www.porkcrc.com.au



Dr John Black is a key player in large Pork CRC projects looking to better understand the effects of particle size, exogenous enzymes and fibre on feed utilisation.

Country	Price
Australia	
45-60kg carcass	3.35
60.1-75kg carcass	2.90
75.1-85kg carcass	2.82
>85kg carcass	2.74
US	2.04
Canada	1.92
Brazil	1.96
Spain	2.66
EU28	2.56
UK	2.74
China	3.89
S Korea	5.48

Table 1

www.porknews.com.au

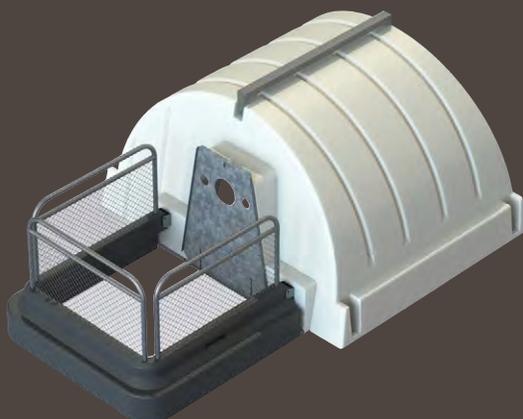


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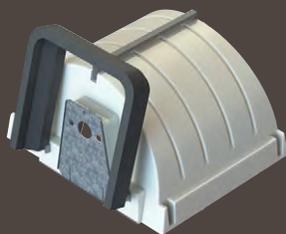
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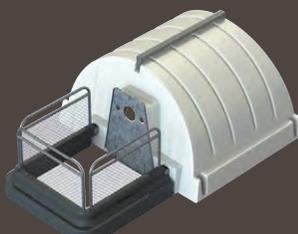
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Dangerously good – Shark Lake Piggery produces Australia’s best pork steak

HIGH-quality pork that impressed as raw and cooked product has been named Australia’s best in the second Steak Your Claim competition.

The Australian Pork Limited competition attracted entries from across the country, but it was Shark Lake Piggery, Esperance, Western Australia that took top honours.

Australian Pork Limited’s general manager of Marketing Peter Haydon said all APL members

were invited to enter the competition and have their pork assessed by the highly qualified chef judging panel.

“We know our farmers produce a high-quality product, but we were looking for something a bit special, a product that they believed would outperform their peers,” he said.

“A panel of three judges had the tough job of assessing the steak entries, looking for the best overall pork and noting any

distinctive characteristics.”

The raw and cooked pork loin steaks were independently judged against a number of criteria.

These included the colour, visual appeal and marbling of the raw product, as well as the aroma, flavour, tenderness, juiciness and texture once cooked.

Stephen Hoffrichter from the family-run Shark Lake Piggery entered the steaks from his Landrace pigs that had been fed lupins and barley.

Judges commended the product as having excellent marbling, being bright and beautiful when raw and having a great flavour profile, excellent juiciness and being an al-

dente style pork.

“We have worked hard on quality improvement, invested more than \$2 million in the past few years and worked closely with our stock providers,” Mr Hoffrichter said.

“It’s really great to have our efforts rewarded in this way.”

Judges awarded second place to Byron Bay Pork, NSW, for a Berkshire cross, which had been fed a mixed grain diet, while third place went to The Butcher’s Block, WA, for a Large White Berkshire cross fed wheat, lupins and meat meal.

The competition attracted significant prizemoney for the first three places, but also marketing opportunities for their product.



SteakYour Claim judges Paul Cooper, Paul McDonald and Alex Herbert.

Sow stalls – time’s up

pork
QUEENSLAND INC.

President’s Perspective

by JOHN COWARD



IN 2010 the pork industry voted to support a voluntary phase-out of the use of sow stalls (gestation stalls) by April 2017.

In Queensland, the legislation now requires that a sow must not be confined for more than six weeks of any gestation period.

The exception to this rule is for individual sows that are under veterinary advice or special care by a competent stockperson.

