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# Australian Pork Newspaper



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Vol 20. No. 11 November 2016 Australian Pork Newspaper PO Box 387 Cleveland 4163 Phone (07) 3286 1833 Fax (07) 3821 2637 Email [ben@porknews.com.au](mailto:ben@porknews.com.au)



Tong Park Piggery farrowing supervisor Dannielle McAuliffe. Four autistic adults will soon be employed at Tong Park.

## Pork CRC backs autistic employment

PORK CRC and the South Australian government have contributed \$150,000 towards a world-first initiative by Autism CRC and SunPork Farms to employ autistic adults in animal care positions in the Australian pork industry.

Pilot projects in SA and Queensland will employ a minimum of four autistic adults in animal care positions within SunPork Farms operations in each state.

Collectively, development and assessment of the program represents a financial commitment by SunPork Farms, Autism CRC and Specialisterne exceeding \$800,000.

Program goals include:

- Identifying and employing diverse skills and talents of autistic adults in animal care;
- Developing innovative solutions that continue to provide optimal welfare for livestock; and
- Building capacity within the agricultural sector to employ autistic adults.

The project offers life-changing opportunities for people



on the spectrum and further improvement in the welfare of livestock.

Pork CRC CEO Roger Campbell said the CRC for High Integrity Australian Pork was proud to be involved with such a game-changing project and encouraged everyone to make the opportunity known to those who might be eligible to apply. "It's the most exciting project we've been involved with and I congratulate Autism CRC and SunPork Farms for coming up with something so innovative," Dr Campbell said.

"This initiative will open up a whole new world to autistic people and those on the autism spectrum and with Australia's pork industry needing to boost its pool of dedicated animal carers to maintain and, indeed, improve our existing high wel-

fare standards, this is a win-win for all parties.

"World-leading Pork CRC supported science and research and development has clearly demonstrated the very real link between good stockmanship and good productivity.

"With this in mind, I believe we can continue to improve welfare and productivity outcomes by embracing a new group of enthusiastic, incentivised piggery workers."

SunPork Farms seeks eight motivated individuals to fill Pig Care positions, with four to be based in the Wasleys and Sheoak Log regions of SA and four based one hour outside Dalby at Tong Park Piggery on the Queensland Darling Downs.

Queensland applications closed on October 31 and SA applications close at 5pm, December 18.

Potential applicants and interested parties should visit [au.specialisterne.com/autism-and-agriculture](http://au.specialisterne.com/autism-and-agriculture) or email [jay.hobbs@specialisterne.com](mailto:jay.hobbs@specialisterne.com) [www.porkcrc.com.au](http://www.porkcrc.com.au)

## Pork meeting season approaches

OCTOBER and November are always very busy times with annual general meetings and other conferences and it's no different in the pork industry.

I recently attended a number of meetings and conferences including the Andrew Forrest initiative, ASA100, which stands for Australia Sino 100 Year Agricultural and Food Safety Partnership.

This initiative, which Australian Pork Limited is associated with, attempts to free up the flow of trade and investment between Australia and China in agricultural commodities and food.

There was quite a bit of media coverage of a speech by Andrew Forrest relating to the need to have a strong over-arching brand for Australian produce in China to ensure the very positive reputation and image it has is used for greatest outcomes for our trade prosperity there.

This has been a hard sell, with many companies trading into China who focus strongly on their own company brands without seeing the value in an additional Australian brand to complement them.

The meeting culminated in a dinner with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce, where the Chinese Ambassador Mr Cheng Jingye also attended.

The National Farmers' Federation Congress was also held recently and it focused on the rapid evolution and adoption of new technologies in Australian agriculture.

A number of panels with various federal politicians also provided some interesting commentary and entertainment.

I was invited to be part of a panel discussing animal welfare issues at the LIVEX Forum recently too.

This is the conference for the live exports industry.

Just like our industry, they have a lot of attention from



Point of View

by ANDREW SPENCER CEO



animal rights activists but unlike our industry, none of their product is actually consumed by Australian consumers or community.

There are some interesting parallels with the pork industry in how they are attempting to increase the transparency of their industry, and the difficulty in communicating more broadly that they are leading the world in managing animal welfare for our live export industry – in Australia and beyond.

Shortly I will head off to the World Meat Congress in Uruguay.

This conference is held every two years and addresses subjects for the meat industry around sustainability, animal welfare, economics and nutritional issues associated with our products.

I represent APL on the International Meat Secretariat on the Pork Committee as Secretary.

And of course, as many of you already know, the APL Delegates' Forum, annual conference and AGM are due to take place in mid-November in Melbourne.

APL members are warmly invited to attend these meetings and the cocktail event on the evening of November 16.

The week following will see the Pork CRC AGM and stakeholders' day as well as the AGM for the new research and development body for the pork industry, Australasian Pork Research

Institute Limited. APRIL is being developed to take up where the Pork CRC will drop off in mid-2019 once its term has finished.

APRIL is now signing on members, of which APL is one, and it will eventually be commissioning projects with funding from commercialisation products emanating from the Pork CRC, membership fees and allocations from APL.

These R&D projects will not duplicate but complement the work already being done by APL, and perhaps work more in the area of products that can be developed for the market.

It was pointed out to me at a recent producer meeting that with a lot of staff turnover at APL over the past 12 months or so, some of the connections between pig producers and APL have weakened a bit.

This is something we hope to rectify in time, and members should note that a quick way to connect with APL is to contact our Membership Services Manager James Battams who will look after any APL-related concerns you might have, or direct you to the correct staff member.

Remember to use our toll-free number: 1800 789 099.

I look forward to catching up with many of you at the forthcoming Delegates' Forum and annual conference in Melbourne on November 16 and 17. 🐷



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**Pig Industry  
Calendar of Events**

**2016**

**NOV 14 - 16** – Symposium on Gut Health in Production of Food Animals, St Louis, Missouri, US [www.guthealthsymposium.com/2016/default.asp](http://www.guthealthsymposium.com/2016/default.asp)

**NOV 14 - 16** – North American PRRS Symposium, Chicago, Illinois US, [www.vet.k-state.edu/na-prrs](http://www.vet.k-state.edu/na-prrs)

**NOV 15 - 18** – EuroTier, Hanover, Germany [www.eurotier.com](http://www.eurotier.com)

**2017**

**JAN 3 - 5** – Oxford Farming Conference, Oxford, United Kingdom [www.ofc.org.uk/conference/2016/2016-conference](http://www.ofc.org.uk/conference/2016/2016-conference)

**JAN 10 - 12** – Banff Pork Seminar, Banff, Canada [www.banffpork.ca](http://www.banffpork.ca)

**JAN 17 - 18** – Minnesota Pork Congress, Minneapolis, USA [www.mnporkcongress.com](http://www.mnporkcongress.com)

**FEB 25 - 28** – AASV Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado, US [www.aasv.org](http://www.aasv.org)

**MAR 15 - 17** – VIV Asia, Bangkok, Thailand [www.vivasia.nl](http://www.vivasia.nl)

**APR 4** – Livestock Forum, Barcelona, Spain [www.livestockforum.com](http://www.livestockforum.com)

**APR 24 - 26** – Livestock Philippines 2017, Passay City, Phillipines [www.livestockphilippines.com](http://www.livestockphilippines.com)

**MAY 18 - 20** – China Animal Husbandry Expo (CAHE), Qingdao International Expo Centre, China [www.caaa.com.cn](http://www.caaa.com.cn)

**JUN 7 - 9** – World Pork Expo, Iowa, Des Moines, US [www.worldpork.org](http://www.worldpork.org)

**JUN 11 - 14** – 10th International Conference on Pig Reproduction, Columbia, Missouri US [www.muconf.missouri.edu/ICPR2017/Index.html](http://www.muconf.missouri.edu/ICPR2017/Index.html)

**JUL 21 - 14** – AVMA Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana US [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)

**AUG 29 - 31** – SIAVS - International Poultry and Pork Show, São Paulo, Brazil [www.siavs.org.br/?lang=en](http://www.siavs.org.br/?lang=en)

**2018**

**MAR 3 - 6** – Annual Meeting of the American Association of Swine, San Diego, California, US [www.aasv.org/annmtg](http://www.aasv.org/annmtg)

**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](mailto:ben@porknews.com.au)**

**porknews.com.au**

**Expanding the 'Pigs in Schools' education program**

I AM sure many of you are aware of the current activities of the Australian Pork Limited 'Pigs in Schools' program... however for those who aren't, here is a brief summary before I discuss several new initiatives.

