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Vol 27. No. 8 August 2023 Australian Pork Newspaper PO Box 162 Wynnum 4178 Phone (07) 3286 1833 Email ben@collins.media

Carbon neutral pork hits Coles shelves

COLES customers can now purchase pork that is certified carbon neutral from farm to shelf in accordance with the Australian Government's Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.

This comes as the retailer also announces a new campaign championing the great lengths its team members and suppliers go to to provide Australians with the best quality fresh meat, produce, bakery and own brand products.

The new Coles Finest Carbon Neutral pork range is available nationally and includes eight premium cuts such as rib rack, cutlets, schnitzel, diced, leg roast and porchetta, as well as porchetta and tomahawk steaks.

Coles has worked closely with a Western Australian supplier who has implemented sustainable practices – such as reducing the use of artificial fertilisers, investing in renewable energy and improved soil management practices

– resulting in farm emissions that are more than 30 percent below the Australian pork industry average.

Coles category manager for pork Ben Beckett said, "We're proud to be launching the Coles Finest Carbon Neutral pork and confident our customers are going to welcome the great-tasting range that has a carbon-neutral footprint from farm to shelf."

WA's Milne Agrigroup has supplied Coles free range and RSPCA Approved pork for more than 10 years and general manager David Plant said he was thrilled to be able to provide customers with a range of pork that is driven to improving sustainability and animal welfare.

"We're grateful for the guidance and support Coles has provided over the past few years as we work to reduce emissions on our farms, which are now fully off-grid and produce 30 percent fewer emissions than the industry av-

erage," David said.

Australian Pork Limited's chief executive officer Margo Andrae welcomed Coles' decision to launch a carbon neutral pork range that builds on the positive steps the pork industry has been taking for the past three decades to minimise its environmental footprint.

"This innovative product range by Coles not only helps pork producers innovate on-farm and achieve their own sustainability ambitions, but it also delivers a product that is great-tasting and can be enjoyed all year round and at every meal," Ms Andrae said.

In 2022, Coles became the first major Australian supermarket to launch a certified own brand carbon neutral beef range, which is supplied by more than 17 producers across the country.

In addition to carbon neutral pork, Coles is launching a new campaign that showcases the great lengths its

continued P2



The Coles team members worked together with its network of dedicated farmers, growers and bakers in the pursuit of quality.



The 2022-2023 Pork Leadership Course participants in Western Australia for the cohort's final workshop.

Fostering our people and attracting new talent

LAST month, I had the pleasure of joining the 2022-2023 Pork Leadership Course participants in Western Australia for the cohort's final workshop.

The PLC is an interactive course that focuses on developing our people and giving them the skills to take on industry leadership roles.

Held across three hands-on workshops, the course aimed to enhance communication, public speaking and conflict resolution, and assists our leaders in learning how to navigate difficult conversations.

Also designed to develop resilience, teamwork and problem solving – the course allowed participants to immerse themselves into areas of the pork supply chain and gain exposure to other agricultural sectors.

Touring WA's pork, grain, beef, sheep, rock lobster and beekeeping industries, the participants gained an

by MARGO ANDRAE
CEO



spired and engaged is always rewarding.

A big thank you to our WA hosts and cross-industry supporters who gave their time, expertise and assistance to make the week-long tour successful.

We look forward to showcasing our participants over the coming months and assisting them in further developing their leadership skills.

However, we also know that for the

continued P2

understanding of the various technologies and innovations being used to improve operational efficiencies among these sectors.

Explored in detail and highlighting the cross-sectorial knowledge and collaboration required in our leadership positions were:

- Similarities between seed and pork breeding
- The value-adding opportunities for pork, honey and rock lobster sectors
- Issues of workforce shortages and rising operational costs across supply chains.

Learning that these unlikely synergies existed between various agricultural sectors, our participants' ob-

servations and comparisons made for great discussions.

Having so much talent across our pork supply chain and seeing our leaders in-



Applications for the 2023-2024 Australian Pork Leadership Course are now open.

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HAVE YOUR SAY!

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This is an open forum where you can cover any topic, whether for or against an issue.

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Pork Industry Calendar of Events

2023

AUG 18-20 – Kingaroy BaconFest – Kingaroy, Australia. <https://www.kingaroybaconfest.com.au>

SEP 16-19 – Allen D Leman Swine Conference – USA. <https://lemanconference.umn.edu/>

SEP 21-22 – Pig Research Summit - Think Piglet Health and Nutrition 2023 – Copenhagen, Denmark. <https://www.tilmeld.dk/thinkpiglet2023>

OCT 17-18 – Animal Health, Nutrition and Technology Innovation Asia – Tokyo, Japan. <https://animalhealthasia.com>

NOV 13-16 – Australasian Pig Science Association (APSA) Conference – Brisbane, Australia. www.apsa.asn.au

NOV 27-28 – Pig Feed Quality Conference 2023 – Bangkok, Thailand. <https://www.asian-agribiz.com/conferences/>

DEC 1-2 – North American PRRS Symposium – Chicago, USA. <https://vetmed.illinois.edu/education/continuing-education/north-american-prrs-symposium/>

2024

JAN 9-11 – Banff Pork Seminar – Banff, Canada. <https://www.banffpork.ca/>

JAN 24-26 – Agros 2024 expo – Moscow, Russia. <https://en.agros-expo.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

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Learning of unlikely synergies between various agricultural sectors made for great discussions.



Fostering our people and attracting new talent

from P1
industry to thrive, we need to continue to attract new people too.

With schools and universities ramping up career days, the Australian Pork Limited team has been busy showing the diversity of career pathways available within the pork industry – not only on farm but throughout the broader supply chain also.

In July, the APL team

was among the action at the 2023 Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition held at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, and the Farming Futures Expo held at the University of New England Armidale campus.

Events such as these provide APL with the opportunity to access a pool of talented students, giving them exposure to job prospects available in our industry.

It's important that we remain proactive in promoting the many job opportunities and career pathways available to the next generation of farmers, students and pork professionals.

If someone you know is looking for a career in agriculture, encourage them to visit our career pathways portal via the website – australianpork.com.au/

discover current vacancies. In addition, if you or someone you know is keen to enhance their leadership skills and pursue industry leadership roles in the future, applications for the 2023-2024 Australian Pork Leadership Course are now open. To register your interest, reach out to Rowena Davis via rowena.davis@australianpork.com.au

The resource celebrates our industry's people, with case studies exploring the types of roles available, what our people enjoy about their roles within the pork supply chain, as well as examples of career progression opportunities available in the industry.

It also aims to help students and new entrants identify with real career profiles and

discover current vacancies. In addition, if you or someone you know is keen to enhance their leadership skills and pursue industry leadership roles in the future, applications for the 2023-2024 Australian Pork Leadership Course are now open. To register your interest, reach out to Rowena Davis via rowena.davis@australianpork.com.au

Carbon neutral pork hits Coles shelves

from P1
team members and suppliers go to for quality produce, such as MSC certified wild-caught banana prawns, relationships with thousands of Aussie farmers that have spanned generations and partnerships with expert suppliers such as French master baker Laurent Boillon, who supplies favourites such as sourdough and Vienna loaves.

Coles head of brand and media Bianca Mundy said the 'great lengths for quality' campaign, developed by its agency Smith St, showed Coles team members working together with its network of

dedicated farmers, growers and bakers – all in the pursuit of quality.

"Our ambition is to provide our customers with the freshest and highest quality meat and produce that's also great value," Ms Mundy said.

"This campaign shines a light on the incredible effort of our suppliers and team to ensure every apple or cut of meat that makes it on our shelves is the highest quality every time."

The campaign will feature a television commercial, in the *Coles Magazine*, on Coles Radio, coles.com.au and in-store.



The new Coles Finest Carbon Neutral pork range is available nationally and includes eight premium cuts.



The University of New England champion team.

UNE shines at meat judging comp

THE 2023 national Intercollegiate Meat Judging competition has wrapped up in Wagga Wagga NSW, with Jonty Hemmingway from the University of New England taking out the title of Australian Meat Judging Champion Individual.

Jonty finished 18 points ahead of Sarah Hamblin from the University of Queensland, with a total score of 1178 out of a possible 1250 points – one of the highest scores ever achieved.

Her stellar performance also helped UNE secure victory as 2023 Champion team overall, ahead of the University of Queensland who finished runners up for the second year in a row.

UNE were last champions in 2006.

This year's competition also included industry participants for the first time.

Signature Beef's Megan Bauman top scored in the overall industry category, while Emily Lavis from Mort and Co finished runner up.

ICMJ president Dr Peter McGilchrist said the spirit of competition was alive and well during this year's event and the training the students had put in leading up to the contest was evident in the results on the day.

"I was very proud to see the UNE team take home the win this year, but I was impressed by all of this year's contestants for putting in such an outstanding effort across the two-days of competition," Dr McGilchrist said.

"It can be quite daunting for many first timers to step into the chillers with the pressure of the clock and the number of classes they have to judge but they all did a fantastic job.

"The best advice we can give them is don't overthink it, judge it as you see it and have fun."

The top 15 individuals in the competition were narrowed down to a team of 10, who will go on to another ICMJ event in September, where they'll take part in further professional development opportuni-

ties and industry tours.

The meat judging competition was the final component of the ICMJ National Conference hosted annually by Charles Sturt University and Teys Australia Wagga Wagga, before winners were announced at the gala awards dinner.

ICMJ activities are supported by foundation partners Meat & Livestock Australia and the Australian Meat Processor Corporation.

It is also supported by conference partners including Teys Australia, Coles, JBS, Australian Pork Limited, Australian Poll Dorset Association, AACo, Australian Meat Group, Aus-Meat, Fulton Market Group, Angus Australia, Kilcoy Global Foods, Rimfire Resources, Fletcher International Exports, Charles Sturt University, Gundagai Lamb, Rivalea Australia, Beef Central and AilFlex.