The decision to voluntarily adopt the plan demonstrated to consumers, welfare agencies and retailers that industry was taking charge of its future and as such gained high regard for the move.

While the vast majority of producers took up the challenge to make the change, with many now meeting a much shorter period of time demanded by retailers, a number of producers were not pressured by markets but are now

required to ensure they meet the new standard of no more than a six-week period of confinement.

Producers who took up the challenge have used a variety of techniques and designs to reach acceptable production figures and legislative requirements, and for those still in the change process, information is available on the Pork CRC website porkcrc.com.au

There are two publications for download from the website: ‘Feeding Pregnant Sows in Group Housing Systems – an update’ and ‘Mixing Sows: How to Maximise Welfare’.

The Australian Pork Limited website (australianpork.com.au) also has a publication available for download titled ‘Group Housing Case Studies’.

Should any Queensland producers require further information on compliance with the requirements, contact me on 0407 622 166. 🐷

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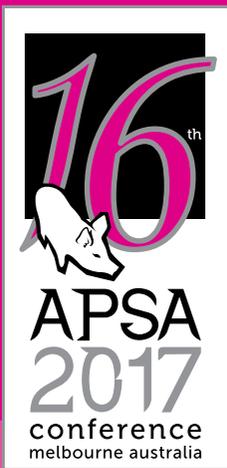
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Australasian Pig Science Association (Inc)

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APSA Member	Full Registration	825.00	995.00
	Day Registration	455.00	455.00
Non-Member	Full Registration	1025.00	1325.00
	Day Registration	555.00	555.00
Student APSA Member	Full Registration	380.00	380.00

Visit the website for more details
www.apsa.asn.au



PorkStar, RockStar, TVStar, none other than APL's Mitch Edwards, clearly the star of this show.



Linley Valley Pork's John Thompson got cosy with LVP's social media guru Rebecca Blackman (left) and Andrea Kavanagh, who helps John ensure foodies plate up Linley Valley style.

Five-star 'Michelin' Perth PorkStar

AS always, I lapped up the fine food, wonderful wine and 'cheffy' conversation at Perth's PorkStar dinner, this year staged by Northbridge Indian restaurant Sauma and oh-so-well hosted and MC'd by Australian Pork Limited's man of the moment, Mitch Edwards, most recently and notably seen performing on the national stage in a reality TV show.

Five-star 'Michelin' or what?

Well, last night (May 29) Mitch put on his usual flamboyant performance, warming up the assembled gathering of top chefs, various foodies, fussy food writers, industry sideliners and even, to my great joy, a handful of producers.

Although the very successful PorkStar concept, now marching triumphantly deep into its second decade, plates up pork-flavoured dishes, served with a side of Mitch and chef commentary, it's always refreshing to host the primary end of the pork production chain.

I had the pleasure of sharing a humble corner table with Esperance pork producers Deb and Steve Hoffrichter, David 'Plantagenet' Plant, an APL director and Milne Agrigroup monogastric manager, as well as West-pork boss Neil 'fitness' Ferguson.

The Hoffrichters are always a delight, Deb being an out-there promoter and spruiker of paddock to plate pork and Steve, in his own quirky, grounded farmer way, delighting in his animals, while being never afraid to express a view on anything that impacts on his cost of production.

Most recently, he's been hammering his disappointment at the closure of a local abattoir, which means he's now deprived of a local and cheap(er) source of meat meal.

Producing pigs on Western Australia's isolated southeast coast can be a tough gig, but the latest delight for the 'Hoffys' is their recent national win in an APL-supported fresh pork cut competition.

They both assured me they had the best loins in the business and it's now been recognised.

**Cant
Comment**
by BRENDON CANT



No further Cant commentary necessary at this stage, but well done to them both.

I also spotted West Australian Pork Producers Association EO Jan Cooper seated alongside *The West Australian's* food writer Rob Broadfield.

Let's hope Jan took the gifted opportunity to get into Rob's ear about the benefits of WA-grown, fresh pork.

Rob probably doesn't need much prompting, as he's a big and very public fan of Linley Valley Pork, in particular.

