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# Australian Pork NEWSPAPER



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Vol 23. No. 11 November 2019 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)



## Boehringer Ingelheim Swine Academy

FOLLOWING the success of the Boehringer Ingelheim Swine Academy Production Economics program last year, Boehringer recently held the first BISA Lead program in Australia.

This global program spans over two days and is designed for swine professionals in leadership roles.

The course aims to provide participants with valuable insights and tools for people management they

can take back to their daily lives.

Joining the Australian Swine Team were 15 producers, two veterinarians, and Boehringer's facilitator Dr Larry Firkins, an American swine veterinarian and Associate Dean of the University of Illinois.

During the program, Larry shared his story on people management, which helped to link ideas and management strategies with practical application.

He also led activities to

develop participants' skills on how to transition employees into team members, accelerating influence and impact, as well as understanding motivation to enhance employee training and retention.

Feedback for the hands-on training program has been very positive, and the two-day course has given customers the opportunity to network with others in the swine industry.

[www.boehringer-ingelheim.com.au](http://www.boehringer-ingelheim.com.au)

## Implementing our new R&D investment model

IN February 2019, the Australian Pork Limited Board endorsed the recommendations from the Innovation and R&D Review to adopt a new R&D investment model that sets a new, fresh approach in how we will invest, deliver and commercialise outcomes from our R&D investments.

The 'Industry Solutions and Horizons' model, which I briefly described to you in my March 2019 APN article, will enable APL to

engage more closely and effectively with industry, modernise our processes and improve the return on investment to levy pay-

ers from funds invested in research, development and extension (RD&E) projects.

continued P2



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



## Stepping up the fight against swine fever

ON October 22 I had the valuable opportunity to represent our industry at Senate Estimates by participating in the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee's hearings.

The invitation was a timely chance to highlight to senators the action being taken, especially by producers and Australian Pork Limited, to prevent African swine fever from reaching Australia and decimating our industry.

Speaking on behalf of Australia's 3700 pork producers, our sector's 36,000 employees and all the families deriving their livelihoods from our \$5.3 billion industry, I painted a clear picture for the Committee about what is at stake.

Australia's pig industry has been scrutinised publicly for many years.

We've embraced that scrutiny and we're proud of where the industry stands today.

As I told the Committee, producers must be commended for investing in new production methods and making Australian pork an environmentally and ethically sustainable industry.

Collectively, we've reduced our carbon footprint by 70 percent, our water use by 80 percent and producers are adopting technology to make further sustainability progress, including on-farm waste management and electricity generation.

APL is grateful for the co-ordination taking place between in-



### Point of View

by MARGO ANDRAE CEO



Our animal welfare standards and outcomes, namely the practical ways we manage the wellbeing of sows and piglets, is a journey we're proud of and one we will continue to advance.

Australian pork producers demonstrate the highest level of animal biosecurity of any livestock industry in Australia.

So much depends on our disease-free status in terms of our production capacity, our market access and our consumer reputation.

I made it clear that all this progress and value is now at stake, reminding the Committee that the estimated economic cost of ASF reaching Australia is \$2 billion.

In explaining just how devastating an ASF outbreak in Australia would be for producers and employees, I asked senators to imagine the sort of lasting financial, social and emotional toll we normally associate with the worst kind of natural disasters.

APL is grateful for the co-ordination taking place between in-

dustry and government agencies such as the special Biosecurity Roundtable we attended with PorkSA Chair Mark McLean in Canberra in September, convened by Federal Agriculture Minister Bridget McKenzie.

The collaboration of agencies and industry groups has given us an opportunity to strengthen our broader biosecurity measures, beyond the immediate focus on ASF.

As I reminded senators, if foot and mouth disease reached Australia, it would be catastrophic for our entire livestock industry, with estimated economic costs of \$50 billion over 10 years.

Federal efforts to hold back African swine fever have sparked a 15 percent increase in biosecurity testing and we welcome the recent deportation of a Vietnamese woman who was caught carrying more than 4.5kg of pork product.

Such action sends a strong message to travellers.

This co-ordination, including the imperatives of overcoming

cross-jurisdictional overlap between states and agencies, means we are now better placed than we were just a month ago in terms of securing our national biosecurity.

APL is playing a leading role in strengthening national biosecurity measures because we're at the frontline in this battle.

We're determined to continue to play a leading role.

From an on-property perspective, producers know their front gate is the last line of defence in the fight against ASF.

With fragments of the virus detected in a large number of products seized at the border, farmers also know our nation's first line of defence will never provide a fool-proof safety net.

On-farm biosecurity measures, which already represent best practice, are now at unprecedented levels.

It is no surprise producers are so determined to secure their farms, their pig herds and their families' livelihoods.

APL is determined to keep this devastating disease away from Australia's pig farms and, as I communicated to Coalition, Labor and crossbench representatives at the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee hearing, we're grateful for the emphatic bipartisan support producers are receiving in this fight.



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- 17 X fast start wean-finish feeder, painted big wheel rf2 **\$589\* inc lid**
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## Pig Industry Calendar of Events

### 2019

**NOV 13 - 15** – 2019 Pig Welfare Symposium, Minneapolis, US [www.pork.org/events/pig-welfare-symposium](http://www.pork.org/events/pig-welfare-symposium)

**NOV 17 - 20** – Australasian Pig Science Association Conference, Adelaide, SA [www.apsa.asn.au](http://www.apsa.asn.au)

**NOV 27 - 29** – Fatty Pig Conference, Okinawa Prefecture Gender Equality Centre, Okinawa, Japan [www.pig333.com/calendar/5th-fatty-pig-conference-2087](http://www.pig333.com/calendar/5th-fatty-pig-conference-2087)

**DEC 10 - 11** – The Pork Show, Quebec City, Canada [www.leporcshow.com](http://www.leporcshow.com)

### 2020

**JAN 7-9** – Banff Pork Seminar, Banff, Canada [www.banffpork.ca](http://www.banffpork.ca)

**JAN 15 -16** – 51st Annual South Dakota Pork Congress [www.sdppc.org/events-4/pork-congress](http://www.sdppc.org/events-4/pork-congress)

**FEB 12-13** – Missouri Pork Expo, Missouri, US [www.mopork.com/events/missouri-pork-expo-2](http://www.mopork.com/events/missouri-pork-expo-2)

**How to supply event details: Send all details to Australian Pork Newspaper, PO Box 387, Cleveland, Qld 4163, call 07 3286 1833 fax: 07 3821 2637, email: [ben@porknews.com.au](mailto:ben@porknews.com.au)**

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## Want us to cover your event?