APL has developed a suite of educational resources that are freely available for teachers throughout Australia.

Currently there are five resources and these target students from kindergarten through to year 10.

These resources are focused on pork production in Australia and cover each aspect of the supply chain.

Topics explored include: pig production systems in Australia, our world-leading traceability system PhysiTrace, our welfare standards and research, environmental initiatives, APIQ✓ and the process of becoming a quality-assured producer, the Pig-Pass NVD system, technologies used in industry as well as marketing of Australian pork.

Throughout each resource, the key messages and themes remain constant.

Teachers, and therefore students, are presented with the truth about our industry and are subsequently encouraged to make informed and educated choices that ensure they are buying Australian-produced pork, and perhaps more importantly, understand the value of making such a choice.

Ultimately, this program is about both succession planning and consumer education.

It is hoped that, in the future, as a result of learning about our fantastic industry, students will pursue a career in some area of the pork supply chain.

This venture also provides a good opportunity for students to learn why it is important to buy Australian-produced pork.

We have made the re-



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



sources as teacher friendly as possible in order to maximise their use in the education system.

They are all linked to the national curriculum and are also cross-curricular linked.

Examples of this are links to sustainability, science, agriculture, design and technology, just to name a few.

Each of the resources have specific curriculum links and an assessment rubric within the document in addition to suggested lesson plans and background industry information.

This essentially means that teachers are able to open the resource and begin to use it without having to do further research on the subject area or have any prior knowledge.

As a result of the use of the resources and networking, APL is often invited to be involved in agricultural education days throughout Australia.

Primarily, R&I Manager Technology Adoption and Industry Capability Ashley Norval represents APL at these events and speaks to students of all ages about the industry and pig production.

She also engages students in activities to help teach them about pigs: for example, learning about the cuts of pork, biogas production, what we feed pigs, and more recently, pig behaviour and simple probability via piglet races (to a very young audience!).

Now, for the future. As previously mentioned,

the five resources currently available focus on pig production in Australia and the pork supply chain.

The next resource to be released in November focuses on how to cook with pork and this will enable industry to engage with a completely new complement of teachers across Australia.

Food Technology teachers will be targeted with the release of 'Pork is on the Menu'.

Aimed at years 9 and 10, 'Pork is on the Menu' engages with teachers and students by enabling them to design a menu for a function that uses pork in all the dishes.

In addition, APL is in the process of putting together a recipe book to support this new resource.

Aimed at a secondary school audience, we anticipate the recipe book will become a valuable reference tool for students for many years to come and be useful when deciding what to cook – hopefully ensuring 'Pork is on the Menu' for an increasing number of households.

However, a significant barrier to the teacher uptake of the resource is the lack of funding that many schools experience to enable them to buy the meat for use in the lesson.

That is why APL and a supply chain partner are working together to supply the pork for two lessons per school at no cost to the school.

Another new aspect of the program is the 2017 Sydney Royal Pig Show –

Commercial Pig Schools Competition.

Quite a mouthful, I know!

Essentially, APL is partnering with the Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales to run a hoof and hook pig competition at the 2017 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

The model for this competition is not a new one – it is well known that the involvement of school students in producing a steer for such competitions has been the starting point for a student's career in agriculture.

The concept is simple. Students gain exposure to commercial production techniques while still competing against other schools (rather than the rest of the industry) – somewhat levelling out the playing field and making it both a valuable networking and educational experience.

Because the competition in 2017 is the first 'Commercial Pig Schools' venture to be run at the Sydney Easter Show, entries will be limited to 15 schools.

It is pleasing to note that we had to increase this from 10 schools, as originally planned, due to the overwhelming interest from schools throughout NSW.

The program will be reassessed after the 2017 Show.

As well as presenting their pigs to meet set specifications, schools and their students will be required to keep records, use industry resources to show that they have cared for their pigs properly, be APIQ✓ certified and present a record (that could include still or video footage) of how they cared for their pigs.

As a condition of entering next year's competition, each school needs to demonstrate it is using the APL resources and is also capable of raising the animals in a suitable, competent and welfare-friendly

manner. Schools will each present a pen of three animals to the show.

It is anticipated that schools will only have the pigs for six to eight weeks prior to the show.

During this time the students will be involved in the day-to-day management of their pigs.

APIQ✓ management will work with each teacher and their students to achieve conditional APIQ✓ certification as part of their education and experience.

It's hoped the students will obtain a good understanding of what is required to run a commercial piggery and develop an interest in the industry for the future.

Students will also be put through the ProHand Pigs course as part of their experience and training.

Pigs will remain at the showground through the first week of the show, with students and teachers responsible for feeding and maintaining the pigs as well as participating in a judging competition.

Students will be parading their pigs and their handling skills will be included in the judging process.

Following the live judging, pigs will be sent for processing, where individual carcasses and pens will be assessed.

Carcass feedback will be provided back to the schools as part of the learning experience and results and winners will be announced and presented at the Show.

If you are in NSW and know of a school that may like to be involved in this competition in 2017 and beyond, please contact Ashley Norval on 02 6270 8823 – there are still a number of spots to fill.

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

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# A triple C: course, China and calliper

WE are getting close to the end of the year, which means the annual Roseworthy pig course 'The Science and Practice of Pig Production' is not far off.

In 2017 the course will run at Roseworthy in South Australia from January 30 to February 10.

The course has been career changing for many and covers the basics and the latest developments in pork production, from reproduction to marketing, with visits to mills and abattoirs and much more.

If you want to understand the industry and learn the latest from the best, then register now.

Pork CRC covers travel and other costs for the first 15 production-based personnel to register for the course, so discuss it with those you need to in your organisation and lodge your registration.

Details are on our website ([www.porkcrc.com.au](http://www.porkcrc.com.au)) or can be obtained from Rebecca Smith at Pork CRC ([rebecca.smith@porkcrc.com.au](mailto:rebecca.smith@porkcrc.com.au)) or course co-ordinator Dr William van Wettere at the University of Adelaide School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences ([william.vanwettere@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:william.vanwettere@adelaide.edu.au)).

## China challenge

I spent five days in China in mid-October at a very large technical meeting attended by 600 people including nutritionists, production and technical staff from pork businesses and company owners.

I didn't hear much on the technical or research side we didn't already know, but I learnt a little about the Chinese pork industry.



## Initiatives

by DR ROGER CAMPBELL  
CEO



The industry is very profitable at the moment, with average cost of production around \$A3.70/kg carcass weight and average price at \$A5.10/kg carcass weight.

Average carcass weight is about 79kg but everything is sold and priced on live weight.

The larger companies have a lower cost of production than the average and some have made billions in the past 12 months.

There is tremendous expansion and consolidation occurring across the industry, with the government closing down smaller producers and moving pigs away from the people.

The government is also introducing many more regulations to reduce the water and air pollution associated with pork production.

Where it all ends up remains unknown, but it will be different and it is likely China will import 5-10 percent of its needs.

This equates to 32-65 million pigs annually and is likely to initially cause disruption to global pork markets and, ultimately, longer-term supply contracts.

To give you a feel for the size of China's industry and how it is changing, the biggest production company in China has permits for and is in the process of expanding its production by 20 million pigs.

I told you last month that a sow body condition calliper caught my interest when in Canada in September, hence following is an outline of what I heard

and how I think you might make use of it.