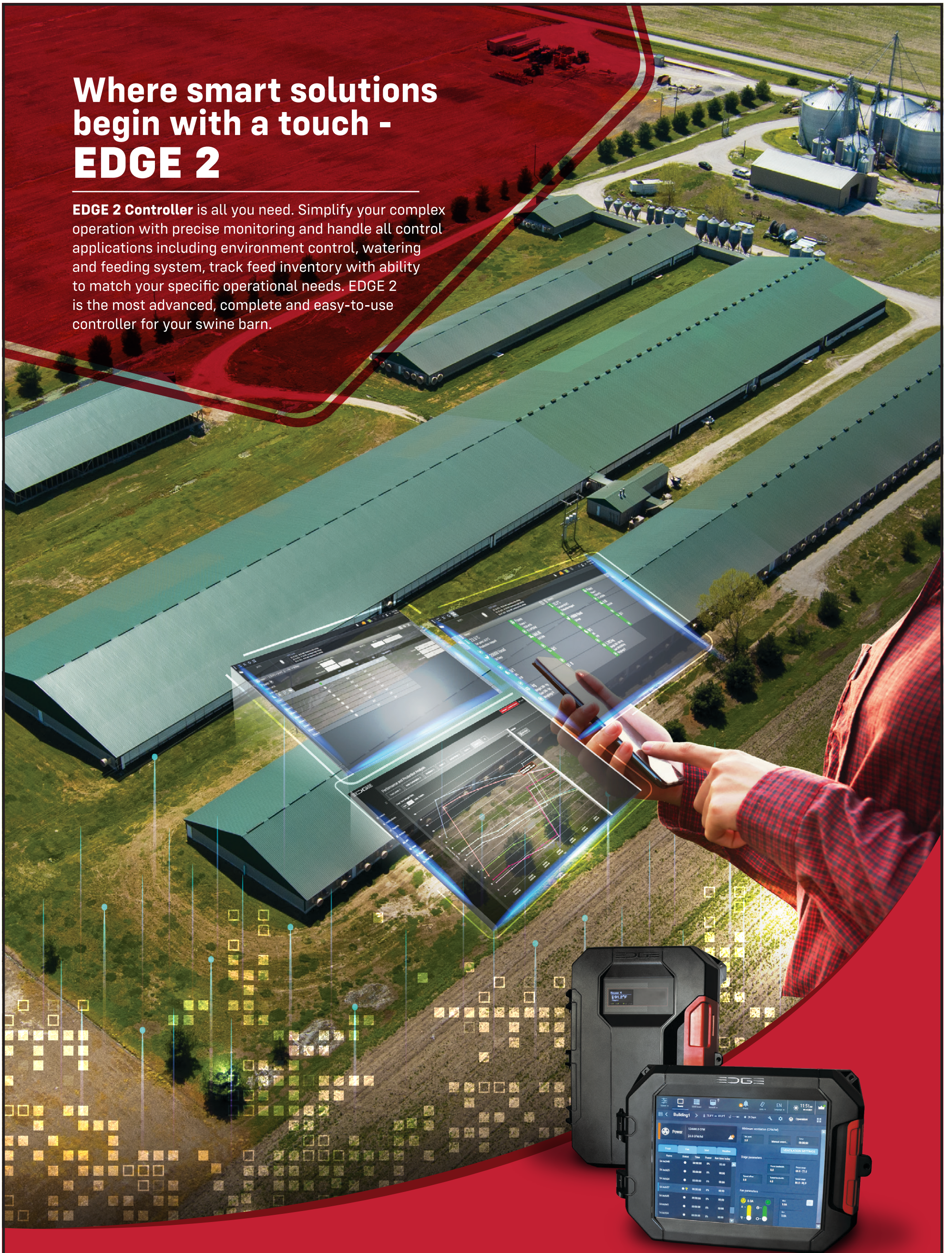
More than 3000 people have taken part in the ICMJ program over its 33-year history.

**Australian
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At Craig Mostyn Group's 2012 agribusiness leaders' dinner in Perth, Stuart Crockett (second from right) caught up with Adrian Arundell (far left) of Azure Capital, Brad Thomason of D'Orsogna and David Lock of CMG. At that time, Stuart was with Austrade.

Meat & Dairy Matters

Department of Agriculture
Government of Western Australia

BY RENATA PALISKIS-BESSELL, MANAGER, MEAT & DAIRY PROGRAM

The *Meat & Dairy Matters* masthead for the monthly column that was written by the author, with the approval and on behalf of the then meat and dairy program manager at DAFWA.

Pork offcuts on the table

HAVING last month debuted 'Pork Offcuts', where I'll occasionally share observations and breaking news on all matters pork and pig, I'll maintain momentum, at least for this month. So, here goes.

Victorian inquiry

News that the Economy and Infrastructure Committee of the Victorian Legislative Council will investigate the welfare of farmed pigs in Victoria was met with a hint of incredulity by Australian Pork Limited.

Chief executive officer Margo Andrae, as reported in last month's issue, effectively implied that had the committee approached APL prior to announcing the investigation, it would not have been necessary to proceed.

While APL would

Pork Offcuts

by BRENDON CANT

certainly have answers and opinions on the five investigative areas – listed below – the mandate of such an investigation is to seek answers and opinions from a cross-section of stakeholders and interested parties.

Peak bodies such as APL are simply one such party and certainly not the sole repository of facts, figures and opinions.

Bring on the investigation, I say.

The five areas of investigation consist of:

- Existing regulatory frameworks and their promotion of pig welfare outcomes
- Methods used to stun pigs before slaughter
- Outcomes of the 2017 industry-led phase out of sow stalls
- Current pig breeding and housing practices
- International industry best-practice standards.

Healthy move

Ten years on from leaving APL as its general manager policy, Kathleen Plowman has chalked up a decade with Animal Health Australia.

As AHA CEO, she has a big job to do de-

tecting and responding to emergency animal diseases, especially when it comes to the challenges posed by increasing biosecurity risks.

When recently scanning AHA's website, I was pleased to learn that two of its board members were very well known to me.

Western Australia local Stuart Crockett joined the board late last year.

I knew Stuart from his time with WA's largest protein producer and exporter, former client Craig Mostyn Group, plus Austrade and Alosca Technologies.

I recently had the pleasure of chatting with him at CMG's one-hundredth anniversary dinner in Perth.

Renata Paliskis, on the AHA Board since 2019, was a senior executive with the WA Department of Agriculture when I worked closely with her – ghost writing a monthly *Meat Matters* column for her, which was published in WA rural media.

It morphed into *Meat & Dairy Matters* when Renata's title changed

to manager, meat and dairy program.

I must say it seems AHA is in good hands, at a time when all-hands-on-deck are definitely needed.

Piggy Sooy

The United Kingdom science-based food ingredient company Moolec has created transgenic soya beans that it has named 'Piggy Sooy', in which a quarter of the soluble proteins are pig proteins rather than plant proteins.

For intellectual property reasons, the company won't yet say which pig genes have been added to soya to produce Piggy Sooy.

However, photos of Moolec's Piggy Sooy beans show they have a pinky-red tinge inside, meaning it's likely one of the added genes is for a protein with an iron-containing heme group, such as myoglobin.

Myoglobin gives red meat its colour and contributes to its flavour.

The animal protein reached a high-expression level of up to 26.6 percent of total soluble protein in soy seeds, which was four times higher than initially projected.

Moolec focuses on producing animal proteins in plants through molecular farming, a disruptive technology in the alternative protein landscape.

Its purpose is to upgrade taste, nutrition and affordability of alternative protein products. 🐷

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Transgenic soya bean known as 'Piggy Sooy'.

Rivalea's significant Corowa investment

RIVALEA recently announced it will invest more than \$20 million across its Corowa site, to improve and strengthen its operations.

The investment – which is subject to local government regulatory approvals – will be made at Rivalea's Corowa piggery and processing facilities, and includes:

- Upgrading pig growing sheds
- Best practice animal handling systems
- Upgrading biosecurity systems, to further reduce the risk of disease
- Upgrading employee amenity facilities

• Upgrading harvest processes.

The investment program will support Rivalea's growth across fresh and value-added pork products, that are supplied to Australian consumers and key export partners.

JBS Australia's pork division chief operating officer Edison Alvares said the investment was a testament to the company's commitment to the Corowa and Federation Council area.

"Rivalea has a proud history of being part of the Riverina area for the past 50 years," Mr Alvares said.

The announcement was proof of the desire

for Rivalea to remain part of the community for many years to come.

"Through this \$20 million investment program, we will seek to improve the productivity of our operations – which will enhance job security for people in the Corowa community," Mr Alvares said.

"We look forward to continuing our constructive conversations with the Federation Council to progress the required regulatory processes to move forward with the investment plan.

"Not only is Corowa a fantastic community with great people, but the location within the

region gives us access to high quality and reliable water sources, is in close proximity to grain growing regions and links to key transport routes to Sydney and Melbourne."

Federation Council Mayor Patrick Bourke said the scale of the investment demonstrated the confidence and long-term commitment that Rivalea has to the region and also to the local community.

"Rivalea is a major employer in our region, providing secure and rewarding local jobs and career opportunities for our residents and the broader community," Mr Bourke said.

"Federation Council encourages responsible business development and expansion and this investment makes very good business sense, especially with the main aims of employee wellbeing, animal welfare and biosecurity being at the forefront.

"Rivalea is a significant economic contributor to our region and we look forward to seeing them continue to invest in our region, to assist in driving the long-term sustainability of our community."

Rivalea's Corowa site currently employs more than 600 people and

consists of five farms, a processing facility, feed milling, research and administration.

The site utilises biogas technology capturing methane to generate 85 percent of the farming and processing operations' peak power requirements and further uses the nutrients to grow crops, contributing to the sustainability of the site.

"Rivalea is a leader in the Australian pork sector with a strong team and track record of sustainable pork production," Mr Alvares said.

"We are committed to building on these foundations and creating new opportunities for Australian-grown pork, both here and overseas."

JBS Australia acquired the Rivalea business in January 2022.

JBS has a long and proud history of supporting and growing its Australian businesses – investing heavily in its local operations and domestic brands, while at the same time providing employment opportunities and supporting the regional economies in which it operates.

JBS Australia employs 15,000 people throughout Australia and New Zealand.



JBS Australia's pork division chief operating officer Edison Alvares.



Through the \$20 million investment program, Rivalea seeks to improve the productivity of its operations – which will enhance job security for people in the Corowa community.

ATTENTION

Clarification

The Australian Pork Newspaper is a wholly independent publication owned by Collins Media. APN does not receive any funding or financial support from Australian Pork Limited.

All advertisements run by APL are paid for at a set rate.

APN works with APL in providing a medium between producers and industry representatives.

As an independent publication, APN also aims to provide a wholistic view on all issues impacting the pork industry.

APN encourages feedback on published articles in either written form or via phone.