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NEWSPAPER

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# Implementing our new R&D investment model

from P1

This new model is comprised of two streams – the first stream, known as ‘Industry Solutions’ will support RD&E projects that address immediate industry issues as they arise, while the ‘Horizons’ stream will focus on the larger, potentially transformational industry issues with a business development culture to provide answers to critical industry questions.

The Horizons investment stream will be comprised of a number of ‘Strategic Intent’ areas (or significant programs) that will focus on delivering impactful outcomes over a longer period (three to five years) that substantially reduce costs, increase revenue and/or provide new options for risk management.

We need to be bold and do things differently to better leverage the R&D levy funds we have available to invest, including exploring opportunities for higher level collaborations with new partners, including through the agtech sector, startup companies, government grant programs and private partnerships, to seek out solutions to address industry challenges.

The successful implementation of the model requires us to have a wider view of who could be involved, who will invest and partner with us and how we commission our RD&E projects.

It also requires us to increase our exposure to and knowledge of new technologies and innovations that could be applied or adopted to address our problems.

dress our problems.

These opportunities are likely to come from other agricultural sectors and/or other disciplines necessitating exposure to broader networks, both domestically and internationally, to be more aware.

These exciting and challenging opportunities are expected to improve the return on investment to levy payers from APL’s R&D programs and, with time, deliver transformational outcomes for the industry.

We are in a period of transition in relation to the implementation of this new model as our current RD&E projects (and associated funding commitments) are completed and the ‘Strategic Intent’ areas are identified.

This is being done as part of the externally facilitated stakeholder consultation and engagement workshops being conducted around Australia to inform the development of APL’s 2020-25 Strategic Plan – which APL must do to meet our requirements with the Commonwealth Government as detailed in our Statutory Funding Agreement.

These workshops commenced in late October in Western Australia and South Australia and will continue until the beginning of December 2019.

Thank you to all who have already participated. If you have not yet registered to attend a workshop in the other states, I strongly encourage you to do so as your contributions to this process are highly valued.

Registration can be eas-



ily performed via APL’s website using this link: [australianpork.com.au/stratplan](http://australianpork.com.au/stratplan)

The details of meeting dates and venues can also be found in the advertisement below.

From an R&D perspective, I’m really interested in the potential Strategic Intents areas that will emerge from these industry consultations so we can finalise our innovation strategy and get things moving.

The shortlist of Strategic Intents will be approved by the APL Board.

These outcomes are required to finalise operational processes and ensure our investment model is agile and flexible and our strategy sets a bold new direction, is clear in its expected industry benefits and allows APL to take a leadership position in relation to the RD&E conducted on behalf of the Australian pork industry.

I’m really looking forward to working with you all as we bed it down and address the industry priorities to be solved through RD&E to deliver substantial benefits with greater impact to the industry for years to come.

Right now, to kick start this new model, several Strategic Intents programs are being supported – these are: Increasing our international trade

participation; Improving the eating quality of Australian pork; and, Investigating the propensity of the consumer to support more Australian-sourced ham and bacon.

We’ll be providing updates of outcomes of these programs as they come through.

### APIQ Major Review update

While I am talking about reviews, APIQ is also undertaking a Major Review, which is required to be conducted every four years.

The Major Review involves a review of standards, policies and documentation to ensure it can continue to meet the future needs of the Australian pork supply chain.

In addition to this, a number of specific areas are included for further investigation in the review including how antibiotic-free verification option and organic certification might be developed as well as an evaluation of the third-party auditing system.

These opportunities to further develop, streamline and utilise APIQ more effectively will be discussed at consultation meetings that will take place in the first quarter of 2020.

Details of these will be communicated shortly to producers.

If you would like to further discuss, please contact APIQ Operations Manager Steven Miller on 02 6270 8808 or [steven.miller@australianpork.com.au](mailto:steven.miller@australianpork.com.au)

### African swine fever preparedness activities

As many of you are aware, Dr Lechelle van Breda has been appointed

as APL’s ASF Co-ordinator – so if you have any questions, please feel free to direct them to Lechelle on 02 6270 8823 or [Lechelle.vanBreda@australianpork.com.au](mailto:Lechelle.vanBreda@australianpork.com.au)

You may also be interested in the summary of key highlights from the NSW Farmers meeting held in Young on October 22 attended by 120 stakeholders – this can be found at [australianpork.com.au/latest-news/african-swine-fever-forum](http://australianpork.com.au/latest-news/african-swine-fever-forum)

I’m pleased to advise APL has set up an ASF Technical Group, comprising several pig veterinarians and processors, who are working directly with the task group set up by the state Chief Veterinary Officers to address gaps in preparedness and response for an ASF incursion.

A face to face meeting is being held in early November 2019 in Canberra.

Further, the revisions to the AUSVETPLAN for ASF are being expedited by the Writing Group and are expected to be finalised by November 22, 2019.

APL is also working to clarify EADRA compensation, with the current AUSVETPLAN pig compensation manual under review.

For resources and more information on ASF, please follow the links on APL’s website or navigate to [australianpork.com.au/latest-news/african-swine-fever-resources](http://australianpork.com.au/latest-news/african-swine-fever-resources)

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)

## The future of the industry is in your hands – we need your input

**Australian Pork Limited (APL) Strategic Plan 2020-25 consultation workshops have begun**

This consultation aims to identify the strategic direction for APL over the next 5-10 years and the priorities for our investment of your levies in R&D. The views of producers and our other stakeholders are important to drive our future direction. We want your views on what’s important to you, your business and your industry.

### What do you need to do?

Email [apl@australianpork.com.au](mailto:apl@australianpork.com.au) to RSVP for the meeting you want to attend including dietary requirements **2 weeks before the event** for catering purposes)

### Stakeholder meetings and locations

Stakeholder meetings will run from 10am to 3pm. Lunch will be provided.