This comes about, I think, from his longstanding mateship with Linley Valley's John Thompson, a chef who develops fresh product lines for Linley Valley and does his best, day and night, to keep the brand before the probing eyes of the likes of Broadfield and his media contemporaries.

APL's Canberra office was well represented too, which was refreshing.

I don't recall previously seeing Peter Haydon, GM Marketing, at a Perth PorkStar event, albeit I know he spends a lot of time in the air and understandably attends more geographically convenient eastern states PorkStar extravaganzas.

His 'sidekick' last night,

jovially described to me by Peter as his 'boss', was Melissa Johnson, Canberra-based marketing coordinator, Food Service, with APL.



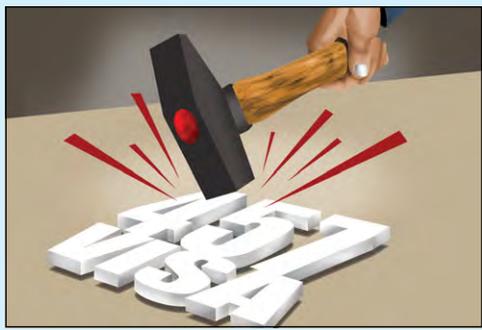
APL's eastern states big guns Kylie Roberts, Peter Haydon and Melissa Johnson ventured across the Nullarbor to touch down in Perth for PorkStar 2017.



WAPPA EO Jan Cooper and Esperance pork producer Deb Hoffrichter shifted gears and seats to chew each other's ears after Jan had finished chewing Rob Broadfield's.



The author's PorkStar 'producer' table, with token chef (right foreground).



The abolition of the 457 visa

ON April 18, 2017 Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced the 457 visa would be abolished, taking effect in March 2018.

Prime Minister Turnbull also announced the introduction of a new temporary work visa called the Temporary Skill Shortage visa.

Mr Turnbull stated this change needed to be introduced to strengthen the integrity and quality of Australia's temporary and permanent employer-sponsored visa programs.

What can be done to minimise the effect of the new changes?

The following options are available:

1. The 457 option may be used until March 2018.

2. The 407 visa, a viable option, would allow producers to hire overseas workers who can be trained in the workplace. By using

the 407 visa, employers would be able to build a pool of qualified workers who may progress to the Temporary Skill Shortage visa.

3. Producers may continue to use the 187 visa, also known as the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme.

4. The final option would be to use a labour agreement. This would be a safe alternative in the current immigration climate. With a negotiated labour agreement for a period of three years, a producer would have peace of mind that the business has access to skilled workers. The employer may renew the labour agreement for a second term and may negotiate the inclusion of the permanent residency option for temporary employees.

Estelle McNally
Global Skilled Employment Services Director

Working on clearing stock in the system

MOST people who talk with me now agree there is too much stock in the system, both on farm and in cold stores.

The debate about the combination of factors that have caused the pig price reduction in 2017 will continue for some time and of course, we should register what we can learn to avoid this happening in the future.

Right now though, we need increased volume sales, and historically both Australian Pork Limited and I have said the marketing levers we have access to do not drive immediate sales.

Immediate sales are driven by being available in more places and at lower prices to the consumer.

However, when needs must...

So there are a lot of activities, both within and outside APL currently occurring to try to encour-

age people who can stock pork more broadly and/or offer consumers even better value for money.

One thing that is happening is some processors and smallgoods companies have started buying Australian stock at imported prices, which is helping the industry's current situation in volume.

The APL team, in conjunction with all the major retailers and their suppliers, is working to increase the level and frequency of pork promotion in retail channels.

In fact, APL is working with major retailers and supply chains by offering to highlight in-store promotions with special television advertisements highlighting those promotions.

The first few of these will be seen in major cities in the coming weeks.

These will feature the pork roast versatility

ad, pictured.

The foodservice team at APL has been equally busy, connecting with major catering companies and fast food chains all over the country.

In the past week alone we have been encouraging companies in Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne and Sydney to increase their usage of pork.

Finally, following research in Hong Kong and export abattoirs partnering with APL to promote protocol agreement with China, the international team (which includes most export abattoir representatives and APL) is working on how to increase international sales in both the short and long term.