Hearing an interesting presentation on the use of a calliper developed by Assistant Prof and Extension Swine Specialist at North Carolina State University Dr Mark Knauer to objectively measure body composition of sows certainly sparked my interest.

Use of the calliper on commercial herds has considerably reduced feed cost in gestation and it appears that reproduction is optimised over a narrow calliper range.

This is shown in Figure 1.

Talking to the inventor, there seems no doubt that sows classified as fat have smaller litters and wean fewer pigs.

We have always known this but the calliper makes

continued P4



Happy students and teachers at the completion of the 2016 Roseworthy Pig Course. Registration is now open for the 2017 course.

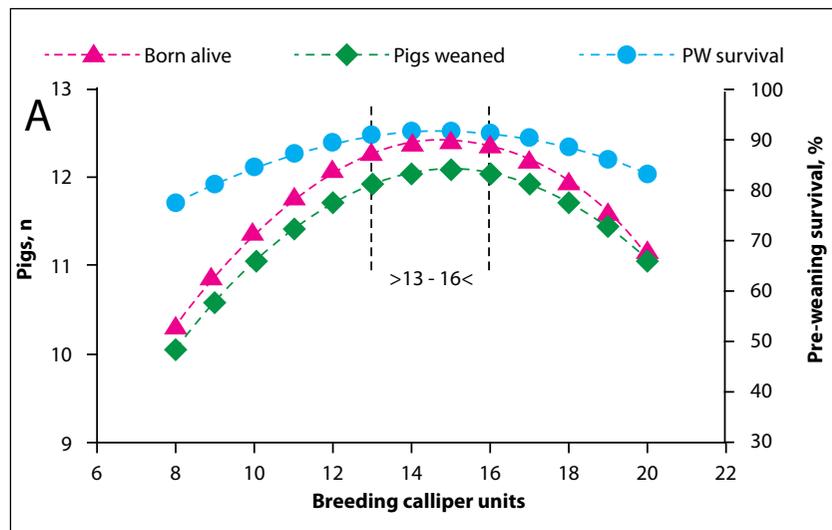
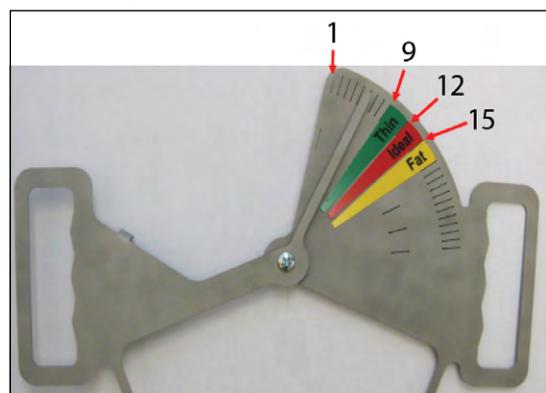


Figure 1: Calliper score and reproductive parameters.



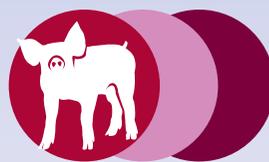
The sow calliper.



Dr Mark Knauer, developer of the sow body condition calliper.

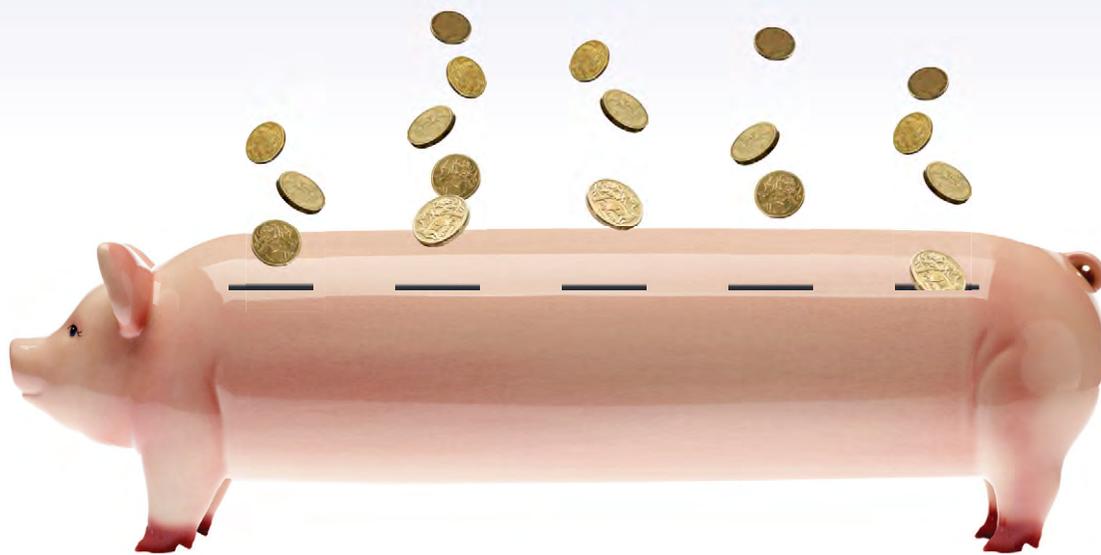
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## Australian Pork Limited Notice of 2016 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting of Australian Pork Limited** (ABN 83 092 783 278) (APL) will be held on **Thursday 17 November 2016** commencing at **12.30pm** (Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time) at the **Melbourne Marriott Hotel (Exhibition Room), Corner Exhibition and Lonsdale Streets, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.**

If you need more information please contact APL Events and Membership Executive, Heidi Eldridge on 02 6270 8807 or at [heidi.eldridge@australianpork.com.au](mailto:heidi.eldridge@australianpork.com.au).

## A triple C: course, China and calliper

from P3

it easier to assess and control body condition than visual body condition scoring.

All the figures included in my column have been taken from reports by Mark Knauer.

The difference in calliper score for two farms owned by the same company is shown in Figure 4.

The change in calliper score over time, along with feed changes and cost savings are shown in Figures 2 and 3.

The calliper is easy to use and there is a YouTube video available on how to use it (<https://youtu.be/YgxQE1zkjbQ>).

The calliper score seems independent of parity and has generated a lot of interest and use in the US.

Sows are assessed at

mating and every five to six weeks as needed and their feed intake adjusted accordingly.

I have a standard operating plan on use of the calliper and feeding levels developed by Hanor Farms and I'm happy to send you a copy but Australian producers will need to work out intakes

for our conditions and probably start by relating calliper score to visual body condition score.

Nevertheless, there is something in this and you should give it a go.

The calliper costs \$US200 and can be ordered direct from Mark at [mtknauer@gmail.com](mailto:mtknauer@gmail.com) [www.porkcsrc.com.au](http://www.porkcsrc.com.au)

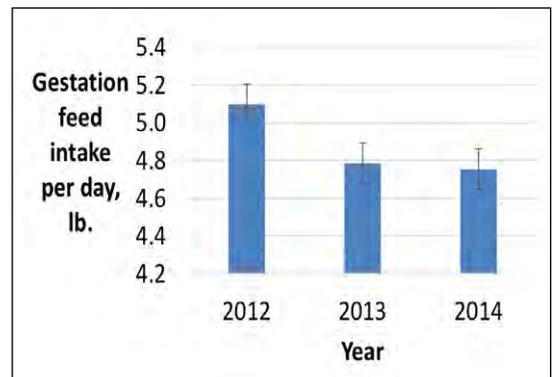


Figure 2: Change in feed intake in gestation for an 18,000-sow unit.