- 6 November 2019: Department of Agriculture Conference Room, 7 London Circuit, Civic, ACT
- 20 November 2019: Stamford Plaza Sydney Airport, Sydney, NSW
- 27 November 2019: Quality Hotel Taylor Lakes, Melbourne, VIC
- 3 December 2019: Novotel Brisbane Airport, Brisbane, QLD

### Producer meeting dates and locations

Producer meetings will run from 11am to 5pm, including a working lunch. Networking drinks and casual meal to follow.

- 18 November 2019: Narrandera Ex-Serviceman’s Club, Narrandera NSW
- 19 November 2019: Young Services Club, Young, NSW
- 25 November 2019: Quest Launceston, Launceston, TAS
- 26 November 2019: Quality Hotel Taylor Lakes, Melbourne, VIC
- 28 November 2019: Moama Bowling Club, Echuca, VIC
- 4 December 2019: Burke & Wills Hotel, Toowoomba, QLD
- 5 December 2019: Kingaroy RSL, Kingaroy QLD



**BIO SECURITY & HYGIENE**

**The trouble with commensal rodents**

Commensal is defined as "sharing one's table." Commensal rodents, which include Norway rats, roof rats and common house mice, live off humans without returning anything of worth. What they do return is the potential for serious problems.

- Spread serious diseases, including salmonellosis (food poisoning), leptospirosis, rickettsialpox and lymphocytic choriomeningitis (LCM).
- Carry fleas, ticks and other ectoparasites, which potentially spread other diseases, such as bubonic plague.
- Consume or contaminate about 20 percent of the world's food supply.
- Gnaw, causing expensive structural damage. They also can start fires if they gnaw on electrical wires.
- Cause a great deal of anxiety for occupants (people and animals) of infested buildings.

Defining a good Integrated Rodent Management is critical to mitigate risks that rodents pose. There is no specific "recipe" when it comes to managing rodent population but following those 6 steps will help you develop a smart program:

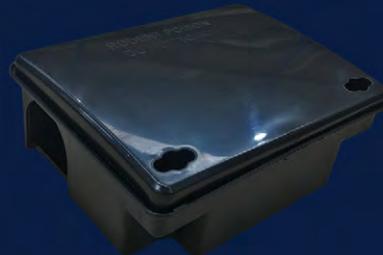
- Identify rodent species and populations
- Thorough inspection of buildings and surrounding areas - Look for rodents activity indicators
- Using the right control method - baits, traps, combination of both
- Excluding rodents from buildings
- Sanitation - removing food, water and shelter
- Evaluate results and adapt program accordingly

**GENERATION BLUE RAT BAIT**

5.5kg



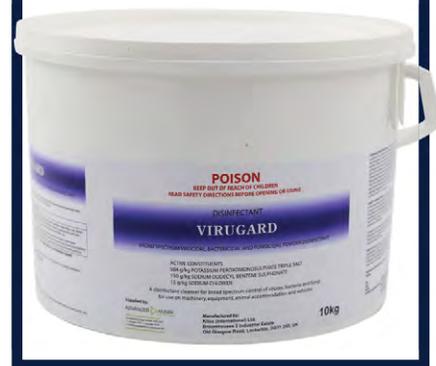
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**AFRICAN SWINE FEVER DON'T BRING IT TO WORK.**

**ASF IS A DEVASTATING DISEASE FOR PIG PRODUCTION FACILITIES AND ALL STAFF HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.**

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**BE AFRICAN SWINE FEVER READY. ASFReady.com.au**

## HOME MILLING OPPORTUNITY

**For sale fully fitted-out home milling plant.  
Suitable for pigs, cattle or poultry.**

Inventory includes:

- 4-tonne raw grain surge bin, delivers to mill
- 4-tonne per hour roller mill, hasn't had much use (includes motor and starter box)
- 3 x 2-tonne crushed grain bins – joined
- 1-tonne weigh bin on scales with load cells and digital readout
- 1-tonne mixer
- 4-tonne protein bin
- 1 double-sided 6-tonne bin for mixed feed
- 1 double-sided 4-tonne bin for mixed feed
- 1 x 20-tonne protein bin

All associated connecting augers and motors.

Other miscellaneous equipment used in home milling.

**All equipment still in place in mill room.**

**PHONE 0427 623 253**

## PigPass Integrity is everyone's responsibility

PIGPASS is undoubtedly a significant Australian pork industry asset.

Since Australian Pork Limited first invested in pig movement reporting in 2006, this asset has grown from PigPass National Vendor Declarations to pig movement reporting and now a PigPass app.

However, PigPass is only as good as its weakest link.

States agreed to progressively implement mandatory reporting from February 1, 2018.

Currently four states have implemented the necessary legislative reforms, and the remaining states and territories are at various stages of legislative reform.

While a number of these reforms have not been liked or supported by some producers (tags for under 25kg weaners),



Point of View

by **DEB KERR**  
General Manager Policy



overall PigPass is about protecting your industry in the event of a disease incursion like African swine fever.

A system that does not meet the traceability standards will undermine the ability for state and territory governments to know where a disease has been, which properties are affected and ultimately get control of the spread of the disease.

This is essential to re-

ducing its impact to your industry.

While government legislative reform is one aspect limiting the veracity of PigPass, there are others.

As an example, a small error in data entry has the potential to cause a big problem for traceability.

If the incorrect serial number is entered by a user into a PigPass movement report, then there is an incorrect movement recorded in the system, which will result in two data errors that need fixing.

This could significantly delay a traceback of livestock in an emergency.

In another example, many of the electronic PigPass NVDs generated directly online are not reported by the receiver of the pigs – in other words a movement occurs that cannot be traced.

And sometimes we see new producers who misunderstand the requirements and use the sender's PIC and tattoo.

APL has commenced changes to PigPass that will help resolve some of these issues.

As an example, there is now a checkpoint reminding the reporter to stop and check the details of each pig movement they have entered before submitting the pig movement report to PigPass.

Producers will also be sent an automatic email if

the upload of the movement from PigPass to the NLIS database returns an error (property identification code or PIC disbanded).