Clearly, we are not out of the woods yet, but all parties in the industry are working urgently to get us there as quickly as possible.



A snapshot of the pork roast versatility ad.



Marketing Matters

by PETER HAYDON
General Manager Marketing



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Available from Aussie Pumps, the Tsurumi-built aerators are called the TRN series.

Tsurumi Pumps, based in Kyoto, is the world's largest submersible pump manufacturer, with the capacity to build over 1.4 million units per year.

Tsurumi pioneered the use and application of submersible aerators with livestock operators in Japan.

The economical benefits, compared to conventional blowers or paddle wheel-style aeration equipment, have led to the systems being widely applied for sewage treatment throughout Asia.

Aussie Pumps Tsurumi product manager Neil Bennett said, "We see that livestock producers, abattoirs and food processing plants all have wastewater handling issues."

"These aerators offer potentially huge savings in installation and maintenance costs for these applications."

The submersible aerators incorporate an in-

tegrated stainless steel semi-open impeller.

The impeller draws air through the intake, mixes it with the liquid and discharges it at a high pressure.

This leads to highly efficient aeration with a number of other significant advantages over conventional aeration means.

By matching the size of the aerator to the tank, it is possible to aerate tanks to 17m in diameter and 6m deep with a single unit.

For larger tanks, two or more aerators can be installed to provide the right results.

"These aerators are as easy to install as a normal submersible pump, and for maintenance they are simply pulled to the surface on a chain," Bennett said.

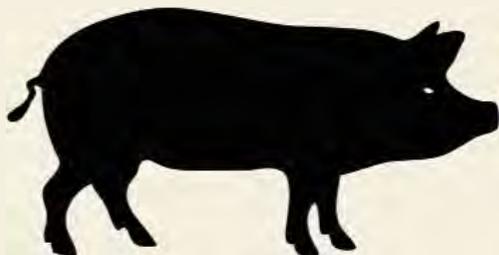
"Tsurumi applies the same no-compromise design philosophy to these units as it does to its submersible pumps.

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INSULATED panels in the animal husbandry sector are nothing new, but as insurance companies and growers alike demand higher performances, farmers are turning rapidly to PIR panels.

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counts against the outdated EPS (polystyrene) panels.

Nu-Tek panels have been recommended by some of Australia's largest shed builders, and being 100 percent Australian owned and manufactured means fast delivery (usually two weeks anywhere in Australia) and personal attention to any queries.

Nu-Tek's national sales manager Warwick Prestwood travels extensively throughout Australia meeting farmers on site to help with designs and product specification.

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ADM expands service and distribution to Australian food developers with new H & R Schwarz partnership

ARCHER Daniels Midland Company recently announced it has entered into an exclusive distribution partnership with H & R Schwarz, a Melbourne-based supplier with more than 80 years of experience supplying ingredients and specialty services.

The new partnership will allow H & R Schwarz to distribute ADM's entire ingredient portfolio to customers in the meat industry in Australia.

This encompasses ADM's extensive range of soy proteins, including isolates, concentrates, soy flour, TVP and TVC;

corn sweeteners including fructose, corn syrup and citric acid; edible beans; fats and oils; corn specialty ingredients including Fibersol, xanthan gum and sorbitol; lecithin; vitamin E; tocopherols; phytosterols, as well as the entire range of WILD flavours and colours.

ADM senior account manager for Australia and New Zealand Khoon Low said ADM has extensive experience helping customers develop innovative products and solutions in the meat industry, and this new partnership will enable more Australian food developers serving

the meat category to have better access to ADM's broad, on-trend ingredient portfolio.

H & R Schwarz director Geoff Gordon said, "This new partnership with ADM is in keeping with our recent strategy of linking up with leading global suppliers of specialist ingredient systems for the meat industry."

"We believe that by combining Schwarz's focused technical expertise and local market knowledge of the Australian meat industry with ADM's vast international experience and innovative product range, we will deliver significant value to our customers."

www.adm.com/australia



Stockyard launches new online store

STOCKYARD Industries, one of the key suppliers of consumables to the Australian pig industry, has launched an online shop for a range of consumable products.