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New managing director at D'Orsogna

INTERNATIONALLY experienced and recognised agribusiness leader, with more than 25 years operating in all segments of the food supply chain, Jason Craig has been appointed managing director of leading Australian smallgoods producer D'Orsogna Limited.

CBH Marketing and Trading – headed by Mr Craig since 2012 – is Australia's largest grain exporter, with an



Jason Craig appointed D'Orsogna Limited managing director.

annual turnover in excess of \$2.5 billion via its activities in grain accumulation, trading, financing, shipping and distribution.

Announcing the appointment, D'Orsogna chair Tony Iannello said the transition would be effectively seamless.

“Current managing director Greig Smith and existing senior management will work closely with Jason from when he joins the company in early November until his commencement as managing director on January 1, 2024,” Mr Iannello said.

“Greig has decided to pursue new challenges, having led D'Orsogna for six years, and we appreciate his ongoing commitment to enable a smooth transition.

“During his tenure he successfully managed significant challenges, including workplace and supply issues surrounding the 2020 incursion of COVID-19, and developing and expanding our state-of-the-art facility that opened in Merrifield Victoria in 2019.

“More recently, Greig restructured critical transport and cold storage arrangements after changes in that industry space, so on behalf of the board, management and staff of D'Orsogna I thank him for his commitment and wish him all the best.”

Mr Iannello described Mr Craig as a dynamic business leader, experienced in leading a large and complex business in tandem with a quality outcome-driven

management team.

“D'Orsogna's Board saw these critical qualities as the right match for where our company is positioned at this time and where we see it moving in the future,” Mr Iannello said.

“Jason has a proven ability to shape organisational strategy and deliver results in highly competitive business environments, and we believe those skills will further enhance the already strong relationships D'Orsogna has with our customers, consumers and suppliers.”

Mr Craig said he was excited to have the opportunity to lead a wonderful family company with such a strong brand and reputation.

D'Orsogna Limited

As happy as a pig in mud

AUSSIE Pumps is always glad to hear from farmers who are using our pumps.

Farmers tell us what works and what doesn't.

That feedback is used to develop the best pumps on the market.

Pig farmer Mark Kingma told us about his Aussie trash pump.

“Building our new piggery at Kerang East in 2021 gave us a chance to see what pump options were available out there for pumping effluent,” Mark said.

After doing his research, Mark decided on an Aussie B2KQ-A/ST GMP semi-trash motor pump, powered by three phase.

“We have about 5000 pigs at this site, and we work on pumping 20,000-25,000 litres per week day,” he said.

“The pump just runs when required, maybe four hours per day.”

That equates to a whopping 105,600 litres in four hours.

It's a big messy job with no room for pump failure.

The risk of liquid backing up or the pit overflowing is almost too awful to imagine.

“We installed this self-priming 2” trash pump supplied by Aussie Pumps to pump the liquid from our effluent press overflow to our evaporation dam and it hasn't missed a beat,” Mark said.

“In fact, we just bought our second pump to install on our main effluent pit.”

Let's have a closer look at Mark's pump, the B2KQ-A/ST GMP semi trash motor pump, or as we call it, the 'rubbish gobbler'.

The pump self-primers from 6m vertical lift.

The impeller is an open vane non-clog style for passing spherical compressible solids in suspension.

A silicon carbide mechanical seal comes

as standard, though a tungsten carbide with Viton seals is an option.

For maintenance, the clean-out port is on the front, which allows easy access to the pump internals for flushing out chokes.

The heavy duty cast construction is partnered with a 316 stainless-steel motor shaft and stainless-steel wear plate.

Running maintenance on a long column sump pump or fully submersible pump can become very difficult.

The Aussie Pump surface-mount trash pump has a real advantage in that the pump never

needs to be moved if an obstruction occurs.

Farmers can detect issues early and it's relatively simple to service.

In fact, it's not necessary to disconnect the hose or pipe.

For power, the unit is close coupled to a heavy duty TEFC single or three-phase electric drive motor IP54 rated.

Aussie Pumps is proud to support farmers such as Mark Kingma, who work hard every day and rely on their Aussie Pumps to never miss a beat.

For more information, visit aussiepumps.com.au



Farmer Mark Kingma at his Kerang East piggery.



Aussie Pumps B2KQ-A/ST GMP semi trash motor pump hard at work.

Australian Pork Limited Concise Notice of Annual General Meeting 2023

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Australian Pork Limited (ABN 83 092 783 278) (APL or the Company) will be held in Melbourne at 1pm AEDST on Thursday 23 November, 2023.

The full Notice of Annual General Meeting, including related registration and proxy forms, will be emailed to all members no later than 24 October, 2023. Registration and proxy forms as well as the 2022-23 Annual Report, including financial statements and Notice of AGM, will also be available on our website australianpork.com.au no later than 24 October, 2023. If you prefer a printed copy of the 2022-23 Annual Report, APL can arrange for one to be posted to you.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact APL's Company Secretary, Damien Howse, on 0431 631 692 or damien.howse@australianpork.com.au

australianpork.com.au

Business of the 2023 AGM will include

- Receiving and considering the financial statements of the Company, with the reports of the Directors and Auditor in respect of year ended 30 June 2023
- Setting Auditor's remuneration for the year ending 30 June 2024
- Electing two 'Elected Directors'
- Ratifying the appointment of one 'Specialist Director'
- Considering resolutions (if any) proposed to the Company by Members and Delegates prior to the annual return date of 8 September 2023



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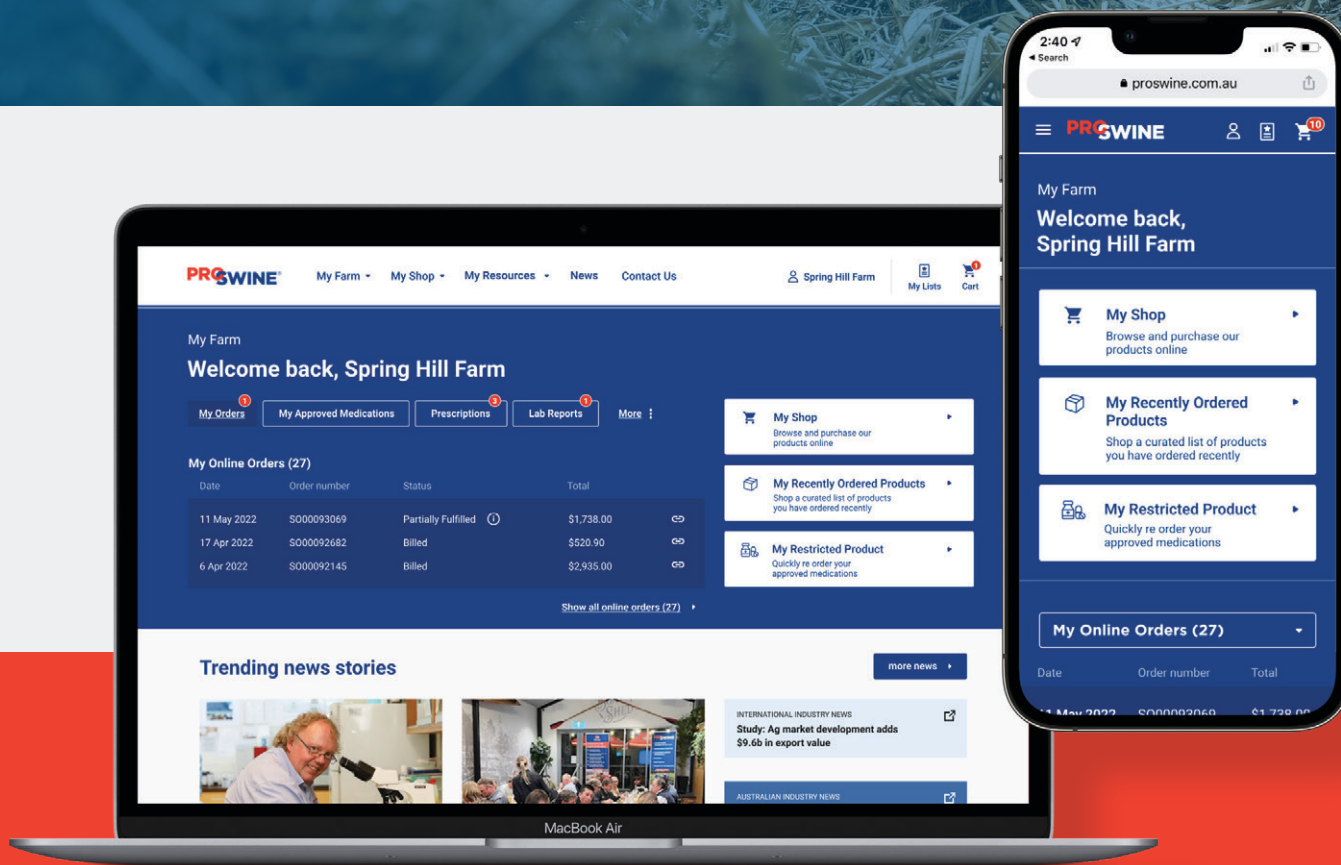
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Pigs at school are cool



In South Australia, agriculture is taught at about 70 secondary schools, with 35 of those now keeping pigs at the school for at least one term each year.



Attracting young people into piggery work has never been more competitive.



The hope is that by assisting teachers to deliver a 'positive pig experience', more school leavers looking for careers working with livestock might gravitate towards pigs.

THROUGHOUT my 46-year career working with pork producers to help improve their piggery performance, their most frequently raised issue has been where to source farm staff.

One even suggested that a dislike for pigs was formed in utero, during the first few weeks of pregnancy!

If it weren't for the benefits of having a skilled migration scheme managed federally, there's no way industry would be able to manage its current national herd size or corporate farm expansions.

Attracting young people into piggery work has never been more competitive.

We compete against all other potential employers offering school leavers careers both within and outside agriculture.

As an industry, our offer needs to be sufficiently attractive to get our share of the available DNA.

Back in the 1970s and 80s, there was plenty of 'heavy lifting' involved in getting an 85kg pig onto a truck by 25 weeks of age.

Most small to medium-sized farms milled their own feed, few had automated feed delivery systems, sheds required frequent manual cleaning as pigs were moved in small groups around the farm, all sows were mated by boars and production flows were continuous.

The adoption of

Pope's Perspective

by GRAEME POPE



raised farrowing crates and, until recently, sow gestation stalls, straw-based housing capable of accommodating large group sizes, improved knowledge around pig-housing design and the impacts of air quality on pig health and performance, artificial insemination supporting batch farrowing, and automated feed delivery and weigh draft systems have changed forever the daily grind of raising pigs.