The PigPass account will be deactivated until the producer contacts the state department of agriculture to resolve the issue.

PigPass will also now check the validity of the PIC and tattoo prior to a new PigPass book being ordered or an ePigPass being generated.

These changes are aimed at resolving some of these identified issues.

Producers can also go online to PigPass to review any movements relating to their PIC.

If you have provided a PigPass NVD and this has not been reported within two business days (or before the next movement if sooner, which mostly relates to shows and saleyards), you should contact the receiver to ask them to report the movement.

Downloading and using the PigPass app (from the Apple or Android stores) will also help to reduce errors, particularly those errors relating to movement reporting.

The PigPass app generates the PigPass NVD, then stores (or caches) the PigPass NVD until your phone is in service.

The PigPass NVD can be passed to the receiver (truck drivers, abattoirs, saleyards and shows) using the QR code scanner in the app or it can be emailed from the app.

Enhancing PigPass is APL's responsibility but everyone along the pork supply chain also has a role to ensure PigPass delivers the traceability requirements expected by governments and industry.

...and this little piggy had none



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Photo: [australianpork.com.au](http://australianpork.com.au)

## APL African swine fever co-ordinator and resources

AFRICAN swine fever is understandably causing concern among the Australian pork industry, particularly since the incursion into East Timor last month.

Australian Pork Limited is responding to increased industry concern and is working hard to ensure all relevant parties are taking steps to prevent ASF reaching Australia's pig herd.

APL asks all producers to be on high alert, revisit biosecurity plans and make sure all staff and visitors to piggeries understand their biosecurity obligations.

APL has assigned Dr Lechelle van Breda as a temporary full-time ASF co-ordinator to address producer and processor concerns, provide information and ensure industry is as well prepared

as possible to assist with preparedness, surveillance and, if need be, a response.

### Resources

At [australianpork.com.au/asfresources](http://australianpork.com.au/asfresources) you will find a list of ASF-related resources to assist you with your biosecurity preparedness and information you can share with other producers and members of the public to ensure everyone understands the serious nature of the ASF risk to the Australian pig industry.

This includes webinars, signs for your farm, biosecurity plans, factsheets and explanatory videos.

If you would like hard copy or electronic resources sent to you, please contact APL's ASF co-ordinator Lechelle van Breda on 0447 099 397.

# Is your farm feral pig proof?

DECENT fencing is a core element of biosecurity.

For farms designed from scratch, the fence around the farm buildings extends to the load-out ramp on the perimeter and includes the silos and staff amenities building.

This means 'clean' farm areas are separated from 'dirty' non-farm areas.

In this sense, the fence keeps transporters, other vehicles, visitors and other pigs out.

The real risk to the 'home' pig population comes from feral pigs.

It has been estimated that there are as many as 24 million of them nationally and they are spread throughout the country.

Even if you have not seen them, they are probably in your area.

They have, unfortunately, at one time or another, breached the biosecurity of many large farming businesses.

For practical purposes, a fence that restricts animal movements to within 2m of your buildings should

be adequate.

If you can do more, terrific, but what you are really trying to prevent is nose-to-nose contact between the farm pigs and any nearby feral pigs.

You will know that disease can be transmitted several kilometres in the air but that's with large populations of source animals all in one spot.

For one or two (feral) animals, a metre or two is enough.

In addition to thinking about how far the fence is from the buildings, you will also need to think about maintenance to make sure there are no holes or gaps under the fence and gates.

A metre-high, well-maintained ring-lock fence will serve you well against feral pigs.

If you want to keep people out, something higher is necessary, but don't overthink it—chances are, people can and will breach anything if they are determined enough.

Your existing stock fences will be a deterrent to

feral pigs and will add to any special barrier you erect.

Where feral pigs have penetrated farms, they have walked through open gates or doorways, crawled under gates or fences, and/or walked right through fences.

They have been attracted to sows on heat as well as to spilled feed.

A recent ABC Landline show (September 28) showed a NSW grain farm fenced with a pig-proof fence that was well-suited for the job.

They used a Waratah 15/150/15 Stocksafe-T Long Life Blue 250m with apron (about \$1200 per roll plus GST—prices will vary).

You need to order it specially.

That fence is 1.5m high and has an apron at the bottom.



## Protect your business from animal activists

AUSTRALIAN Pork Limited has been busy advocating for the safety and privacy of producers in recent months.

The Aussie Farms Inc website, which identified the location and addresses of hundreds of producers, was released and promoted earlier this year accompanied by edited pictures and videos.

Some of this footage is of family homes.

APL made it clear to multiple parliamentary inquiries that stronger laws were needed to protect primary producers from interference and disruption.

In response, the Commonwealth Parliament has passed laws making it an offence to use a carriage service to incite trespass.

This means those who encourage or ask others to trespass on your property using a computer or mobile phone may be guilty of an offence.

If you, or anyone on your property feels unsafe or threatened by the actions of animal activists, contact the police.

Additionally, the Commonwealth Attorney-

General has listed Aussie Farms Inc under Federal Privacy Legislation, meaning the Australian Privacy Principles now apply to Aussie Farms.

This is normally reserved for businesses with a turnover of more than \$3 million.

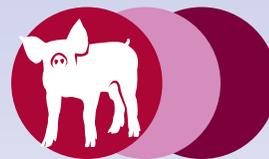
The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner has invited individuals who believe their personal information has been breached to make a complaint.

This can be done by lodging a Privacy Complaint Form at [oaic.gov.au/about-us/contact-us](http://oaic.gov.au/about-us/contact-us)

Whether your property is family owned or part of a larger organisation, you may still have had identifiable personal information included on the Aussie Farms Inc map, and thus entitled to make a complaint.