Stockyard believes this will give alternative ordering options for producers and farm managers in managing their business needs.

The online shop will allow for orders to be placed out of general business hours and can be processed the next business day.

The process will be very simple if you already have an account set up with Stockyard.

Orders can be placed and processed and an email, text or phone call can be sent for freight options and verification.

Stockyard Industries director Marcus Jones

said, "We initially wanted to set up a limited amount of product, mainly consumable items to determine if producers would prefer to order online."

"If we find there is a demand for the online shop, we will extend our product range."

To celebrate Stockyard's new online shop, the business is offering an EOFY 10 percent discount on all products in the online shop.

To receive the discount, you need to enter the discount code (ONLINE10) and order online.

This will be a great opportunity to stock up before the EOFY.

All backorders are welcome.

Hurry though, because this offer ends on June 30.

Visit stockyardindustries.com today.



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New Zealand Pork welcomes government focus on biosecurity

THE announcement of additional operating funding for biosecurity is a vital protection for New Zealand's primary industries, according to NZ Pork.

NZ Pork, the statutory board that works on behalf of local pig farmers, says as one of the world's leading high-health primary industries, the local pork production sector sees biosecurity as vitally important.

Over \$18 million of operating funding over four years was included in the Budget 2017 to help secure the biosecurity system and protect New Zealand's borders.

NZ Pork chairman Ian Carter said the increase in biosecurity funding reinforces how important an issue it is not only to the primary industry and economy, but also the wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

"One of the unique things about the New Zealand pork industry, for example, is our producers grow food purely for the local market," Mr Carter said.

"They feel very strongly that as we are providing products that will feed our neighbours, we must do everything possible to

maintain the health of our herds and biosecurity of our operations.

"New Zealand's high animal health status not only provides for better welfare of our animals but also minimises the need for antibiotic use, unlike most of the countries exporting pork to New Zealand."

NZ Pork dedicates a considerable portion of its operating budget every year to monitoring emerging risks and biosecurity threats from overseas and providing best-practice education for commercial pig farmers.

"This has enabled us to establish an international reputation as a high-health status industry," Mr Carter said.

"But everyone – from the Government, to ordinary New Zealanders, to overseas visitors – has a role to play in ensuring our borders are protected from pests and diseases, which could cost the primary industry and wider economy dearly.

"This latest Budget injection is a strong signal of the Government's commitment to the protection

of the safe food we enjoy in New Zealand."

Mr Carter said one area the Government could also address is country of origin labelling to help local consumers make an informed choice when buying food for their families.

"We note that the new investment will include a review of Import Health Standards to ensure they are up to date," he said.

"However, the Import Health Standards don't include any animal welfare components, which are the standards our local industry has to meet in order to gain PigCare accreditation and sell products commercially.

"We believe this is an important distinction – one we're reinforcing through our new 'Born and Raised in New Zealand' labelling – that Kiwis care about, if they have enough information to make a choice."

For further information on PigCare accreditation, including information and videos on farming pigs in New Zealand, visit nzpork.co.nz

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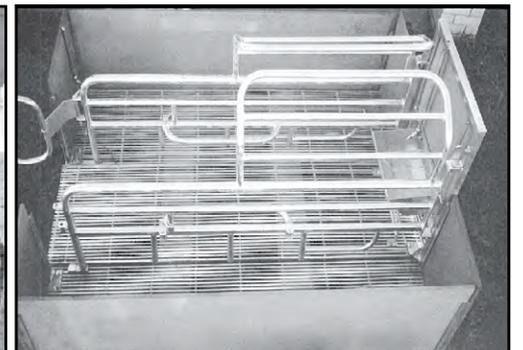
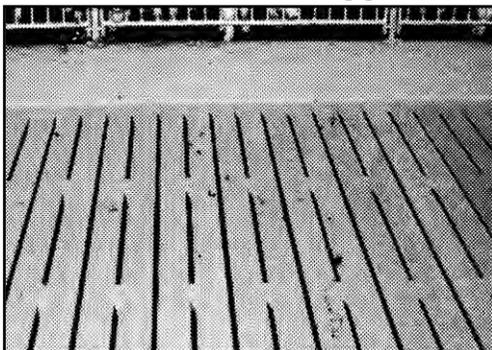