Other agricultural industries have similarly developed innovations in response to farm labour shortages and their employees wanting lifestyle change.

Robotic milking plants, GPS-guided driverless tractors and modern shearing-shed design are all good examples of this happening.

But school leavers won't want to set their sights on entering our industry until they know enough about it.

To that end, Australian Pork Limited has invested in several initiatives aimed at filling that knowledge gap.

APL was one of the first sponsors of the Primary Industries Education Foundation Aus-

tralia – a one-stop shop providing agricultural teachers with access to curriculum-aligned industry relevant classroom resources focused at several primary and secondary school year levels.

Detailed case studies and 'virtual' piggery tours demonstrating different production systems used in industry are also accessible to students and their teachers on the APL website and show the many ways a 100kg pig can now get to market in less than 20 weeks, while mitigating the biosecurity risks and logistics associated with having large school groups physically visiting farms.

In South Australia, agriculture is taught at about 70 secondary schools, with 35 of those now keeping pigs at the school for at least one term each year.

Agricultural teachers never seem to have sufficient budget to cover-off on all the enterprises they might wish to teach and expose their students to, so to help them get pigs 'on the radar' in SA, we have developed a long-standing program of industry sponsorships

and support aimed at reducing the costs and optimising their pig's performance while at school.

Ridley AgriProducts sponsor starter and weaner feed, to get school pigs off to a flying start.

Stockyard Industries sponsor feeding and drink water equipment, to avoid any 'over weekend outages' and demonstrate how the essentials of feed and water are delivered to pigs in commercial piggeries.

Jackson Metal Fabrications have designed and can assist in erection of a 5m x 5m mini shelter.

School pigs are typically sourced at 4-5 weeks of age from a local piggery under various payment arrangements, often coming off an ex-student's farm.

Supported by Pork SA, I am able to spend time with teachers – to assist with how to set-up and manage their pig-keeping facilities, sourcing their pigs, taking a few lessons, securing sponsorships and providing ad-hoc advice.

In addition, the South Australian Pig Breeders Association hosts a schools' pig handling competitive class at the Royal Adelaide Show each year.

Over 50 students from various schools are provided with moving boards, paddles and a pair of grower pigs to move between pens and into a weigh crate, competing for trophies, rib-

continued P9

Anti-slip Self Supporting Triangle Hot Dipped Galvanised Flooring

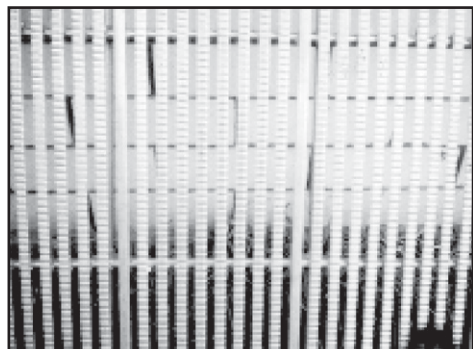


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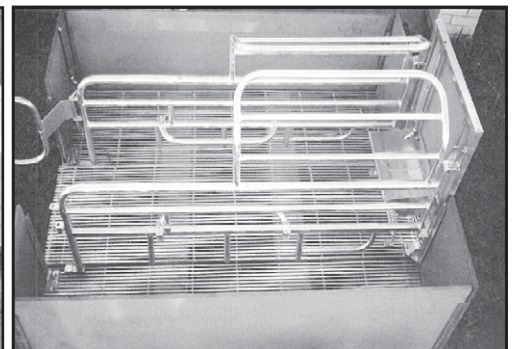
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Agriculture Victoria's free online business program is designed to help farm businesses better manage risk in the face of a variable climate, particularly drought. Photo: Jasper Wilde

Online farm business program helps manage risk

AGRICULTURE Victoria is offering farmers an opportunity to participate in a free online business program designed to help farm businesses better manage risk in the face of a variable climate, particularly drought.

The online program commenced late July and is suitable for livestock, grains, mixed farmers, horticulturalists and apiarists.

Project leader Kit Duncan-Jones said participants will improve their skills and knowledge to better prepare for and manage risk, adapt to change and strengthen their farm businesses.

"The course is designed to help farmers set and achieve their individual business goals and is relevant to those who are new to farming and young farmers, as well as more experienced farmers," Mr Duncan-Jones said.

An introductory session ran at the end of July, which will be followed by five sessions on key farm management topics, including:

- Identifying and managing risks, strategic planning and setting business goals
- Financial management, budgeting and profitable decision-making
- Managing people on-farm, succession

planning and farm safety

- Climate risk and natural resource management
- Business planning.

As part of completing the course, participants will be offered a one-on-one session with an experienced farm management consultant to review their business plan.

Mr Duncan-Jones said participants will be supported by Agriculture Victoria staff and Jane Foster, a farm business consultant with ORM Pty Ltd.

"Online delivery of the course allows farmers from anywhere in the state to participate, from the comfort of their own homes and without the added time commitment of travel," Mr Duncan-Jones said. "If you're a farmer who wants to better manage your business, strengthen your farm resilience to withstand future droughts and shocks, and set up your farm for success now and into the future – this is the program for you."

For more information, contact Elizabeth Alsop on 0457 838 537 or email elsop@agriculture.vic.gov.au

The Farm Business Resilience Program is jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Victorian Government's Future

Agriculture Skills Capacity Fund.

Further information about the Program and the Future Drought Fund can also be

found on the Agriculture Victoria website – agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/managing-for-and-during-drought

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School pigs cool

from P8
bans and cash prizes.
Done properly and with an industry focus, this assistance gives us a 'foot in the door' to compete for a student's attention against the poultry, sheep, goat, beef and cropping enterprises most schools teaching agriculture tend to gravitate towards.
The hope is that by assisting teachers

to deliver a 'positive pig experience', more school leavers looking for careers working with livestock might gravitate towards pigs.
I can't see why this engagement model couldn't be copied in all states.
A side benefit is the amount of interest created within the general school community by having pigs on site.

Pig deaths shock Linley Valley Pork

THE deaths of hundreds of pigs at a Wheatbelt property run by a supplier of Linley Valley Pork's has Western Australia's biggest pork producer shocked and deeply concerned.

With recent cold temperatures and respiratory issues playing a major role, up to 500 animals were believed to have died at the farm east of Perth.

The property was understood to be a privately-owned grow-out facility.

A spokesperson for Linley Valley Pork said, "Our company has a strong animal welfare ethos, so we were shocked at the animal welfare and mortality issues at the piggery."

"At the request of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, we sent several qualified staff with significant piggery experience to work with DPIRD and the farmer to remedy the immediate animal welfare challenges at the site."

While monitoring the

welfare of the remaining pigs at the property, DPIRD livestock welfare inspectors were investigating the deaths.

Investigation backed by industry body

WA Pork Producers Association president Graeme Dent said, "Any death of livestock – be it pigs, cattle or sheep – is disturbing to farmers."

"Whatever the outcome is, the industry is fully in support, because none of us like to see compromised animals."

While he could not comment on the specifics of the current al-

legations and investigation, Mr Dent said the incident was not a reflection on the industry as a whole.

"The people involved in this industry are passionate and produce the equal-best quality in the world."

"We do not like to have any bad results – whether it's euthanising animals or growing animals for a food market," he said.

"We are responsible for putting food on the table, so we have to do that the best possible way we can and the safest possible way we can." 🐷



Linley Valley Pork is assisting DPIRD inspectors after hundreds of pigs allegedly died at a supplier's Wheatbelt farm. Photo: Mark Stebnicki



Participating in the conference as representatives of Genics and Australian science was a highly rewarding experience for the author.

International Symposium on Emerging and Re-emerging Pig Diseases wrap up

IN the ever-evolving landscape of pathogens, conferences are one of the powerful platforms for professionals to exchange ideas, share new findings and explore cutting-edge solutions in the field.

Such as CPF Smart Farming leveraging advanced technologies for optimising farming practices, the Ceva Lung Scoring Program that focuses on assessing and managing respiratory health in animals and the Pork MultiPath technology introduced by Genics as novel diagnostic tools for comprehensive pathogen detection.

The eighth International Symposium on Emerging and Re-emerging Pig Diseases, held July 4-7 in Bangkok, was a prime example of such an event, where experts and enthusiasts gathered to explore the frontiers of new and emerging swine pathogens.

The well-organised conference provided an ideal setting to foster creativity and collaboration among the attendees.

One of the highlights of ISERP 2023 was the impressive line-up of the keynote speakers, including Professor Tanja Opriessing, Dr Joaquim Segales, Dr Maria Pieters, Dr Hans Nauwynck, Dr Mausou Sueyoshi and Dr Douglas Gladue.

These esteemed speakers shared the latest insights on topics such as porcine circoviruses, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus, porcine epidemic diarrhoea virus and African swine fever.

Discussions during the conference covered a wide range of sub-

jects, including the ongoing challenge of antimicrobial resistance on pig farms.

It was highlighted that despite antibiotic bans in many countries, antimicrobial resistance persists, potentially also due to non-antibiotic selection pressures such as heavy metals and disinfectants.

Another noteworthy topic was the development of the first commercially produced ASF vaccines by the United States Department of Agriculture, namely NAVET-ASFVAC and AVAC.

Progress in this area was discussed, providing hope for improved ASF control measures.

Furthermore, Dr Nauwynck presented comparative studies on PRRSV vaccines, particularly the autogenous inactivated PRRSV vaccine being developed by Ghent University.

The research demonstrated that this vaccine can effectively boost vaccination in sows with active immunity.

Attendees also received updates on innovative diagnostic technologies for viral and bacterial surveillance, as well as rapid identification of emerging and re-emerging pathogens.

The challenges faced in these fields were highlighted, emphasising the need for clear-cut diagnostic criteria for diseases caused by novel viruses.

It was emphasised that detection alone was not sufficient in such cases.

Biosecurity was a main feature across all presentations and discussions of this conference.

Specific control measures were outlined, including increased border controls, installation of fences to pre-

vent wild boar relocation and monitoring of pig transport.

Education was also identified as a crucial aspect of biosecurity, underscoring the need to raise awareness and knowledge among individuals involved in the industry.

The conference served as an excellent platform to showcase the recent achievements of the Australian industry to a broader audience.