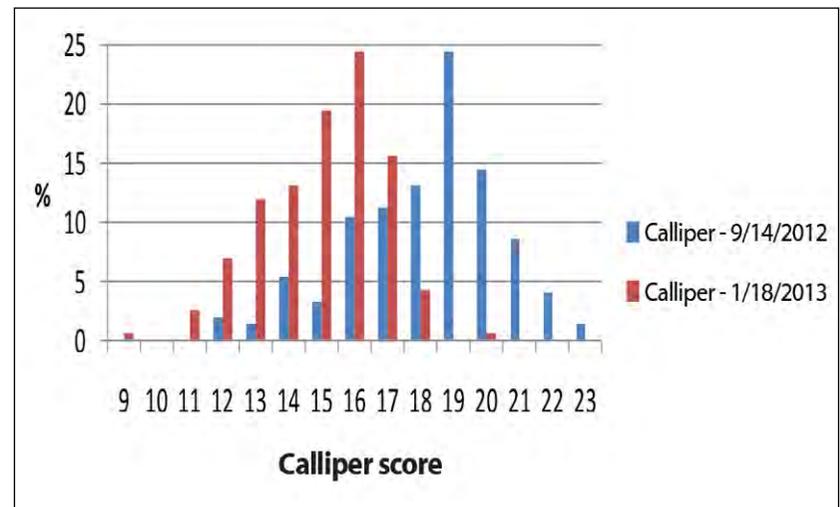


Figure 3: Change in calliper score over a four-month period. Feed savings associated with the change totalled \$US285,000 and the 'ideal' calliper score is 13-16.

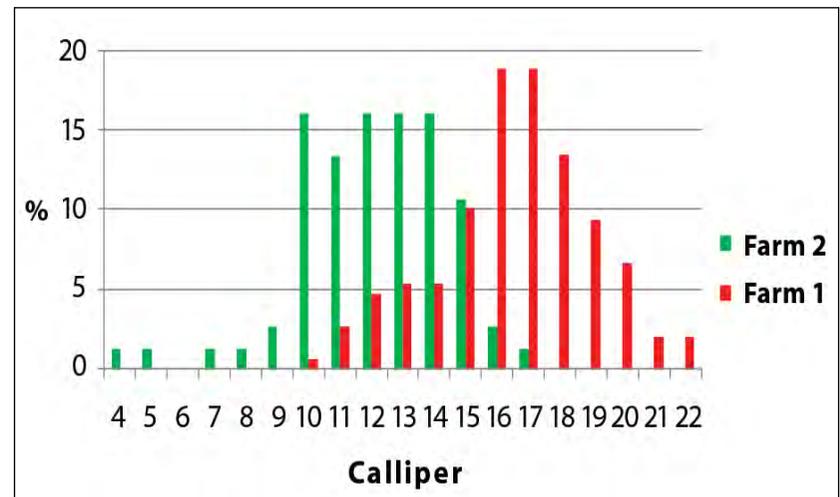


Figure 4: Calliper scores for two farms with the same genetics and feeds.

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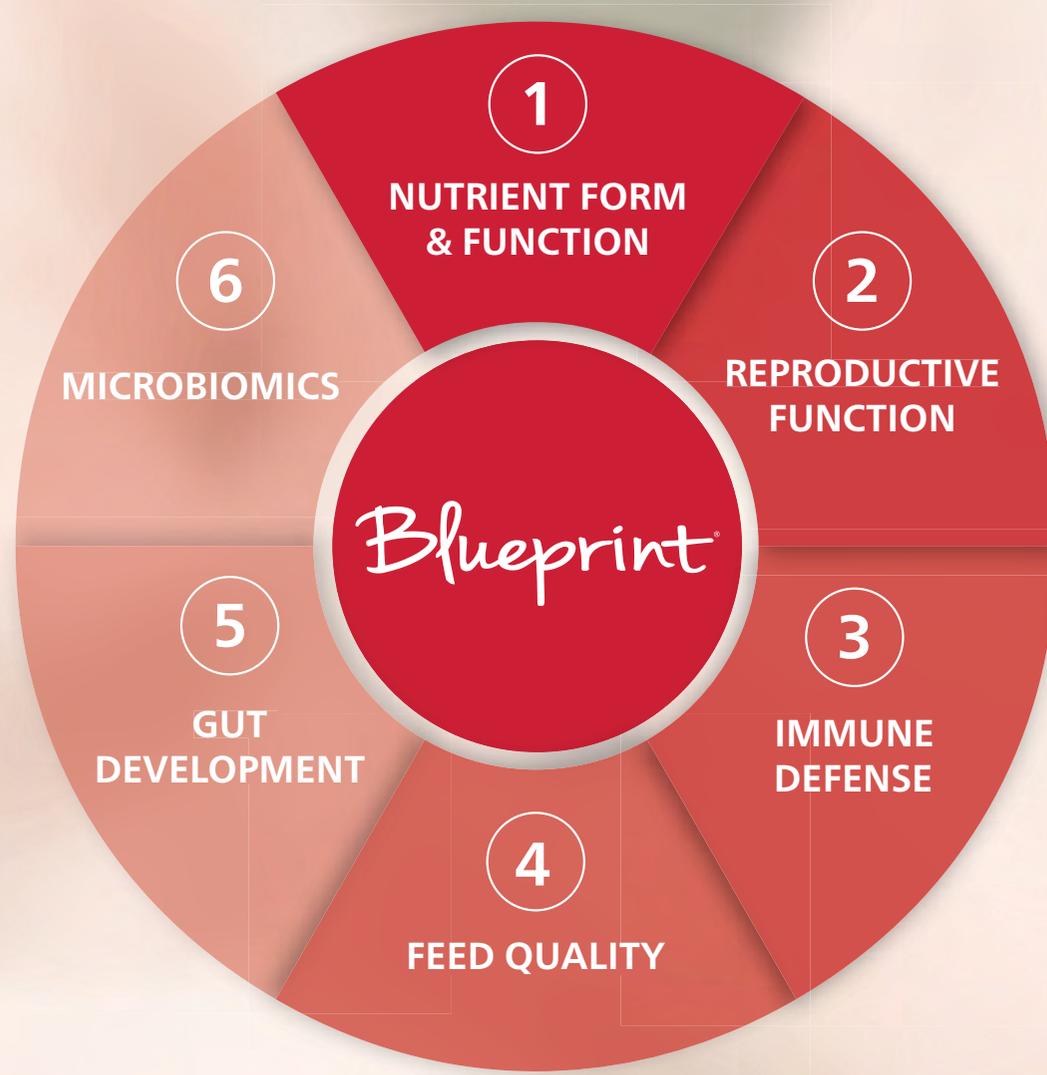
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## Pork production open for business

IN 'prepping' for this month's column I happened to revisit the equivalent month's column from 2008.

Headlined 'Pushing pork's price point', it began like this:

"Increasingly people are starting to talk up the price of pork. The traditional producer's lament is 'heh, I'm not being paid enough, especially with such high inputs, particularly the cost of grain'."

Well, with some grain prices coming off a bit of late, producers will at least soon have the margin between cost and price reduced, which will be some sort of relief.

As for price increases, well that's something between them and their chosen processor or agent.

What I'm hearing out there in shopper and consumer land is that pork is cheap and maybe too cheap, relative to lamb and beef.

I agree and think pork is usually the superior product of the 'big three'.

It more often cooks and tastes the way it should and now that the oft-repeated message that pork should not be overcooked is finally starting to get through to Aussie kitchens and barbecues, rarely do you have a tough eating experience.

If consumers drive demand and therefore drive price and they can be convinced pork is a superior product, surely that can translate into more sales at higher prices and, therefore, more in the pockets of pork producers, processors and sellers.

That way everyone's happy, except maybe lamb and beef producers!

While I admit my magical market analysis is back of the cigarette packet stuff (even more magical 'cos I don't smoke), I maintain that pork for too long has languished, relative to 'the other two', at or near the bottom of shopping lists and menus.

Of course, convincing more people to eat pork and convincing people to eat more pork are two different things and two different challenges."

Well, I must say, it could be said that not a lot has changed in the past eight years.

While most producers would be pretty happy with the price they're currently



Cant Comment  
by  
BRENDON CANT

receiving and grain prices have come back a fair bit, making profit margins more palatable, let us not forget that most have also had to invest heavily in recent years to meet new(ish) industry welfare standards.