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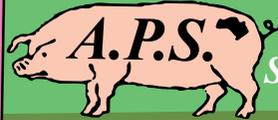


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ProHand training supported by Pork SA

A PROJECT supported by Pork SA annually to provide stockperson training in 'positive' moving and handling of pigs was completed in April, with the delivery of a third facilitated ProHand session at Adelaide University's Roseworthy Campus.

Pork SA is the peak industry organisation representing SA pork producers and corporate commercial industry stakeholders.

ProHand is a training program developed for Australian Pork Limited by the Melbourne University Animal Welfare

Science Centre, aimed at demonstrating to farm staff the impacts routine stockperson pig handling behaviour can have upon the physical ease of moving pigs, staff safety working within piggeries and pig growth and reproductive performance.

Pork SA has supported the delivery of three ProHand training sessions facilitated by industry consultant Graeme Pope from Nuriootpa, SA during the past year, using the recently released internet-based version of the program.

One session was attended by 35 students enrolled in

animal and veterinary science degrees at Adelaide University's Roseworthy Campus.

Well over 650 SA piggery stockpeople have now completed the ProHand training program since its previous version was released in 2009, resulting in improvements in trainees' workplace job satisfaction by implementing learnt 'positive' pig handling practices, resulting in more predictable pig behaviour while handling and moving animals around the piggery.

Pigs have good colour vision, a wide angle of vi-

sion and a preference for brightly lit areas, but only a moderate ability to judge distances.

Piggery stockpeople can use these innate characteristics to modify their routine handling behaviour or make changes to piggery infrastructure to reduce fear amongst pigs when being moved or handled.

On-farm research has shown a strong relationship exists between a stockperson's beliefs, his/her behaviour, the fear levels in the pigs under their management and subsequent pig growth and productive performance.

Pigs that are consistently handled with more 'positive' behaviours, such as pats, rubs and a hand resting on their back while moving, learn to associate positive handling behaviours with the stockperson and therefore become less fearful of humans.

SA Pig Industry Funds have been invested into the delivery of ProHand training across the SA pig industry since 2009.

The latest version of ProHand is now available online, with access managed through APL.

Phone 02 6285 2200 for further details.



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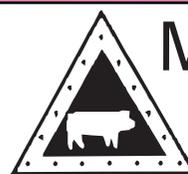
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Pig Farm Perspective by Bruce the brainy pig



PIG producers in Europe are on edge at the moment – they're facing a huge decision on whether or not the use of zinc oxide in pigs should be banned.

When I mention this to most people, the general response is: "What the heck is zinc oxide and why do we have to care about it?"

Well, zinc is an essential trace element for growing pigs, and deficiencies can result in reduced feed intake and growth, poor wound healing and impaired immune function.

During the 1980s it was found that rates of 1500 to 3000 parts per million of zinc oxide in feed resulted in decreased diarrhoea and increased growth in weaner pigs.

At higher doses, zinc oxide has also been found to stabilise the intestinal bacterial flora, preventing attachment of disease-causing bacteria (such as *E. coli*) to

the gut wall.

In fact, a combined review of 10 independent studies found the addition of 2400ppm of zinc oxide to weaner feed reduced the relative risk of post-weaning scours by 65 percent.

Everyone said "Great!" and zinc oxide became a commonly seen additive in pig diets.

It was particularly promoted in the European Union as a means to reduce in-feed antibiotics in the period immediately after weaning.

In the past few decades, it has become a staple component of weaner diets.

However, zinc is poorly absorbed from the gut, and is released in high concentrations in manure.

This increases the risk of environmental pollution of zinc oxide and has caused concern within the population about the risk of zinc oxide when effluent is

spread on crops and pastures.