The presentation of the Pork MultiPath technology, capable of detecting and quantifying 12 respiratory and 19 enteric pathogens in a single sample – along with the latest data from the field evaluation project conducted by Genics in collaboration with Australian Pork Limited, SunPork and Riverbend – marked a significant moment.

The project effectively demonstrated the value of PMP in assessing herd-health status and offered significant insights into the prevalence profiles of respiratory and enteric pathogens, as well as patterns of coinfections in selected Australian production units.

Through a longitudinal study, thresholds of PMP1 and PMP2 pathogens were established that enable veterinarians to intervene before the onset of initial symptoms, such as diarrhoea or coughing.

Moreover, by correlating the PMP results with metadata, the study also revealed associations between specific pathogens and sickness in pig populations.

This linkage between pathogen occurrence and clinical symptoms provides a deeper understanding of disease dynamics and aids in

targeted interventions. Furthermore, the field evaluation project introduced a new approach to evaluating herd health programs.

By monitoring the levels of pathogens of concern using PMP panels before and after strategic treatments, in combination with clinical observations, the effectiveness of antibiotic strategic regimes can be assessed.

This methodology provides a valuable means of evaluating the impact of interventions and optimising the management of pig health – find out more at genics.com.au/pork/multipath

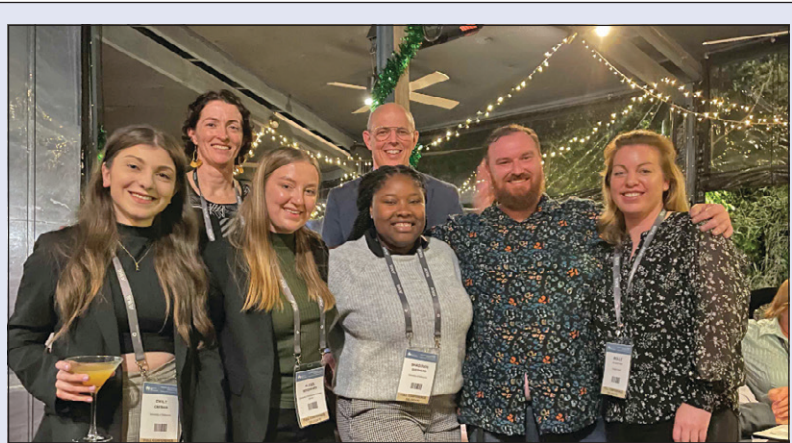
The audience at ISERP 2023 recognised the significance of the project's outcomes and the potential of the developed panels, which sparked discussions on utilising PMP beyond the Australian market.

Participating as representatives of Genics and Australian science was a highly rewarding experience, underlining the value of this innovative approach to pathogen monitoring and assessment. 🐷

Dr Joanna Gerszon
Genics Senior Research Scientist



The author speaking at ISERP 2023.



Student conference scholarship winners Emily Chebaia, Alexa Woodward and Shadirah Shepherd pictured in the front row with vets Greg Tuckett and Molly Dunstan, and in the back row Yvette Pollock and Rowan Wilson at the conference dinner.

Australian Pig Veterinary Conference overview

THE Australian Pig Veterinarians Conference, held on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland recently, featured a range of subjects including batch farrowing in large systems, appropriate antimicrobial usage, risk factors for Japanese encephalitis virus, pressure for welfare reform and African swine fever.

Hearing from US



International keynote speaker Dr Tara Donovan.

international keynote speaker Dr Tara Donovan was one of the highlights.

Dr Donovan captivated the audience with stories and practical examples of production best practices, the use of technology in agriculture and the role of women in the industry.

She was joined by Dr E Wayne Johnson from China, Dr Kirsty Chidgey from New Zealand and local expert Dr Rebecca Athorn for a welfare panel discussion.

The panel – facilitated by Dr Kate Savage – delved into the pressures for reform in the swine industry and shared practical examples of changes happening in the field.

The APV executive committee took pride in introducing the in-

augural student scholarship program, supported by the SunPork Group.

Three University of Melbourne students were selected to attend the full conference – Alexa Woodward, Emily Chebaia and Shadirah Shepherd.

This opportunity allowed the students to gain valuable insights into the industry and build a network of professional veterinarians. The attending veterinarians enthusiastically shared their experiences with the students over the three days, embracing their involvement in the veterinary profession.

Overall, the conference provided a platform for knowledge sharing, networking and discussing important issues in the pig farming and veterinary sectors. 🐷

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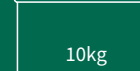
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Being connected is key to mental wellbeing

■ Zoetis and Beyond Blue support rural communities

INCREASING interest rates, inflation, rising living costs and concerns about the future are among the primary causes of community concern for people living in regional Australia, according to a new survey by Beyond Blue.

However, despite the importance of seeking help for mental health, many Australians are hesitant to do so, particularly in rural areas where there is a stigma surrounding mental illness.

Research shows that being connected to others is crucial for mental wellbeing and



can serve as a protective factor against anxiety and depression.

Leading animal health business Zoetis has partnered with Beyond Blue for seven years to support mental health initiatives and reduce stigma around mental illness in rural and regional Australia.

During this time, Zoetis has raised \$700,000 for the Beyond Blue Support Service by donating \$5 from each sale of the

company's livestock, pig and poultry vaccines and drenches.

For 2023, Zoetis set a goal to raise an additional \$100,000 by the end of the year.

Zoetis senior vice president and cluster lead Australia and New Zealand Lance Williams said, "Zoetis works closely with rural Australia through interactions with the country's farming community, agricultural stores, veterinarians and their families."

"We are proud to once again be supporting Beyond Blue and the important work they do.

"The farming community has endured many challenges over the years.

"Through economic insecurity, social isolation, loneliness and insecure work, we're seeing an increase in many of the factors that drive mental health challenges," Mr Williams said.

"Rural Australia and country people are stoic and display considerable courage, however the impact on mental health has been significant for many."

Beyond Blue chief community officer Patrice O'Brien said, "Social connections are closely tied to our physical and mental wellbeing."

"Feeling connected with others can reduce stress and build resilience.

"Having someone to talk to and support you is important.

"People in rural Australia are known for their resilience in times of crisis, but even the most resilient need extra support at times," Ms O'Brien said.

"Timely diagnosis, treatment and ongoing management of a mental health condition in rural areas are likely to occur later or not at all, often resulting in an increased probability of the most tragic of outcomes.

"We want everyone to know that support is available."

The journey to better mental health can start with small actions.

"It's important to make looking after ourselves a priority," Ms O'Brien said.

"Maintaining social connections, keeping in touch with friends and family and being part of a community provides a supportive network.

"Also, understanding which tools and strategies work well for you in tough times and reaching out for that extra support when you need it are really important.

"You are not alone, and you don't have to work things out by yourself.

"Seeking support at the first sign you're not feeling quite yourself can make it easier to bounce back and maintain good mental health.

"Sometimes, just talking to someone can make a difference."

People can support the Zoetis initiative between July 15 and October 31, 2023.

For each sale of the company's livestock, pig and poultry vaccines and drenches, Zoetis will donate \$5 – up to \$100,000 – to Beyond Blue.

Mr Williams said, "The money raised goes directly to the Beyond Blue Support Service to continue helping people living in remote areas."

"To date, thanks to Zoetis' donation, over 14,000 people have been able to get the support they need through the service.

"Together we have made strong progress in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of those who live in rural Australia, and we are passionate about helping again this year," he said.

For more information on how you can help Zoetis to raise vital funds to support mental health in rural communities through its partnership with Beyond Blue, visit zoetis.com.au

For more information about depression and anxiety, visit beyondblue.org.au

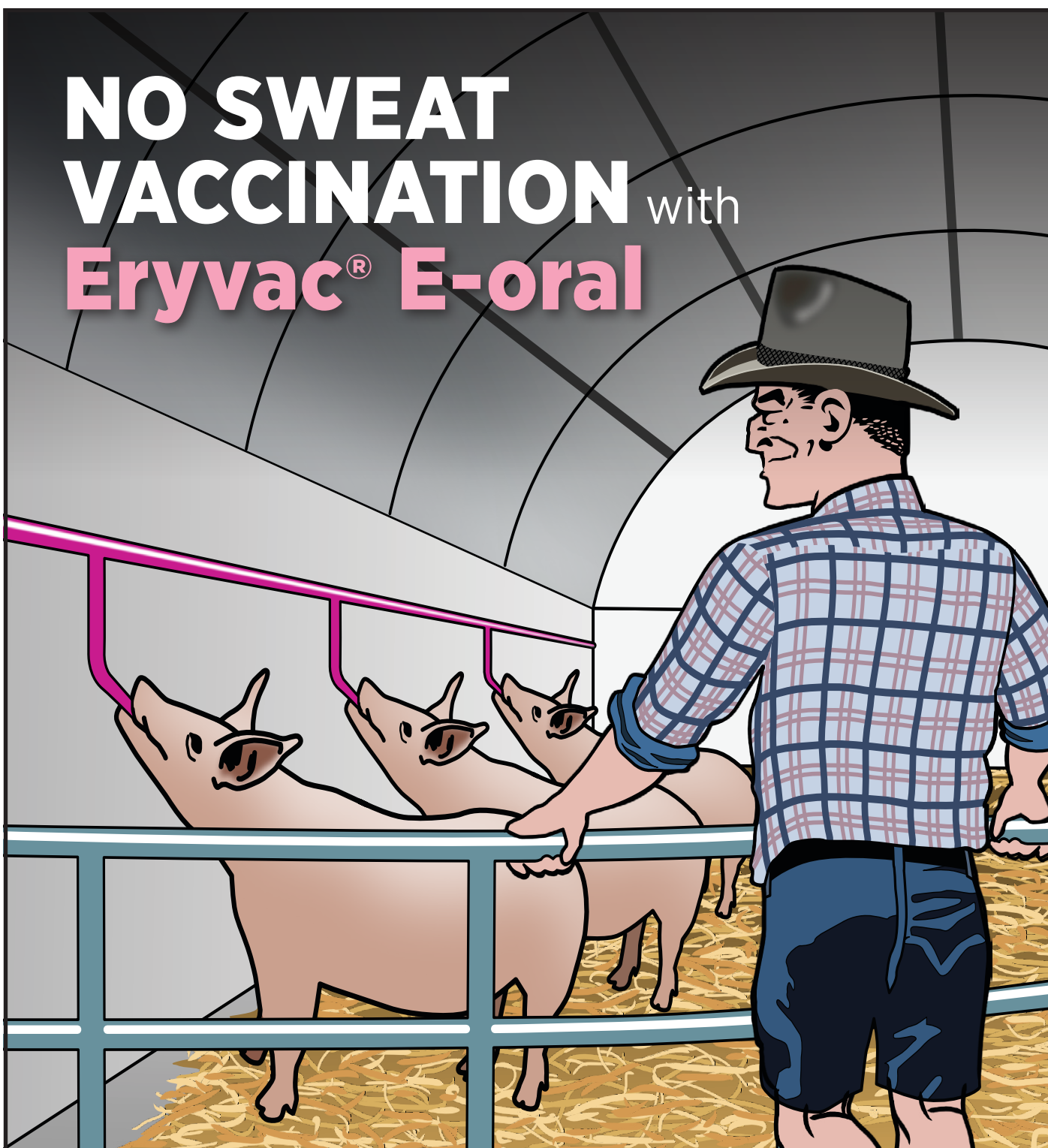
The Beyond Blue Support Service offers free and immediate counselling, advice and referrals via phone, webchat or email.