That said, surely it is a good thing that they can now begin to reap the rewards of that investment, even if it is simply a matter of recovering costs.

The next frontier on the welfare/price front is, of course, producers being paid premium prices for premium products, whether that be simply a product produced under a higher welfare regime or one with a niche marketing edge.

Either way, consumers will need to recognise the efforts of those Australian pork producers who are clearly committed to producing a high(er) integrity pork product by paying a premium for premium pork.

For a very contemporary 'spin' on where Australian pork production is going and how some see it, I'd recommend you take a look at SBS TV's *For the Love of Meat* episode two

of three, which focused on pigs and aired on October 27 ([www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/785444931937/](http://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/785444931937/) for-the-love-of-meat-with-matthew-evans).

Former chef turned media man and small-time Tasmanian pig farmer (outdoor/free range) Matthew Evans poses a few curly questions of our industry while trying to 'educate' consumers on how their pork is produced.

I must commend West Australian pork producer and 2010 RIRDC Australian Rural Woman of the Year Sue Middleton, sister-in-law of well-known WA porcine veterinarian and former Australian Pork Limited Board member Dr Chris Brennan, for opening up the piggery she runs at Wongan Hills with husband Michael Brennan.

Walking Matthew through the farm's breeding facility, Sue presented a balanced, thoughtful case in favour of farrowing pens, with Matthew coming on board, to a point, about the positive merits of superior piglet survival when farrowing pens are employed.

I get why industry bodies and individual producers balk at opening up piggeries, especially intensive ones, to the media, but presenters and commentators, even those on the 'friendly' spectrum such as Matthew Evans, when snubbed, will usually default to the oft-quoted line: "well they must have something to hide if they don't want us to see what happens."

Where once upon a time curious consumers were essentially satisfied with knowing their pork's provenance, these days they want to know not just where it's come from but the quality of its journey from paddock, or piggery, to plate.



The author loves pork belly. Does he care how the pig responsible for it was farmed? Yes, he does.

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# Where has pig price growth gone?

WHILE some in our industry would prefer not to have to look beyond the farm gate, we are all clear that everyone has to.

After all, beyond the farm gate is where all the revenue is.

Whether the customer relationship is loyal, love-hate, personal or transactional, everybody has a buyer.

And, however inconvenient it is, it's the buyer who decides what they want, then tells their suppliers what they want and then, generally speaking, the closer the supplier gets to the buyer's needs, the more money the supplier gets.

The final buyer is the shopper, and recently increased demand from shoppers has been converted into higher retail prices more than volume sales, mainly benefitting retailers.

However, most of those increases in prices have not flowed through to the producer prices recently.

In fact, in 2016, we have seen some softening, albeit from unheard of heights last Christmas.

So, what's going on?

Generally, there are two margins in food value chains; there's the one the retailer makes and the



## Marketing Matters

by PETER HAYDON  
General Manager Marketing



other one, which is what everyone else in the value chain shares.

This is certainly true in our industry where wholesale pork prices and pig prices follow very similar trends.

Unless there is a retail price war, it is very rare for retail margins to go anywhere but up in the long term.

This obviously means the rest of the margin is shared between the producer, abattoir and wholesaler.

In the run up to Christmas 2012, there was a mini jump in wholesale gross margins (sell price minus buy price) and another mini jump in the run up to Christmas 2014.

However, since Christmas last year, wholesale prices have fallen, which has had an effect on some producers and reduced the national average pig price

(we have used the buyer's one in Figure 1).

So why is that?

My guess is there have been three factors that have combined to cause this.

The first is that Australian pig meat prices have diverged from global prices (except China).

This makes Australia an even more attractive country for exporter countries than we were already.

The second factor is product innovation in wholesalers using cooked meat – either cooked in approved Australian facilities (such as cooked bellies) or cooked meat, which is treated as canned product.

This is heated to a very high temperature and then doesn't need to be kept cold to have a 12-month shelf life (such as ribs – yes bones are allowed in

canned-type product).

The products are attractive in mainstream casual dining outlets because they are arguably more convenient, acceptable in quality and cheaper.

The third factor is these type of outlets are driven by cost because their shoppers are driven by cost much more than provenance.

Because both bellies and ribs have been highly valuable cuts, downward pressure on wholesale prices has also affected some producers.

For example, in Figure 3 are some NSW bellies, loins and middles data wholesale prices.

We can see that while belly prices appear to remain respectable, they have certainly come down from their highs of late last year and early this year.

Currently we are working on whether there are ways to counter this, but given the cost difference, in markets that are cost sensitive this is not easy or simple.

We are mindful that anything we do as an industry needs to provide the producer with the best return on investment.

We will continue to monitor this situation closely.

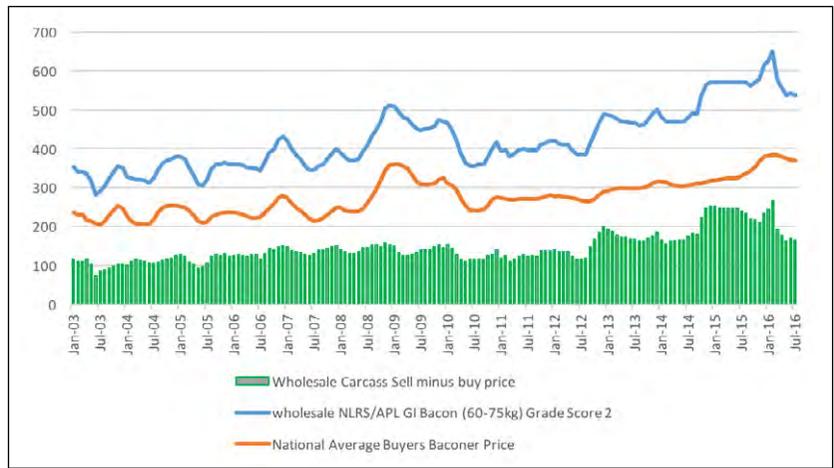


Figure 1: Pricing by supply chain stage.

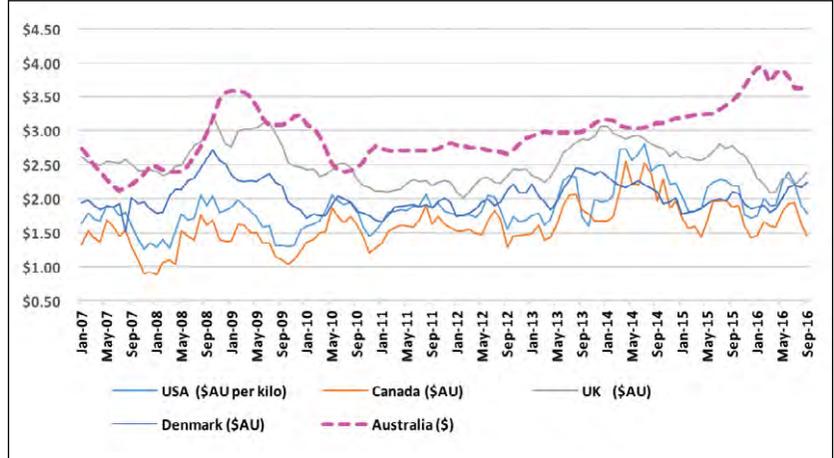


Figure 2: International pig price comparison.



Figure 3: Loin, belly and saddle prices over time.



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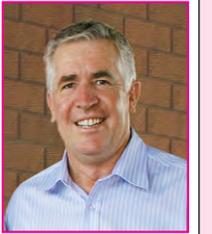


## Be prepared for storm season

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QUEENSLAND INC.

President's Perspective

by JOHN COWARD



THE storm season is off and running in Queensland, not to mention the severe wind and rain events that have occurred across the southern states.

While Mother Nature can strike anywhere and at any time, you will come out of a weather event better if you are prepared.