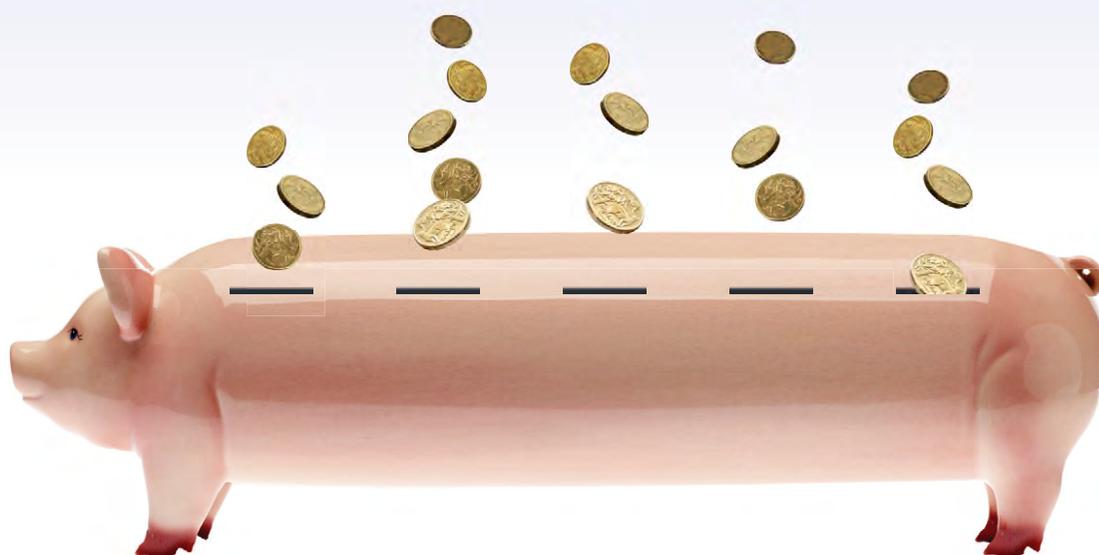
APL cannot make a complaint on behalf of an individual.

For any further information about the recent changes, please contact Alister Oulton on [alister.oulton@australianpork.com.au](mailto:alister.oulton@australianpork.com.au) or 0427 423 869.



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The author and his dog Tiger enjoyed hunting feral pigs in the 1980s, backed up with a rifle or sometimes just a spear, or sometimes just a knife.



## Back to the future for pigging past

GOING pigging, mainly in forest country south of Perth with my faithful brindle dog Tiger, a three-quarters bull terrier, quarter heeler, was one of my favourite weekend recreations back in the 1980s.

I therefore have watched, with some interest, the increasingly loud calls for feral pig culling to be stepped up a few notches in what some see as one small step in our country's efforts to inhibit the spread of African swine fever, assuming it reaches our vulnerable shores.

With ASF already having landed in Timor Leste and with Darwin and, indeed, the whole Northern Territory and far north Queensland coastlines vulnerable to incursions of irresponsible people and ASF-tainted meat, its prohibition and inhibition if it gets here, as some believe is inevitable, is occupying the minds of Australian pork producers and all industry stakeholders like nothing ever before.

It's made fear of the likes of foot and mouth disease and porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome incursions seem like a blister on a pig's snout.

According to Australian Pork Limited, the most



**Cant Comment**  
by  
**BRENDON CANT**

significant risk of entry of ASF virus into Australia is via illegally imported contaminated pork products that are then swill fed to domestic pigs and/or accessed by feral pigs.

Though feral pig numbers fluctuate widely according to seasons and food availability and estimates of their numbers are about as reliable and accurate as a Donald Trump midnight Tweet, there could be something like 24 million feral pigs (according to the National Farmers' Federation) roaming this great southern land.

They are recognised as a key threat to native flora, fauna and ecosystems under federal legislation and are a declared pest ani-

mal in Queensland, NSW, ACT, Victoria and Western Australia.

In terms of industry efforts to control feral pigs, the Invasive Animals CRC and Animal Control Technologies Australia, with support from Meat and Livestock Australia and other industry partners, developed the 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) PIGOUT bait, the next-generation sodium nitrite HOGGONE bait and the HogHopper feral pig-specific bait delivery device.

I understand HOGGONE is now being assessed by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority as part of its registration application process.

This can be slow. The National Farmers' Federation recently called on all levels governments to act immediately to control the feral pig population by investing in and working with industry towards the more effective control of feral pigs.

NFF chief executive Tony Mahar said: "The spread of ASF to Australia has the potential to decimate our commercial pork industry and the livelihoods of farming families and the communities they contribute to."

With most observers agreeing that ASF has, in not much more than a year, slashed China's commercial pig population by

half and the world's by 25 percent, it is a hot button issue.

While I'm not suggesting the likes of me should, could or would take up arms and go bush to try to make a dent in feral pig numbers, government vertebrate pest control officers, who already undertake ground and aerial shooting operations, are out there doing just that, hopefully helped and not hindered by amateur enthusiasts.

Of course, if ASF was to infiltrate here, the issue of how best to educate amateur pig hunters in the appropriate ways of handling and disposing of ferals potentially infested with ASF is another big question.

Hopefully, it's one we won't need to ponder or answer, at least for now.

Meanwhile, responsible steps are being taken nation-wide and industry-wide to minimise the risk of ASF entry into Australia, albeit some would say obvious and particularly vulnerable entry points have been neglected for a bit too long.

No sniffer dogs at Darwin International Airport until that changed after an outcry last month was one big miss, especially with flights landing there from Dili, the capital city of Timor Leste.

Lest we forget. 🐷



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# Livestock feed demand puts squeeze on Australian grain

AUSTRALIA'S grain 'balance sheet' is set to materially tighten over the next decade, with increasing demand for grain to feed livestock – coupled with growing human consumption – well outstripping projected supply, according to a recently released industry report.

This will see the proportion of the nation's grain harvest exported annually decline from the current 60 percent to 53 percent by 2030, and may increase the likelihood of further grain imports into the country over time.

In its report 'The Australian Feed Grain Squeeze', agribusiness banking specialist Rabobank says by 2030, the domestic market for cereal grains (wheat, barley, oats and sorghum) will soak up an additional 6 percent of Australia's annual production, leaving available supply for exports down by two million tonnes (or 10 percent under the current five-year average).

Report author, Rabobank senior grains analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon says the bank is forecasting domestic demand for cereal grains to grow by 2.3 percent per annum over the next 10 years (to above 17.5 million tonnes a year by 2029/30), well exceeding projected annual supply growth of only 0.4 percent per annum over the same period.