To talk to a mental health professional for free, contact the 24-hour seven-days-a-week Beyond Blue Support Service on 1300 22 46 36.

Free web chat is also available at beyondblue.org.au/support-service/chat and you can join the online forums for free.



Zoetis works closely with rural Australia through interactions with the country's farming community, agricultural stores, veterinarians and their families.



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Cereal grain energy and nutrients vary by region

DURING the 2022-23 harvest season, Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited compiled AusScan Online data sourced from mills receiving grains – wheat, barley, sorghum and triticale – across the various grain-growing areas in Australia.

This information was distributed to nutritionists and feed millers as a series of Early Harvest Reports and showed predicted protein and moisture contents, pig ileal and faecal digestible energy contents, the IDE:FDE ratio, the broiler apparent metabolisable energy content and the broiler AME index.

These reports were

published monthly in this publication over the harvest period.

Additionally, from this data APRIL has produced a series of box and whisker graphs showing the distribution of pig ileal DE content, broiler AME content and protein content for barley and wheat samples by geographical region as predicted by AusScan Online.

The graphs represented over 7000 scans uploaded to AusScan Online over the harvest period, from November 2022 to April 2023 inclusive.

FDE content of barley and wheat

Within and between geographical regions of Australia, the FDE

contents were found to be more variable in barley than in wheat – see Figure 1.

In contrast, there were subtle regional differences for the FDE content of wheat, with the range across all regions being approximately 0.8MJ/kg.

Protein content for barley and wheat

The 2022-2023 harvest season indicated a wide range of protein percentages for barley and wheat across all regions, and wheat was found to be more variable than barley between regions – see Figure 2.

This information highlights and reinforces the value that AusScan Online can bring in quantitatively portraying the variation in energy and nutrient content of various grains fed to pigs.

AusScan Online is also particularly valuable for picking up 'outliers' that fall outside of the standard range and further underscore the importance of scanning grains for these key dietary components.

Dr Charles Rikard-Bell
APRIL

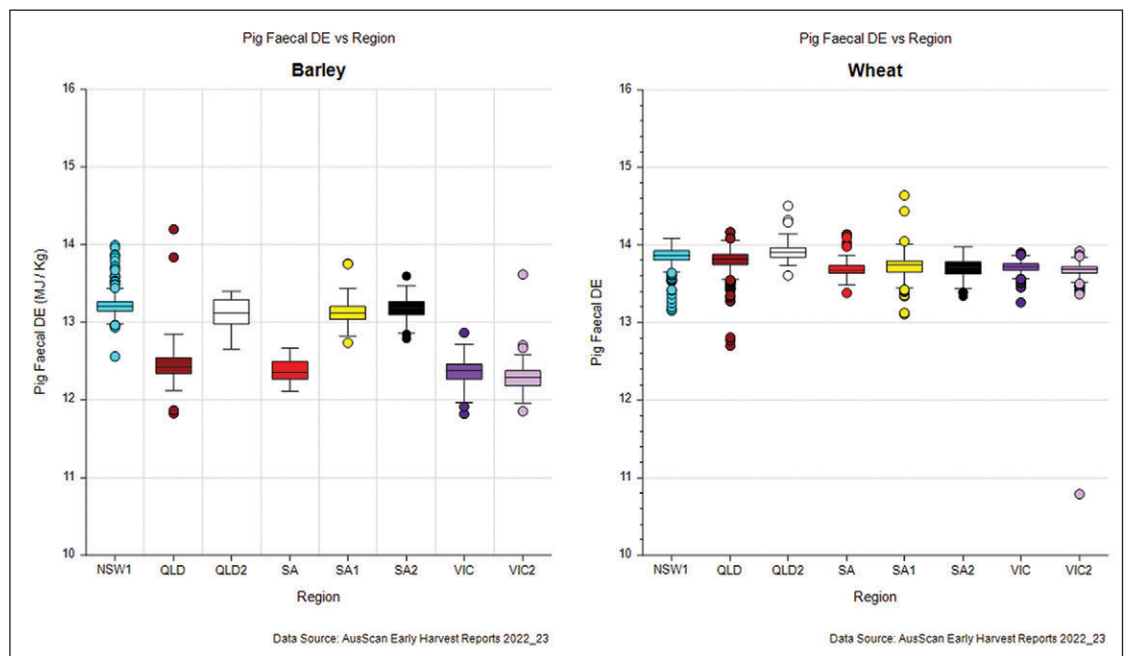


Figure 1. Distribution of pig faecal DE content (MJ/kg) by geographical region for barley and wheat samples as predicted by AusScan Online. Regions are NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. Outliers – coloured dots – are shown external to the box and whisker plot for each region.

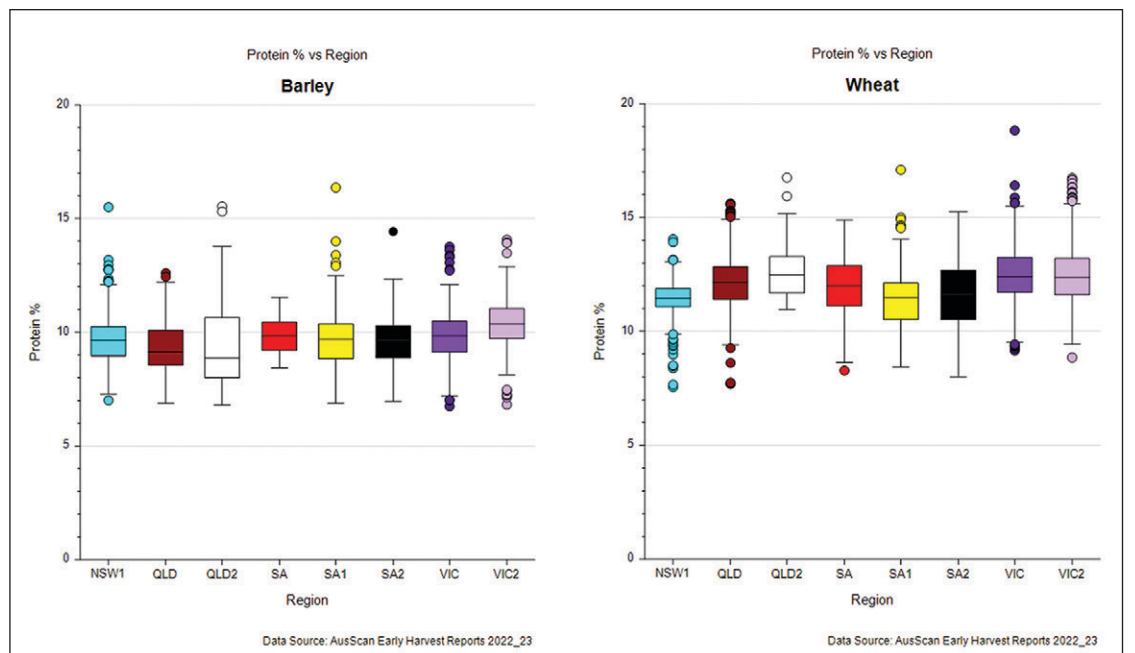


Figure 2. Distribution of protein content (%) by geographical region for barley and wheat samples as predicted by AusScan Online. Regions are NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. Outliers – coloured dots – are shown external to the box and whisker plot for each region.



Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited manager commercialisation and research impact Dr Charles Rikard-Bell.

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Antibiotic use in animals

THE responsible use of antibiotics in both veterinary and human medicine is essential to protect both animal and human health and ensure that animal-derived products are safe for human consumption and use.

Antibiotics should

never be routinely used in place of good animal-care practices.

However, it is vital that antibiotics remain available for a veterinarian to use when an animal is sick, or likely to become sick, from a bacterial infection.

Using the right an-

tibiotic at the right dose, at the right time and for the right duration will treat an infection most effectively and efficiently, reducing the development of resistance and protecting the effectiveness of antibiotics in the future.

Visit animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/industry-stewardship/frequently-asked-questions-about-antibiotic-use-in-animals for a document developed by Animal Medicines Australia that aims to assist veterinarians in discussions with clients and interest groups regarding responsible use of antibiotics in animals.



Antibiotics should never be routinely used in place of good animal-care practices. Photo: RDNE Stock



The winning University of Queensland team for the pork judging competition at ICMJ 2023 – Shania Gough, Sarah Hamblin, the author, Holly Johnson and Will Richards. Photo: ICMJ

Career pathways showcased

THE Australian Pork Limited's producer relations team was busy travelling across its regional communities

during July, attending events.

Including the 2023 Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging

Association program as well as the University of New England Farming Futures Expo, with a focus on showcasing career pathways within the pork industry to the next generation of farmers and young professionals.

2023 ICMJ program

This year, APL was a principal partner of the 2023 ICMJ program hosted at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga from July 4-8.

The 2023 program included a conference featuring industry guest speakers, interactive workshops, question and answer panels, a careers expo and an awards presentation dinner.

More than 130 participants from eight Australian universities and eight industry companies attended the event – as well as a team of nine students from the University of Wyoming in the US.

Pork highlights of the program included:

- A presentation from Natalie Bell from co-sponsor Rivalea
- Pork carcass utilisation workshop presented by Butcher Wars star Shannon Walker
- Pork lunch sponsored by APL.

The program also included this year's ICMJ meat judging competition, where the top 15 meat judging individuals from across the country were narrowed down to a team of 10.