Whether it's a cyclone, flood or fire, many producers often find themselves underprepared and this article is designed to challenge your level of readiness.

Some of the things you should consider include a list of emergency contacts from police, state emergency services, fire services and the state disaster management centre for your area.

Power supply is one of the first services that can be lost, so contact numbers need to be readily available, as should be your alternative service option.

Testing back-up generators and having adequate fuel supplies is a great idea.

Having some emergency roofing material

is wise because while emergency services personnel can assist, they will prioritise public demand first.

With strong wind a common occurrence in storms and cyclones, checking and tightening feed bin and auger tie-downs can limit potential damage to these structures.

To assist in addressing potential fail points, you should ask yourself: what would you do and who will be involved if any of your critical supports were damaged or lost?

Identify all the key elements of your operation, record them on paper and then add the actions you would take if required.

This should include suppliers of feed and so on, and don't forget staff who may not be able to

get to work if there is a flood or fire.

This paper document and the key contact numbers should be part of your emergency response plans and be in a handy position to use if required.

By developing an emergency response plan, you will have staff and yourself better prepared to manage a disaster event and limit its impact on your business.

Producers should also have plans to address farm raids by activists.

Assistance in this area is available through the APL Members website.

Pork Queensland Inc directors are trained as industry officers to assist government and industry recover from a disaster event, whether it be a natural disaster or an exotic disease outbreak. ☺

## Most successful animal health vaccine of all time reaches milestone

VETERINARIANS and pig farmers have protected over two billion pigs around the world against porcine circovirus disease using Ingelvac CircoFLEX, the most successful animal health vaccine of all time based on yearly sales.

With more than eight pigs vaccinated every second worldwide, the vaccine contributes to sustainable production and supply of healthy, nutritious pork around the world like no other.

Head of Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health George Heidgerken said, "We are very proud of this milestone, and we know it has been finally achieved by our customers – veterinarians and pig farmers around the world doing their best to prevent disease."

"We would like to thank them for the trust and loyalty they put into Ingelvac CircoFLEX vaccine.

"We continue to strive to provide the best protection against porcine circovirus to the global pig industry by an integrated solutions approach.

"This includes the supply of a high-quality vaccine and tailored customer services."

Porcine circovirus disease can have a devastating impact on pig health, causing suffering to the animals and economic damage to farmers.

An infection with PCV2 in unprotected pigs may lead to wasting, paleness of skin, respiratory dysfunction (dyspnea) or diarrhoea in piglets.

PCV2 can also cause medically and economically relevant subclinical infections (infections without evident clinical signs).

In Australia, over 24 million pigs have been protected against porcine circovirus disease since the product was launched here in 2010.

Boehringer Ingelheim has conducted extensive field trials in Australia involving over 10,000 pigs.

These co-mingled studies were conducted in piglets under typical Australian commercial conditions.

The consistent efficacy shown in these trials is a key reason why Australian farmers choose to use Ingelvac CircoFLEX vaccine in their systems.

Ingelvac CircoFLEX vaccine provides proven protection without compromising safety with just one shot around weaning.

It is licensed to be freshly mixed with Ingelvac MycoFLEX vaccine to protect pigs with one shot against both PCV2 and mycoplasma hyopneumoniae, which causes respiratory disease in pigs.

If you would like to know more about Ingelvac CircoFLEX or Ingelvac MycoFLEX vaccines, please contact your local Boehringer Ingelheim technical services and sales representative. ☺



Sam Custodio from Boehringer Ingelheim helped vaccinate the 20-millionth pig in Australia with Ingelvac CircoFLEX vaccine.

# Compliance for Model Code is around the corner



IN 2006, agriculture ministers endorsed the Model Code for Animal Welfare: Pigs.

The Model Code was subsequently adopted into state government regulation in 2007 and following years.

A key outcome of the revised Model Code was to limit the time sows spent in stalls from the entire pregnancy to a maximum of six weeks with a lead-in time of 10 years.

From April 20, 2017, producers in all states except NSW will be required to comply with the maximum time for sows in gestation stalls during their pregnancy.

NSW producers will be required to comply from July 1, 2017.

In 2010, the Australian pork industry agreed to phase out the use of gestation stalls and voluntary Gestation Stall Free Standards were added to APIQ<sup>✓</sup>.

A voluntary module specific to supplying Coles called Customer Specifications Coles was also added to APIQ<sup>✓</sup>, which includes GSF standards that meet the industry-agreed position.

Figure 1 portrays the production cycle showing traditional practices with a maximum of sow stall use, the Model Code requirements, and for APIQ<sup>✓</sup> voluntary standards, and attempts to outline the mandatory and voluntary gestation stall requirements described above.

While there has been a lot of attention on gestation stalls, producers will also be required to comply with other elements of

the Model Code, such as space allowances for all pigs, from April 20, 2017, and for NSW only, from July 1, 2017.

## How is industry tracking?

So how is the industry, and your business, tracking to comply with the Model Code?

Today, there are 272,958 breeding sows and gilts in production in Australia and 193,808 of them, or 71 percent, have been verified as GSF, which means they already comply with the Model Code requirements.

This group includes sows that are APIQ<sup>✓</sup> certified, APIQ<sup>✓</sup> free range certified and APIQ<sup>✓</sup> outdoor bred – raised indoors on straw certified and CSC verified.

Figures 2 and 3 show sows and sites that are yet to convert to loose housing by state and by farm size.

Some of the 120 sites (covering about 48,000 sows) that are yet to convert to loose housing might already be compliant with the Model Code requirements.

However, a small number of producers have indicated they may likely exit the industry rather than make the change to meet the Model Code requirements.

Producers have also asked questions about how the relevant authorities may undertake compliance activities.

While Australian Pork Limited is not privy to this information, in reality, producers who decide not to comply with the Model Code by April 20, 2017 (July 1, 2017 for NSW) will need to manage this compliance risk for their business.

For further information, contact me on 02 6270 8803 or [deb.kerr@australianpork.com.au](mailto:deb.kerr@australianpork.com.au)

**Deb Kerr**  
APL General Manager Policy



**APIQ<sup>✓</sup> voluntary standard**  
APIQ<sup>✓</sup> Standards – Option A: Gestation Stall Free (GSF) Version 4.1 10/2015, Standard 1.1

**APIQ<sup>✓</sup> voluntary standard**  
APIQ<sup>✓</sup> Standards – Option B: Customer Specifications to supply Coles Supermarkets Australia Pty Ltd (Coles (CSC)), Version 4.1 1/2015, Standard 1.2 B

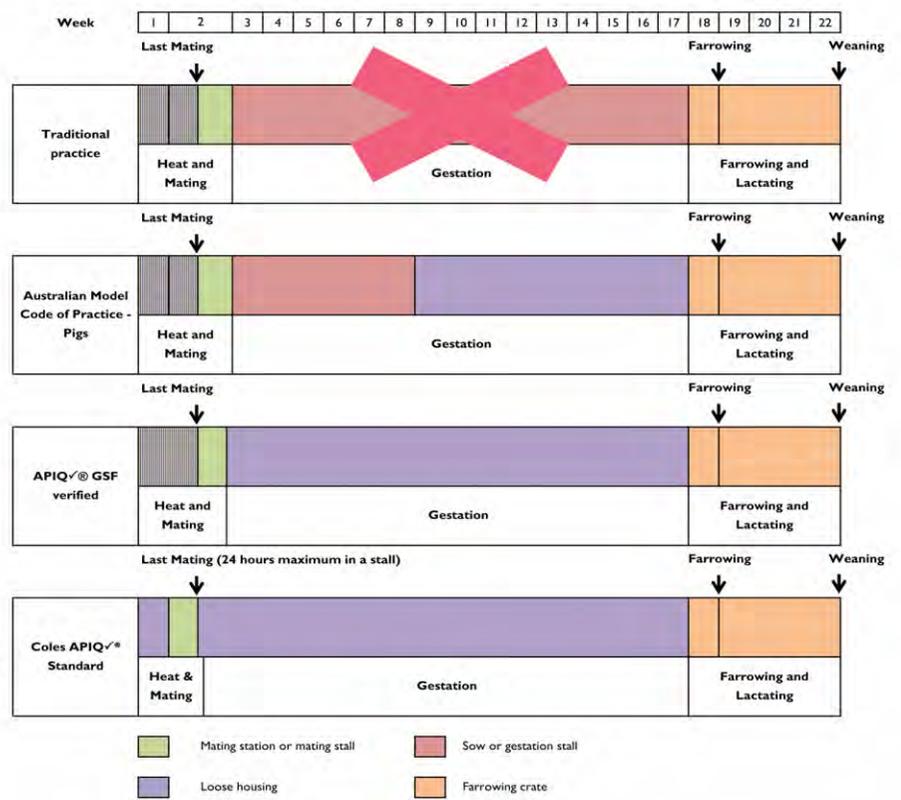


Figure 1



Figure 2: Sites and sows yet to convert to loose housing.