This in turn has raised concerns around the potential run-off of zinc into water sources.

As such, over the coming weeks the European Union is meeting to decide on whether zinc oxide will be banned from use in pigs.

What does this mean for us in Australia?

Well, the likelihood is that if a ban is put in place around the use of zinc oxide within the EU, Australia may follow suit, banning the use of zinc oxide in coming years.

Fortunately, a number of studies have been undertaken regarding the use of microencapsulated zinc oxide, which has decreased the addition rate of zinc oxide by up to 25 times.

Will this reduction in application rate be enough to save zinc oxide from the chopping block both in the EU and Australia?

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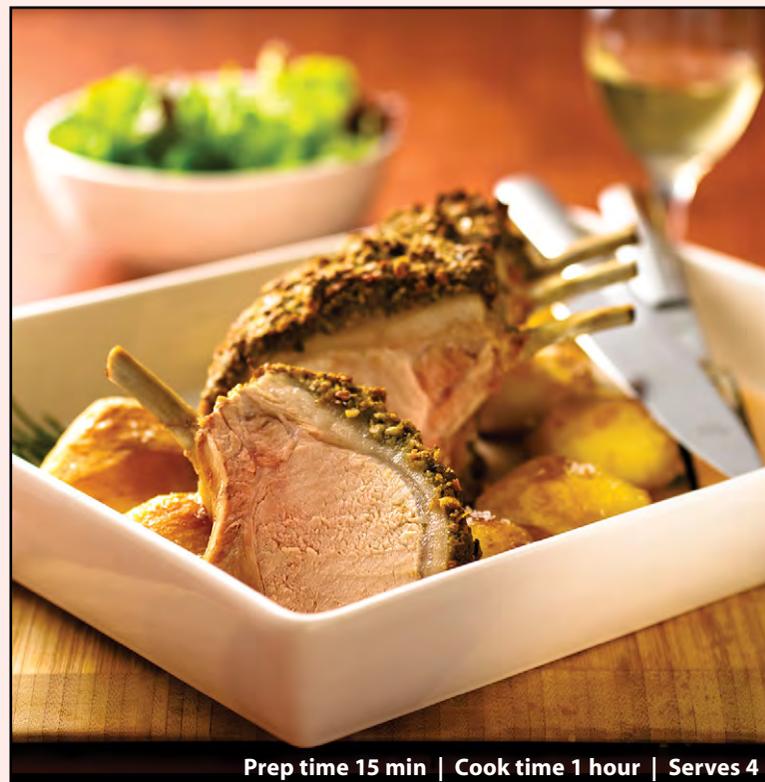
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Recipe

Pesto-crusted roasted pork rack



Prep time 15 min | Cook time 1 hour | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 5 or 6 cutlet pork loin rack roast, rind removed
- 1 cup basil pesto
- 1 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup fresh bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Crispy roasted potatoes to serve
- Rocket salad
- Basil leaves to garnish

METHOD

1. Trim pork rack and clean bones. Wrap bones in foil to protect.
2. Combine pesto, parmesan, bread crumbs and olive oil in a large bowl and mix well.
3. Press mixture into a thick crust on the entire surface of the roast.
4. Weigh the roast and allow 25 minutes per 500g. Roast the pork in a preheated oven at 190C for the required cooking time.
5. Allow roast to stand at least 10 minutes prior to carving and serving with crispy roast potatoes and rocket salad. Drizzle plate with a little balsamic glaze or basil oil prior to serving.

For more delicious pork recipes, visit pork.com.au

www.porknews.com.au

Anaerobic digestion – keeping bugs in the system

ANAEROBIC digestion is a naturally occurring biological process involving micro-organisms breaking down organic matter in environments with little or no oxygen.

The process occurs naturally in swamps, waterlogged soils (such as rice fields), deep water storage dams and in the digestive systems of animals.

AD produces biogas, which is a mixture of mostly methane and carbon dioxide, with trace amounts of other gases such as hydrogen sulphide.

Purpose-built biogas plants use the natural activity of the micro-organisms to convert organic biomass materials, such as piggery manure, into biogas, which can be combusted to generate electricity and heat.