## More mouths to feed

Livestock feed will take an increasing proportion of Australia's domestic grain supply, the report says, driven by a rise in the number of stock being fed grain to satisfy local and international demand for animal protein.

Increased human consumption of food products containing grain will also fuel part of the rising demand.

"Despite changing diets, which have seen people's consumption of wheat and other coarse grains fall on a per capital basis, Australians will still consume more grain due to population growth," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"Overall, this will see an increase in demand for cereal grains in Australia due to both direct consumption of grain in products – such as breakfast cereals, bread, cake, biscuits, pasta and beer – and also derived demand for grains to feed livestock that supply animal protein products including beef, lamb, chicken, pork, eggs, milk and fish."

This domestic appetite will also be augmented by a strongly growing demand for Australian beef and lamb in export markets for at least the next five years, she said, as "the global protein market resets as a consequence of the African swine fever epidemic in China".

Dr Kalisch Gordon said a higher level of growth in feed-grain demand – compared with human consumption – forecast over the next decade meant the share of cereal grains going to feed in Australia would approach 70 percent by 2029/30, up from 64 percent (the five-year average to 2018/19).

"As such, we will not only see increased demand for grains in Australia, but an increase in the relative

importance of feed grain as an end use compared with milling, malting and processing for human consumption," she said.

## Supply

On the supply side, the report says, production growth will not be able to keep up with the forecast increase in demand over the coming decade.

"We expect Australian cereal grain supply to increase by just 0.4 percent annually over the next 10 years," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"In the absence of any new technologies that offer step change improvements in yield growth – and in the face of a drying climate and challenges to crop management, such as herbicide resistance and potential limits on the use of glyphosate – we do not expect future yield growth to exceed historical growth trends."

Dr Kalisch Gordon said with a 'southerly contraction' already occurring across Australia's cropping belt due to climate challenges, as well as relative commodity pricing, the bank was not expecting cropping area growth in the forecast period.

"And while genetic modification and new plant-breeding techniques of-

fer the potential for step change increases in yield that would offset the feed grain squeeze, we consider the likelihood of development, adoption and end-market acceptance low within the coming decade," she said.

As such, the report says, Rabobank expects average Australian cereal grain production to be at around 37.5 million tonnes by 2030, up from the current five-year average of 35.8 million tonnes.

"However, Australian production will continue to be prone, and possibly more vulnerable, to year-to-year variation, so a range of 20 million to 52 million tonnes must be considered part of the outlook," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

## Exports and imports

The report says the expected low rate of production growth, together with the forecast increase in domestic demand, will reduce Australia's annual export surplus – from an average of 22 million tonnes of wheat, barley, oats and sorghum (2014/15 to 2018/19) to an export surplus closer to 20 million tonnes by 2030.

"This will result in the proportion of Australia's grain production going

to exports reducing from typically being 60 percent of annual production to 53 percent by the end of the next decade," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

And, while Australia would "remain a net exporter of cereal grains", she said, there was increased potential to see further grain imports coming into the country over the next decade.

"Feed grains may be imported if the basis (price) reaches sufficiently high levels to cover freight and compliance with import biosecurity measures," she said.

"However, the import of food-grade grains for milling, malting or other processing will be more likely."

## East/west divide and price

The Rabobank report says grain 'balance sheet' tightening will be particularly focused on Australia's eastern states "where supply growth will be lowest and demand growth highest".

"The highest forecast growth in cereal supply will be in Western Australia and South Australia," the report says.

When it comes to demand though, growth will continue to be con-

centrated on the east coast of Australia.

"Together, Victoria, NSW and Queensland account for close to 80 percent of Australia's population and have the highest forecast population growth over the coming decade," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"They also have more than 90 percent of the country's feedlot capacity, more than 65 percent of its milling capacity and more than 70 percent of poultry sector capacity."

This tightening is expected to see the average underlying east coast basis rise by as much as 5 percent per annum, she said.

"For WA and SA, higher supply growth will put downward pressure on the basis between local grain prices and global prices, though prices are expected to be supported more often by demand for their grain from the eastern states."

The growing demand for livestock feed will also narrow the premiums for food-grade grain and improve the profitability of growing feed grains in Australia, especially in Queensland, NSW and Victoria, the report says.



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# Making the FHA work better for farmers

THE Australian Government recently introduced improvements to the Farm Household Allowance that will help more farmers through periods of hardship.

This is the next step in responding to the Independent Review of the FHA, which will see more than 30,000 farmers able to access this immediate support.

Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie said the changes extended farming families' access to the FHA from three years in their lifetime to four years out of every 10, recognising farmers experience hardships, including droughts, more than once in their lives.

"Our government has listened to farmers



Photo: frasercoastchronicle.com.au

throughout the independent review and proactively responded to all the recommendations," Minister McKenzie said.

"The Government has now introduced a Bill to provide drought relief for those who have exhausted their time on FHA.

"The Bill will also allow farmers to receive the FHA payment four years in every decade; make it easier for more farmers to access the payment by lifting the amount families can earn off-farm to \$100,000 a year; and allow farmers to count income from adjustment against their losses.

"These changes reflect the nature of contemporary farming businesses – by recognising the reality that much of the income

earned off-farm goes straight to servicing debt rather than putting food on the table.

"Our farming families don't need to be worrying about how to pay the bills and feeding their families while they are struggling to feed their livestock and making tough decisions about their long-term future.

"A one-off drought relief payment of up to \$13,000 for a farming family and up to \$7500 for an individual is designed to help people determine whether they will be sustainable, should look at succession options or, in some instances, choose to sell.

"For the first time, we'll link farm enterprises with their directly related businesses and consider income and losses together – not just income – a big change in how government support payments are provided to families.

"Our Government had already made changes to make the FHA quicker and easier to access by reducing paperwork by a third and by temporarily increasing the farm assets threshold to \$5 million from July 1, 2019.

"It is all part of the radical simplification of the

FHA application process and key policy settings the Prime Minister announced on September 27."

These improvements include:

- A simplified assets test;

- A significant redesign of the application process and form, including allowing farming couples to apply using the same form; and

- A strengthened case management approach to better support farmers in hardship through periods of financial difficulty.