These finalists will go onto the second ICMJ event in September, where they'll take part in further professional development opportunities and industry tours.

They'll be joined by a second contingent of students – selected for their leadership skills, dedication and potential to have a positive impact on the red meat industry – from which five finalists will be chosen for the Australian ICMJ team to

tour the US in January next year and compete on the US meat judging circuit at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

In addition to the competition and industry presentations, the program also included a careers expo.

APL hosted a stall on the day, and it was a great opportunity to connect with students and young people about the career pathways available within the pork industry.

UNE Farming Futures Expo

Also during July, the APL producer relations team was in attendance at the UNE 2023 Farming Futures Expo.

Hosted on July 13 at the UNE Armidale campus, the event was a celebration of careers in agriculture and featured both a careers fair and industry dinner.

APL was a bronze sponsor for this event, with over 500 students attending the careers fair across the day, affording us the opportunity to talk about all things pork and share the wonderful opportunities available to young people within the Australian pork industry.

The industry dinner had over 300 people in attendance, with a diverse mix of industry professionals and students.

It's been great for our team to recently return to regional communities and showcase the many career pathways available and the valuable place young people hold for the future of the pork sector.

**Rowena Davis
Producer Relations
APL**



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InterpreData managing director Greg Stocks.

AI driven pork traceability processes could bring enhanced benefits to producers

PRODUCT fraud and supply chain tampering is increasing, and governments are starting to crack down, exporters are getting worried and consumers are increasingly cost conscious.

Having a cost-effective, highly efficient and easy-to-use method of determining

the provenance of pork samples will allow the pork industry to benefit from scientifically verifiable branding claims, ensuring Australian producers get full value for their products in the national and export markets, while giving consumers the eating experience they pay for.

However, there are two basic challenges:

- While effort and money have been thrown at ensuring the supply chain remains 'untampered with', none prove irrefutable provenance – that is, which farm and animal
- A 'cost-effective, highly efficient and easy-to-use method' is easier said than done... until now.

Physi-Trace project

The Physi-Trace project was aimed at developing a traceability platform that could be used by all producers for biosecurity, provenance, food quality,

security and safety.

In 2021, InterpreData was funded by Australian Pork Limited to revitalise and enhance the Physi-Trace project with their artificial intelligence-driven process TraceBase and to demonstrate that a cost-effective highly efficient method of determining the provenance of pork samples could be achieved.

InterpreData developed TraceBase as a secure user-friendly web interface and database management and AI-driven analysis platform that enables the collection, storage, interpretation and classification of data from any testing hardware which, when coupled with AI, provides irrefutable provenance and traceability throughout the supply chain.

The proof-of-concept trials clearly demonstrated that a much faster highly cost effective

and accurate overall process of proving irrefutable provenance – not only enhanced oversight of the supply chain – could be achieved.

- Automating the interpretation of test results and data storage dramatically reduces manual effort and time – a greater than 96 percent reduction – which equates to a very significant cost-saving

- Irrefutable provenance could be accurately established and with ever-increasing accuracy due to AI application and database

- A secure easy-to-use platform for producers, exporters and consumers can be easily established.

In conclusion, demonstrating provenance could be more quicker, easier and more affordable than ever.

Proof of concept

InterpreData collected and tested 15 samples from three different

farms in Western Australia to create a trace 'elemental fingerprint' for each site using the Physi-Trace analysis method.

Using three different models, TraceBase was able to clearly identify the significant chemical elements to separate the samples and to accurately define from which farm each sample* – see Figure 1 – had come from within 1-4 percent of the time taken by the manual process, a very significant cost-saving.

All farms received a report with the results of the analysis, including their own unique fingerprints.

All data remains the property of the owners and is available for further analysis if required.

This provides compelling evidence to propose that connection to TraceBase with the historical Physi-Trace data would be of significant value in establishing an accurate, validated, fast and easy to use system to identify samples and would greatly enhance the current Physi-Trace system and allow the pork industry to benefit from scientifically verifiable branding claims.

The Physi-Trace dataset could be very easily and quickly imported into TraceBase to generate a fingerprint for each producer in that dataset, leveraging the considerable investment that the pork industry, through APL and government, have made in the collection of the existing dataset.

Next steps

We now want to engage individual farms or businesses, especially free-range and organic producers, who would be interested in being part of a project to demonstrate the value to producers.

TraceBase will provide those producing premium product with the scientific verification to attract premium pricing.

Further work will provide the flavour and intra-muscular fat profiles that accurately demonstrate desirable eating qualities of Australian pork to today's increasingly discerning consumers.

InterpreData managing director Greg Stocks said, "We aim to enable the global scientific community to scale up their chemical and forensic analysis efforts by providing cost effective solutions to increase productivity with sample analysis and interpretation."

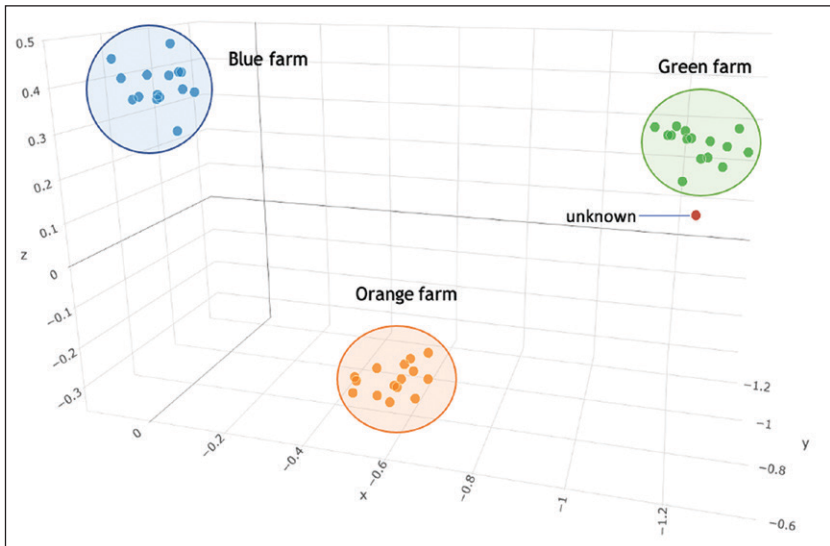


Figure 1: A three-dimensional representation of the chemical fingerprint from all the samples clearly showing the associations of the 15 samples to each farm – *one unknown sample can be easily linked to the green farm.



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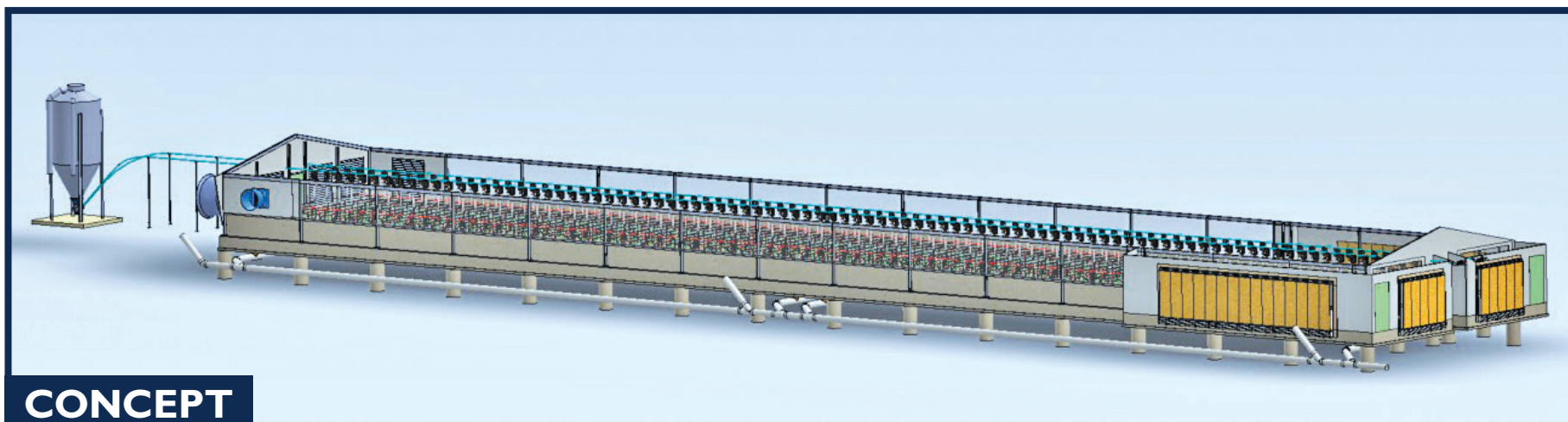
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A dynamic range of speakers for the 2023 APSA Conference

The 2023 Australasian Pig Science Association Committee has assembled an impressive line-up of speakers to present on topics that highlight the depth and breadth of local and international pig science.

Combined with one-page paper presentations, sponsors workshops and a vibrant social program, the three and half-day program will not disappoint.

The nineteenth biennial APSA Conference will see the return of the face-to-face format, with plenty of opportunity to reconnect and network with colleagues and friends.

Register now to make the most of early-bird rates, which have been extended to August 13.

APSA members receive discounted registration.

Visit apsa.asn.au/conference/registration



Animal source foods in the human diet: recalibrating the conversation

Professor Frédéric Leroy

Professor Frédéric Leroy graduated from Ghent University as a bioengineer in 1998 and obtained a PhD in Applied Biological Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in 2002, where he now holds a professorship in food science and biotechnology. His research deals with animal source foods, food processing and fermentation, human nutrition and interdisciplinary ‘food studies’.

Professor Leroy will deliver the 2023 AC Dunkin Memorial Lecture on animal source foods in the human diet. Hyperbolic statements on the harmful effects of animal source foods are becoming increasingly influential, especially via mass media. However, if we were to drastically reduce livestock agriculture, as some are now suggesting, disastrous societal outcomes should be expected. Not in the least, this would cause severe disruptions in the food system and put an already fragile situation of nutrient security at further risk. Though the methods and scale of animal production systems will need to adapt to a changing global context, they will remain vital for the foreseeable future. A more robust and evidence-based conversation on the fundamental assumptions of food systems change is needed.



Space allowance for growing pigs – animal welfare, performance and on-farm practicality

Dr Kirsty Chidgey

Dr Kirsty Chidgey is New Zealand Pork’s animal welfare scientist and advisor based in the School of Agriculture and Environment at Massey University. Dr Chidgey has been involved in the pork industry since 2010 and completed a PhD investigating sow and piglet performance and behaviour in a pen-based farrowing system. She is interested in practical science-based research that benefits and enhances on-farm practice.