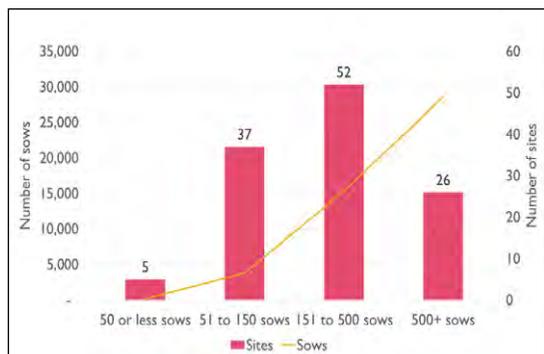


Figure 3: Sites and sows yet to convert to loose housing by site size.

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# New loans scheme to support farm businesses

THE Australian Government continues to deliver farm-strengthening initiatives from the \$4 billion Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper with the recent launch of the new Farm Business Concessional Loans scheme.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce said the new scheme would provide \$250 million in concessional loans funding from November 1 to June 30, 2017 to assist farmers to rebuild their businesses following drought and farm gate milk price cuts.

"The government is delivering drought policy certainty to help farmers prepare for and manage through severe droughts by making \$2.5 billion in concessional loans available over the next 10 years," Minister Joyce said.

"The government will be providing these loans at an initial variable concessional interest rate of

2.47 percent for a maximum term of 10 years.

"Interest-only repayments are available for the first five years of the loan term, with principal and interest repayments for the next five years.

"The new Farm Business Concessional Loans scheme brings together the differing loans products, drought concessional and drought recovery concessional loans offered over the past two years, under a more flexible package.

"So far more than half a billion dollars in concessional loans have been approved to over 1000 farm businesses nation-wide.

"The new scheme includes Drought Assistance Concessional Loans to assist commercially viable, drought-affected farm businesses to continue to operate through drought conditions, recover once the season breaks, and to prepare for future drought."

Farm Business Conces-

sional Loans will continue to be delivered on behalf of the Commonwealth by each participating state and territory government for the time being.

"The government has committed to establishing a Regional Investment Corporation to be the single administrator for the farm business concessional loans, as well as our National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility," Minister Joyce said.

"We have fought hard to establish the RIC because regional people are telling us this is what they want.

"This scheme will operate under agreements with participating states and the Northern Territory to ensure drought and dairy-related concessional loans continue to be available until the RIC is fully operational."

Applications for the scheme opened on November 1 in Queensland and Tasmania and farmers in NSW, South Australia and Victoria can now reg-

ister their interest under the scheme.

Minister Joyce said applications for the 2015-16 round of drought, drought recovery and dairy recovery concessional loans closed on October 31, 2016.

"Applications received by the closing date will continue to be assessed under the guidelines for those schemes," Minister Joyce said.

"Our farmers contribute about \$58 billion to our nation's economy and stronger farm businesses mean a stronger economy.

"Supporting viable farm businesses to better manage through drought and hardship is firmly in our national interest."

It is important that farm businesses do not self-assess their eligibility for a Farm Business Concessional Loan.

Farmers should contact their delivery agency (QRAA in Queensland; NSW RAA in NSW; Rural Finance Corporation in Victoria; State Growth in Tasmania; and PIRSA in South Australia) for assistance and details on the application process.

For more information regarding concessional loans, please go to agriculture.gov.au/loans

# Piggery pump solution

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Older installations often use antiquated long column sump pumps that are subject to high maintenance and costly breakdowns.

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of handling virtually all waste effluent applications.

Tsurumi, the world's biggest manufacturer of electro-submersible pumps, has developed a range of single and three-phase products suitable for a wide range of piggery applications.

The B series delivers flows of up to 3500l/pm and solids handling capacities of up to 53mm.

These pumps offer potential solutions for al-

most any installation.

The heart of the Tsurumi B series is a channel impeller that prevents internal clogging and enables the pump to efficiently transfer any wastewater containing compressible solids.

Available with discharge ports from 50mm to 800mm, the range offers side discharge with either an elbow or sliding discharge connector outlet.

Pumps are available in single phase, in sizes up to 0.75kW.

Above that the product range is all four pole, designed for long and continuous service.

Three-phase machines are all direct online starting.

Aussie Pumps Tsurumi product manager Neil Bennett said Tsurumi's range is not only particularly reliable but also very good value for money.

"The exclusive three-year warranty is a bonus too," he said.

Big 4" B series pumps are mainly sold for mounting on guide rails.

The guide rail kit makes it easier to remove the pump for maintenance or service without draining the pit.

Tsurumi has also developed a guide rail adaptor kit that enables Tsurumi submersibles to be installed in existing guide rail installations from other brands.

For example, both Flygt and Grundfos pumps can be easily replaced, with potentially major savings for users.

Like all Tsurumi submersible pumps, the B series includes features that extend the life and enhance reliability of the pump.

Significant design details make a big difference.

These include an anti-wicking cable entry that prevents water from entering the motor if the power lead is damaged or the end of the cable is accidentally submerged.

A double silicon-carbide seal is standard on all models.

Both seal surfaces are submerged in an oil chamber, away from the pumped liquid.

This ensures lubrication and protects against ingress of foreign materials.

The oil bath features a patented oil lifter that increases mechanical seal longevity.

The lifter ensures both the upper and lower seals are lubricated and cooled, even if the oil level in the chamber is low.

"Tsurumi is the only company we know of that will offer a three-year warranty on submersible sewage pumps," Bennett said.

Further information on the complete range of Tsurumi submersible pumps is available on the Aussie Pumps website ([www.aussiepumps.com.au](http://www.aussiepumps.com.au)) or contact Neil on 02 8865 3500.



The B series sewage pumps transfer waste material through the cast iron channel impeller, thus allowing free passage through the pump without clogging.