Biogas can also be treated (or upgraded) to remove non-methane compounds so it can be used as a direct replacement for natural gas.

Leper digester

The earliest recorded purpose-built anaerobic digester was constructed at a Bombay (India) leper colony in 1859.

AD reached England in 1895, where a septic tank was used to generate gas for street lighting in Exeter.

Soon after, in 1907, a patent was issued for the Imhoff tank, an early form of digester developed in Germany.

Staged process

The AD process involves four distinct stages, as follows:

1. Bacterial hydrolysis of the organic feed materials to break down insoluble organic polymers such as carbohydrates and make them available for other bacteria.

2. Conversion of sugars and amino acids into carbon dioxide, hydrogen, ammonia and organic acids by acidogenic bacteria.

3. Conversion of the resulting organic acids into acetic acid, along with additional ammonia, hydrogen and carbon dioxide by acetogenic bacteria.

4. Finally, conversion of the acetic acid to methane and carbon dioxide by methanogens.

It is important to note that effective AD requires the progressive processing of the various substrates produced by distinct groups of living micro-organisms.

Disruption of any of the individual stages can adversely affect the overall AD process.

In addition to biogas, the AD process also produces a wet solid residue called digestate that is rich in nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.

The digestate has considerable value as an organic fertiliser and can be processed into commercial compost.

Temperature talk

The AD process temperature affects the rate of digestion.

Many covered anaerobic ponds used in the pork industry are not heated and therefore the effluent temperature follows the ambient air temperature, resulting in seasonal fluctuation in biogas production.

www.porknews.com.au



by ALAN SKERMAN
Leader, Pork CRC Bioenergy
Support Program



More sophisticated (and considerably more expensive) in-ground and above-ground tank digesters are heated to maintain their operating temperatures in the mesophilic range (35-40C), resulting in minimal seasonal variation in biogas production.

It is also possible to operate digesters in the thermophilic range (55-60C), however the digestion process is subject to upset if not closely monitored.

Sizing digesters

The organic loading rate and hydraulic retention time are the main operating parameters used in sizing digesters in practice.

Overloading the digester with feedstock may cause the AD process to become unbalanced, potentially affecting the pH and in-

hibiting methane production.

Additionally, the time taken to digest various substrate components varies and decreasing the HRT may result in wash-out of active bacteria and feedstock.

Conversely, longer HRTs require larger reactor vessels or covered ponds, substantially increasing the capital cost of the system.

AD inhibitors

Piggery effluent contains relatively high concentrations of nitrogenous compounds such as proteins and amino acids that may be degraded to form high levels of ammonia during the AD process.

Although ammonia is an essential nutrient for growth of micro-organisms, high concentrations are potentially toxic to methanogens,

depending on other process conditions.

AD is also inhibited by the presence of heavy metals and a range of cleaning

and veterinary chemical formulations commonly used in piggeries, such as chlorinated solvents, biocides, pesticides and antibiotics, which may inadvertently enter the waste stream discharged from piggery sheds.

Available technologies

The main technologies currently used for on-farm AD at Australian piggeries include passive (unheated, unmixed), in-ground CAPs, mixed and heated in-ground hybrid digesters and above-ground mixed tank digesters.

Unheated, unmixed CAPs have been by far the most commonly adopted digester type, primarily due to their relative simplicity and lower capital cost.

Biologically speaking

In summary, it is important to remember that all anaerobic digesters are living biological systems that rely on the balanced and sequential performance of a range of micro-organisms for their effective operation and consistent production of biogas.

While the various bac-

teria can survive 'shocks' resulting from such things as inconsistent piggery management practices or the use of different cleaning products, careful management is necessary to avoid major disruptions to the AD process and resulting on-farm biogas and energy production.

For further information on AD or services provided through the Pork CRC Bioenergy Support Program, contact me on 07 4529 4247 or alan.skerman@daf.qld.gov.au

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Consistent and reliable biogas production relies on the healthy functioning of distinct groups of living micro-organisms that break down the organic matter in piggery effluent.

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