A recent review of the Code of Welfare: Pigs in New Zealand included proposals to increase the minimum space allowance for growing pigs. However, there is a lack of information on how space allowance impacts a pig’s welfare status. Additionally, scientific approaches to assessing the effect of space on other aspects, such as pig performance, are inconsistent. Dr Chidgey will outline the existing literature to explore the impact of space on the welfare and performance of growing pigs, and the practical implications of increasing space allowance on existing farms.



Towards truly stall free pork production

Dr Kate Plush

Dr Kate Plush is manager science, technology and adoption at the SunPork Group, and holds an affiliate position with the University of Queensland. Upon completion of her BSc (Hons) and PhD at the University of Adelaide, Dr Plush continued postdoctoral and early career research roles at the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Research and Development Institute. Dr Plush joined the SunPork Group in 2017 and leads her research team in programs and projects across the entire pork value chain, with a special interest in transition sow management and neonatal piglet survival.

The individual housing of sows and boars within stalls is still frequent, especially when risk for impaired reproduction or welfare is high. Many countries have either removed or limited stall housing in gestation or are working towards this in response to legislative changes that are becoming more commonplace. With increased experience and confidence in group gestation systems, there may be an opportunity to examine whether there is indeed a requirement for stall use in any stage of pork production. Dr Plush will focus on the phases of the reproductive cycle in which the use of the stall is often still routine – breeding and farrowing – to critically examine whether there is an opportunity to completely remove use. Her review will determine whether stall-free pork production is achievable, and if not so immediately, identify knowledge gaps that once addressed should position the industry well to move away from stall use over time.



Improving pig survival with a focus on birthweight – a practical breeding perspective

Ms Jo-Anne Harper

Ms Jo-Anne Harper is genetics program manager at Rivalea Australia, where she's involved in the management of genetics and breeding programs across the many sites within the company. Ms Harper's PhD is aimed at improving progeny survival through genetic selection, more specifically looking at developing pre and post-weaning survival traits and immune response phenotypes in pigs. Her main interest is making genetic improvements in economically important traits to improve productivity and efficiencies for commercial operations, along with understanding how to best manage the ever-changing genotype of the modern pig.

Survival of pigs is a key driver directly impacting profitability and animal welfare. Ms Harper's review explores the relationship between litter size and piglet birthweight and the detrimental impact this negative association has had on pig survival, along with genetic strategies implemented in breeding programs to improve survival. It is suggested that the primary effect of litter size on mortality was indirect, through the effects of litter size on individual piglet birthweights. For a successful selection program, combining the average piglet birthweight at the litter level and mortality data based on individual piglet records might yield the best response in pig survival.



Smallholder farming in selected regions and its impact on the changing African swine fever pandemic

Dr Nina Matsumoto

Dr Nina Matsumoto is a veterinarian and epidemiologist with a background in production animal health and epidemiology of emergency diseases in development contexts. Dr Matsumoto completed a PhD investigating the prevention and control of the African swine fever epidemic in Laos. The results of her work included investigation into the financial and social impacts of the outbreak on smallholder farmers, novel diagnostic tests, abattoir-based surveillance programs and the characteristics of the disease in the southeast Asian context. She is now working for Ausvet epidemiology consultants supporting Indonesian feedlots in developing cost-effective biosecurity solutions in the face of the 2022 foot and mouth disease outbreak.

Dr Matsumoto's paper will describe two unique smallholder pig production systems and the challenges they pose to effective ASF control strategies. She will demonstrate the similarities and differences that required nuanced approaches to recommendations for ASF control and provide recommendations on strategies to address these challenges to aid the development of effective smallholder biosecurity protocols in a variety of contexts.



Early life piglet experiences and impacts on immediate and longer-term adaptability

Dr Megan Lucas

Dr Megan Lucas is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Animal Welfare Science Centre, University of Melbourne. Dr Lucas is currently working within 'Tails', a Cooperative Research Centres Project aimed at improving our understanding of tail biting to eliminate the routine practice of tail docking in the Australian pig industry. Her research interests centre around early detection of tail biting and how housing and management affect pig welfare. Dr Lucas' PhD research examined the effects of positive human interaction and early life experiences on stress resilience in pigs.

Pigs routinely encounter a variety of challenging situations, including abrupt weaning, painful husbandry procedures, intense contact with stockpeople and exposure to different social and physical environments. The resilience of pigs to these stressors has implications for both welfare and productivity and can be impacted by early life experiences. In piglets, the early housing environment before and after weaning can affect future stress resilience, and impact welfare and productivity. As such, early life experiences can be important in shaping how pigs cope with stress in both an immediate and longer-term capacity. Dr Lucas' review will address the various challenges young pigs face and how factors such as the physical environment, maternal and human contact and enrichment may modulate these responses.



Genetic engineering technologies in domestic pigs

Professor Paul Verma

Professor Paul Verma is principal scientist - reproduction and acting program leader - livestock sciences at the South Australian Research and Development Institute and an Affiliate Professor at the University of Adelaide. After obtaining his BSc and MSc from MS University in India and PhD at the University of Adelaide in 1996, Professor Verma joined BresaGen Ltd where he developed an interest in stem cells working on genetic manipulation of large animals. He moved to Monash University to continue his cell-reprogramming research, where he established the premier Australian reprogramming group at the Monash Institute of Medical Research, attracting about \$10 million in funding, over 80 publications and seven granted and provisional patents.

The emergence of advances in genome editing provides a simple and rapid approach to impact livestock genetics for a variety of applications – thus far, the majority of genes that have been targeted in livestock species are genes impacting animal and human health. However, with experience, the application of these approaches for modulating and enhancing livestock for production, health and welfare gain are now feasible, hence the immense excitement in the field. The ability for direct genome modification of embryos using clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeat – CRISPR/Cas9 – is a reality. Professor Verma will present research in efficient manipulation of embryo genomes in pigs and other livestock and discuss his vision for the future use of these technologies in pigs.



New developments in mineral and vitamin D nutrition for sows and growing pigs

Professor Hans Stein

Dr Hans H Stein is a professor of nutrition in the Division of Nutritional Sciences and the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois, where he has responsibilities in research, extension and teaching. His research focuses on feed ingredient evaluation, digestibility and utilisation of energy and nutrients by pigs and humans and development of systems for accurate diet formulation. Professor Stein has mentored more than 100 graduate students, post-doctoral research fellows, interns and visiting scientists, and has authored or co-authored approximately 335 peer-reviewed publications and given invited presentations on nutrition in 41 countries.

Mineral nutrition in swine has received more attention during recent years due to the availability of microbial phytase, as well as the emergence of new sources of micro minerals which has resulted in a renewed interest in defining absorption and functions of micro minerals in diets for pigs. Professor Stein's review will highlight the benefits of formulating diets based on standardised total tract digestibility of calcium and phosphorus, avoiding over-formulation with calcium, and using sufficient microbial phytase to degrade all dietary phytate. Benefits of using vitamin D metabolites in diets for sows and chelated or other non-sulphate forms of micro minerals will also be discussed.



Maximising feed intake in sick pigs

Professor Nicholas Gabler

Dr Nicholas Gabler is a professor in swine nutrition and physiology in the Department of Animal Science at Iowa State University. He graduated with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from La Trobe University in 1999 and gained his PhD in 2005.

Professor Gabler spent time at Purdue University as a postdoctoral researcher before moving to Iowa State in 2005. His research focuses on understanding and improving swine feed efficiency, growth and intestinal physiology and health of swine. Professor Gabler recently won the American Society of Animal Science's 2022 Animal Growth and Development Award and will present at APSA on the complexities of managing nutrition in disease-challenged and stressed pigs.

Indicative 2023 Conference Program

| Monday 13 November 2023 | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 10:30 – 17:00 | Industry Workshops |
| 18:00 – 19:10 | AC Dunkin Memorial Lecture |
| 19:10 – 21:10 | Welcome Reception |
| 21:10 – 23:00 | After Reception Drinks |
| Tuesday 14 November 2023 | |
| 08:30 – 17:00 | Conference Program |
| 19:00 – 23:00 | Conference Dinner |
| Wednesday 15 November 2023 | |
| 08:30 – 17:00 | Conference Program |
| 19:00 – 23:00 | Networking Function |
| Thursday 16 November 2023 | |
| 08:30 – 12:30 | Conference Program |
| 12:30 – 13:00 | Awards and Close |
| The full program will be released in October 2023. | |

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PorkStar visits Brisbane and Adelaide

THE PorkStar program returned to both Brisbane and Adelaide for its annual event series, hosted this year by Stanley Restaurant in Brisbane and Arkhé in Adelaide.

Head chef Louis Tikaram of Stanley Restaurant presented a Cantonese themed banquet.

Chef Louis' menu was innovative, taking classic dishes such as a pork belly Siu Yuk, sweet and sour pork and wontons and elevating them to fine-dining standard.

Presented to influential chefs – including Adrian Richardson, Ben Williamson of the Agnes group and Spirit Hotels national food manager Gary Johnson



Marketing Matters

by JACK NICOLL



program was delivered in partnership with Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards – which provided an impressive wine pairing for every dish.

These events bring new ideas and provide conversation starters to chefs, continuing PorkStar's commitment to promote culinary excellence and build the presence of pork on menus.

To hear more about how pork has played a role in Louis Tikaram's journey or how Jake Kelly's love for pork began, we invite you to listen to *The Crackling* podcast – a platform created by PorkStar for Australia's finest chefs, artisan producers and butchers to talk about all things pork.



PorkStar travelled to Adelaide to host an event at Arkhé, with the help of head chef Jake Kelly.



The PorkStar program returned to Brisbane, where head chef Louis Tikaram of Stanley Restaurant presented a Cantonese themed banquet.

– Louis' imaginative cooking does a lot to inspire a place for pork on menus in both high-end and volume food-service markets.

Two weeks after visiting Brisbane, PorkStar travelled to Adelaide to host an event at Arkhé, with the help of head chef Jake Kelly.

Jake's menu was a great ambassador for head-to-tail cooking,

utilising trotter, lardo, blood sausage and every part of the pig's head.

Dishes such as pig's head tacos provided chefs, producers and attending media with a culinary twist on underutilised cuts.

The culinary experience attracted media coverage from both the *Adelaide Advertiser* and *Glam Adelaide*.

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