"We're bringing these reforms online as quickly as possible, and not waiting for the full response before we act," Minister McKenzie said.

"We'll continue to listen to farming communities and continue to implement recommendations of the farmer-led Independent Review of the FHA."

This Bill amends the Farm Household Support Act 2014 and the Farm Household Support Minister's Rule 2014.

The FHA has been supporting Australian farmers since July 2014.

It has paid more than \$365 million to about 12,700 recipients in that time. 🐷

## Counting down the days to APSA

THE 17th Biennial APSA Conference is less than a month away and the committee is excited to welcome six international guest speakers and four local experts in the fields of nutrition, genetics, reproduction, technology and alternative proteins.

With the generous support of principal sponsors Australian Pork Limited and Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited and the many diamond, gold, silver, bronze and category

sponsors, we promise to deliver the best APSA Conference yet.

The program begins on Sunday, November 17 with the student workshop hosted by APL.

This brings together honours and postgraduate students working on pork industry research for professional development and networking.

The pre-conference workshops, hosted by sponsors EW Nutrition, DSM and Phytobiotics, will run from 11am on Sunday and lead into the Dunkin Memorial Lec-

ture at 6pm.

The next two and a half days promise the latest research outcomes and thinking around key areas of the pork supply chain.

A range of invited papers and submitted extended abstracts will be delivered through oral and poster presentations, with a number of opportunities to network with colleagues and friends.

The Hilton Hotel in Adelaide will host the conference with social functions at the hotel, Adelaide Oval and La

Boca Bar and Grill.

Anyone wishing to enjoy some of South Australia's wines and hospitality is invited to join the post-conference tour to the Adelaide Hills on Wednesday afternoon.

If you haven't registered, head to [apsa.asn.au/Conference2019/Registration](http://apsa.asn.au/Conference2019/Registration)

The full program can be downloaded from the Registration page.

We look forward to welcoming you to Adelaide in a few weeks' time. 🐷

## APL group assessing UK antimicrobial recording software

ELECTRONIC recording systems are helpful for tracking antimicrobial use and comparing use between farms.

The UK pork industry deployed the electronic medicines book to measure and demonstrate significant reduced antimicrobial usage.

Producers log in to a central database and fill in their eMB each month using farm treatment records.

Now this recording system is being tested on some Australian farms to see how it applies.

Log-ins to the UK software have been provided by the UK Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board to some veterinarians who form a steering committee advising APL on antimicrobial stewardship policy.

There is some work to do on this but the Australian pork industry is at the beginning of being able to demonstrate compliance with a global program on reducing antimicrobial resistance.

The Australian Pork Limited antimicrobial stewardship steering committee comprises veterinarians with a strong commitment

to good antimicrobial practice.

They are drawn from major farming businesses and veterinary practices.

It is chaired by Ross Cutler.

Its members are Anke Woeckel (MSD Animal Health), Regina Fogarty (Rivalea), Barry Lloyd and Bernie Gleeson (SunPork), Peter Scott (Scolexia), Andrew Morris (Riverbend Group) and Hugo Dunlop (Chris Richards and Associates).

Heather Channon and Lechelle Van Breda represent APL on the steering group.

Australian pork producers have high global standing when it comes to the antimicrobials that are of critical importance to human health.

Neither the fluoroquinolones nor the cephalosporins, both critically important in humans, are registered for use in pigs.

The cephalosporins (Excenel) are used in cattle medicine and have been prescribed by veterinarians in exceptional cases for pigs in the past.

While that may have been a practice for some as late as 2017, it is no longer so and this medicine class is not part of

best practice prescribing.

The fluoroquinolones are not registered for use in any food animal species in Australia.

The challenge is to rationalise the use of the other antimicrobials that carry the animal disease treatment load and only use them when other ways of controlling disease have failed.

This often means a complete overhaul of pig flow management, batch systems and re-vamping hygiene for a start.

The 60 percent reduction in the use of antimicrobial medications achieved by the UK pork industry since 2015 is impressive.

It comes with a culture driven by committed UK pork producers and their equally committed veterinarians who want to produce high-quality food while reducing antimicrobial resistance.

The program was supported by integration of a measurement standard into the UK Red Tractor quality assurance program.

Analysis of the antimicrobial use data reveals most pig farmers are low-level users of medications but there is a smaller number of persistent high users. 🐷  
**Ross Cutler**

## First visa cancellation for serious biosecurity breach

OFFICIALS at Sydney International Airport have used new legislation to cancel a passenger's visitor visa for the first time because of a serious biosecurity breach.

Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie said the cancellation showed Australia would not tolerate people putting our

environment, industries, economy and way of life at risk.

"The biosecurity threats our country is facing are real and could be devastating for all Australians," Minister McKenzie said.

"We have significant diseases like African swine fever on our doorstep, and one key pathway for this and other threats to arrive in Australia is by international passengers bringing in risk items.

"The passenger, a 45-year-old woman from Vietnam, had her visitor visa cancelled for failing to declare an extensive cache of food concealed in her luggage, including over 4.5kg of pork.

"In the midst of what is potentially the biggest animal disease event the world has seen, it beggars belief that someone would deliberately attempt to bring pork meat past our border.

"That act could deal a very heavy blow to our \$5.3 billion pork industry, as well as the 36,000 jobs that depend on it in rural and regional communities.

"Each of the items seized could pose a direct threat to our \$60 billion agricultural industries.

"Australian authorities won't stand for it."

The passenger was also found to be carrying garlic, fruit, raw eggs and over a kilo each of squid and quail.

"Ensuring strong borders means ensuring a strong biosecurity sys-

tem to protect our international trade reputation as a leading supplier of safe, healthy, high-quality food," Minister McKenzie said.

"This passenger will now be unable to come back to Australia for three years.

"The punishment must fit the crime and that's why we introduced this new legislation to cancel visitor visas when a passenger commits a significant biosecurity breach or repeatedly contravenes our biosecurity laws.

"Returning Australians who do the same could face criminal prosecution or civil court action.

"They could be ordered to pay up to \$420,000 and be sentenced up to 10 years in jail.

"This government is serious about biosecurity and we will keep working to ensure the measures we have in place safeguard Australia from deadly pests and diseases now and into the future."