	Status	Interest rate (%)
Farm Business Concessional Loans • Drought Assistance • Dairy Recovery	Open 1/11/16 to 30/6/17	2.47
Drought Recovery Concessional Loans	Closed 31/10/16	2.66
Drought Concessional Loans	Closed 31/10/16	3.05
Dairy Recovery Concessional Loans	Closed 31/10/16	2.66
Farm Finance Concessional Loans	Closed 30/6/15	3.55

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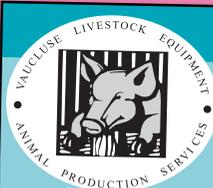


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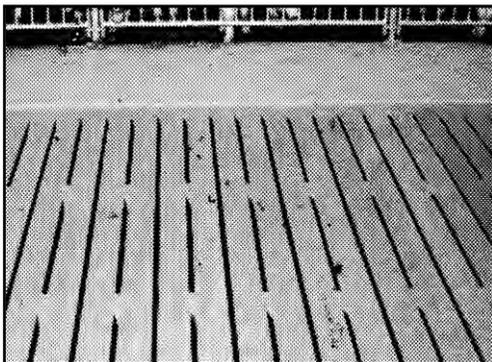
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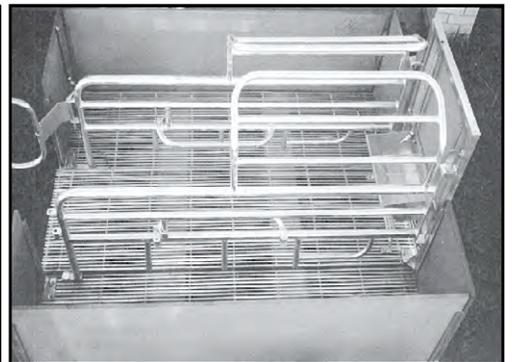
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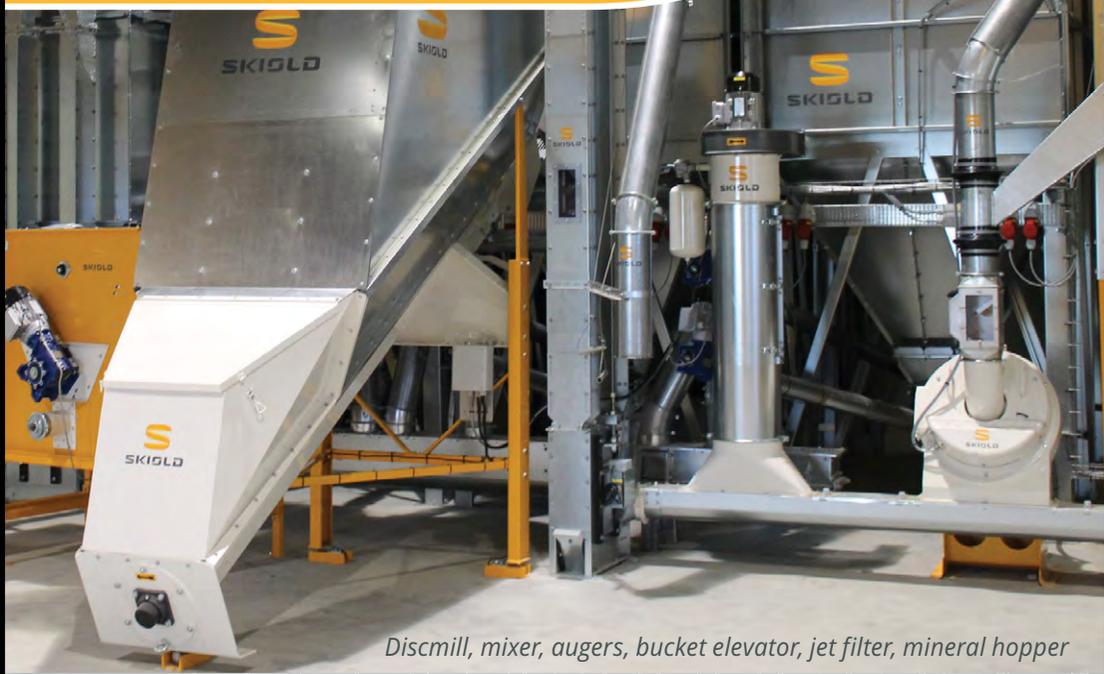
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## Pig Farm Perspective

by Bruce the brainy pig



A RECENT peer-reviewed article authored by researchers at Kansas State University and published in the bimonthly journal of the American Association of Swine Veterinarians evaluated the widely used practice of 'bump feeding'.

In general, the practice of bump feeding involves increasing daily feed intake by about 1kg from day 90 of gestation until farrowing.

The rationale behind bump feeding is that increasing the energy and amino acids available to sows in late gestation will compensate for the sudden increase in nutrient demand from the growing piglets.

The study involved measurement of a number of variables including:

- Body weight gain of sows;
- Back fat (mm);
- Lactation feed intake;

- Weight loss during lactation;
- Wean to oestrus interval;
- Born alive and still-born rate;
- Total litter birth weight;
- Individual piglet birth weight;
- Pre-weaning mortality; and
- Piglet weaning weight.

The review found that each 1kg increase in daily feed allowance during late gestation was positively correlated with a 7kg increase in body weight gain.

A moderate increase in individual piglet birth weight was also found, with individual piglets 28g (+/- 20.4g) heavier at birth.

The review found there to be no/minimal difference in:

- Lactation feed intake of gilts and sows, although other studies have disputed this and suggested that bump feeding reduced lacta-

- tion feed intake of both gilts and sows;
- Back fat (mm) of sows and gilts;
- Wean-to-oestrus interval; and
- Total born pigs.

Economic modelling on the data available (accounting for differing survivability and growth performance from birth to finish, assuming 0.9kg additional sow feed per day for the final three weeks of gestation) found that the practice of bump feeding increased average birth weight of piglets by 28g at a cost of \$US0.46 per marketed pig.

The review concluded that while increased feed intake of both sows and gilts increases body weight gain of gilts and sows and also increases individual piglet birth weight, more research is required to provide further information to producers on whether bump feeding is a profitable practice. 🐷

## Putting regional Australia in context

KEY information profiling Australia's agriculture sector on a region-by-region basis is now available in ABARES' latest About my region profiles.

ABARES executive director Peter Gooday said the profiles provided a concise overview of the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors in every region across the nation.

"It is important that Australian growers and producers have access to up-to-date, useful information on their regions

and these profiles allow them to understand their business in a national context," Mr Gooday said.

"The more information industry has, the better it can plan and make effective business decisions; the same applies to peak body groups and agricultural policy development at all levels of government.

"These profiles contain information on employment and the value and size of local industries at regional, state and territory and national levels.

"They provide a snapshot of agriculture in your region as well as the recent financial performance of the broadacre, dairy and vegetable industries."

The About my region profiles contain information on:

- The geographic size and population of each region;
- The number of people

employed in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors (compared with other sectors) in the region;

• The value of agricultural production in the region;

• The number and type of farms in the region;

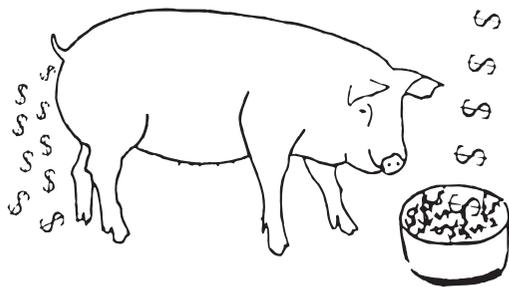
• Indicators of recent farm financial performance at state level based on ABARES survey data (farm cash incomes, business profit, debt levels, rate of return to capital) for grains, sheep, beef and dairy farms;

• The size and value of the fisheries sector in/near the region; and

• Some information about the size and value of the forestry industry, including the area and composition of plantation areas and native forests.

To view the latest collection of About my region profiles, visit [agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/aboutmyregion](http://agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/aboutmyregion) 🐷

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# New research finds cinnamon cools pigs' stomachs; improves overall health

NEW research has found that cinnamon can help cool the stomachs of pigs as well as contribute to a general improvement in overall health.

Project leader Dist Prof Kourosh Kalantar Zadeh, from RMIT University's School of Engineering in Melbourne, said the results of the study, which used pigs, seemed to show that cinnamon maintained the integrity of the stomach wall.

"When pigs feed at room temperature, carbon dioxide gas increases in their stomach," he said.

"Cinnamon in their food reduces this gas by decreasing the secretion of gastric acid and pepsin

from the stomach walls, which in turn cools the pigs' stomachs during digestion.

"When the pigs are hot, they hyperventilate, which reduces CO2 production.

"With cinnamon treatment, CO2 decreases even further.

"This not only cools the pigs but leads to a significant improvement in their overall health."

Fellow researcher Dr Jian Zhen Ou said altogether cinnamon cooled the stomach by up to 2C.

No wonder cinnamon is so popular in warm regions, as taking it makes people feel better and gives them a feeling of cooling down. 🐷

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