The introduction of visitor visa cancellations is in addition to a range of measures in place to support Australia's airport biosecurity.

In response to the spread of ASF, heightened screening for banned imported pork products has been implemented at the border.

A stronger approach to enforcement is also in place to ensure the issuing of infringements reflects the seriousness of the breach. 🐷



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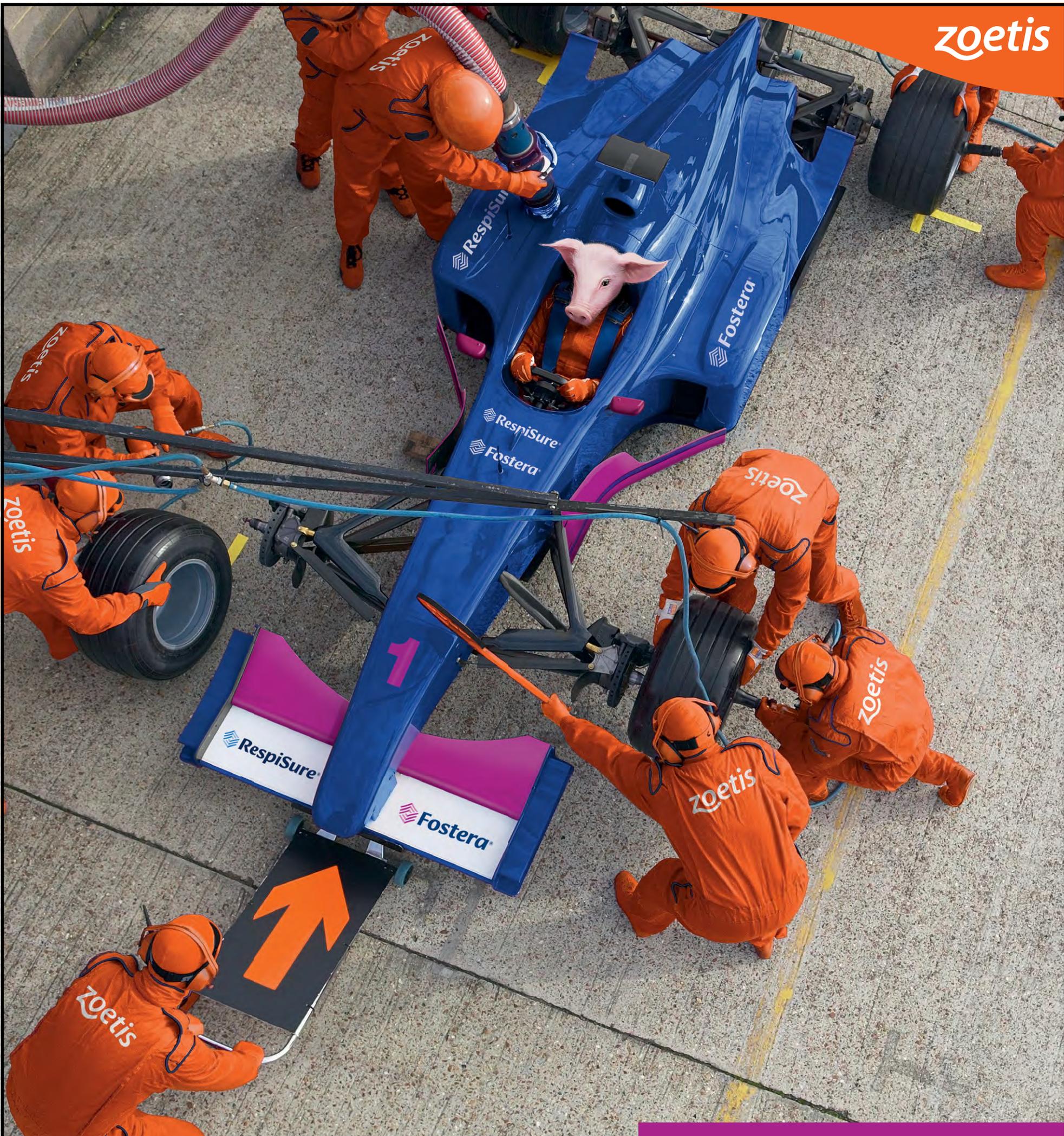


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The Aussie Pumps team showed off the Scud high-pressure blasters on the production line in the Castle Hill facility.

## Piggeries clean up with Aussie Pumps

WITH African swine fever front of mind, pig producers are even more aware of the importance of a hygienic environment for animal health.

Aussie Pumps, through working directly with leading piggeries, has developed a high-flow, Honda petrol-drive water blaster ideal for cleaning stalls efficiently.

The Aussie Scud 351 delivers a powerful combination of flow and pressure that washes and flushes cutting cleaning times in heavily soiled applications.

The machine features an Aussie Scud galvanised steel frame with four 13" wheels.

The Scud design, a unique Australian development, incorporates OH&S friendly attributes with ergonomics

that make it easy to move around.

Product manager Hamish Lorenz said, "The Scud's ability has won fans in a range of industries including piggeries in Singapore."

"They're simple to use and even the diesel drive version, at 100kg, is very manoeuvrable."

The heart of the machine is a 'Big Berty' Bertolini triplex pump that delivers 21l/pm flow.

The slow-speed, gear-box-drive pump has a pressure capability of 2600psi, ideal for wash-down applications.

The machines can be powered by either Honda petrol or Yanmar diesel-drive engines.

When partnered with a high-pressure turbo lance, the machine performance is boosted to give the operator an effective working pressure of up to 4200psi.

This can cut cleaning times by up to 50 percent.

"The turbo saves huge amounts of time, cuts water usage and saves energy and machine wear and tear," Lorenz said.

The machine also has a high/low pressure capa-

bility that can be adjusted by the operator at the gun.

This is affected through a double stainless steel lance with an adjustment valve that enables the operator to apply non-caustic cleaning agents to the job when necessary.

The machines are supported by a first-class aftermarket warranty program.

The Big Berty pump comes with a four-year warranty.

The Honda engine, carefully match tested to the product and approved by Honda internationally for this application, comes with a three-year warranty support program.

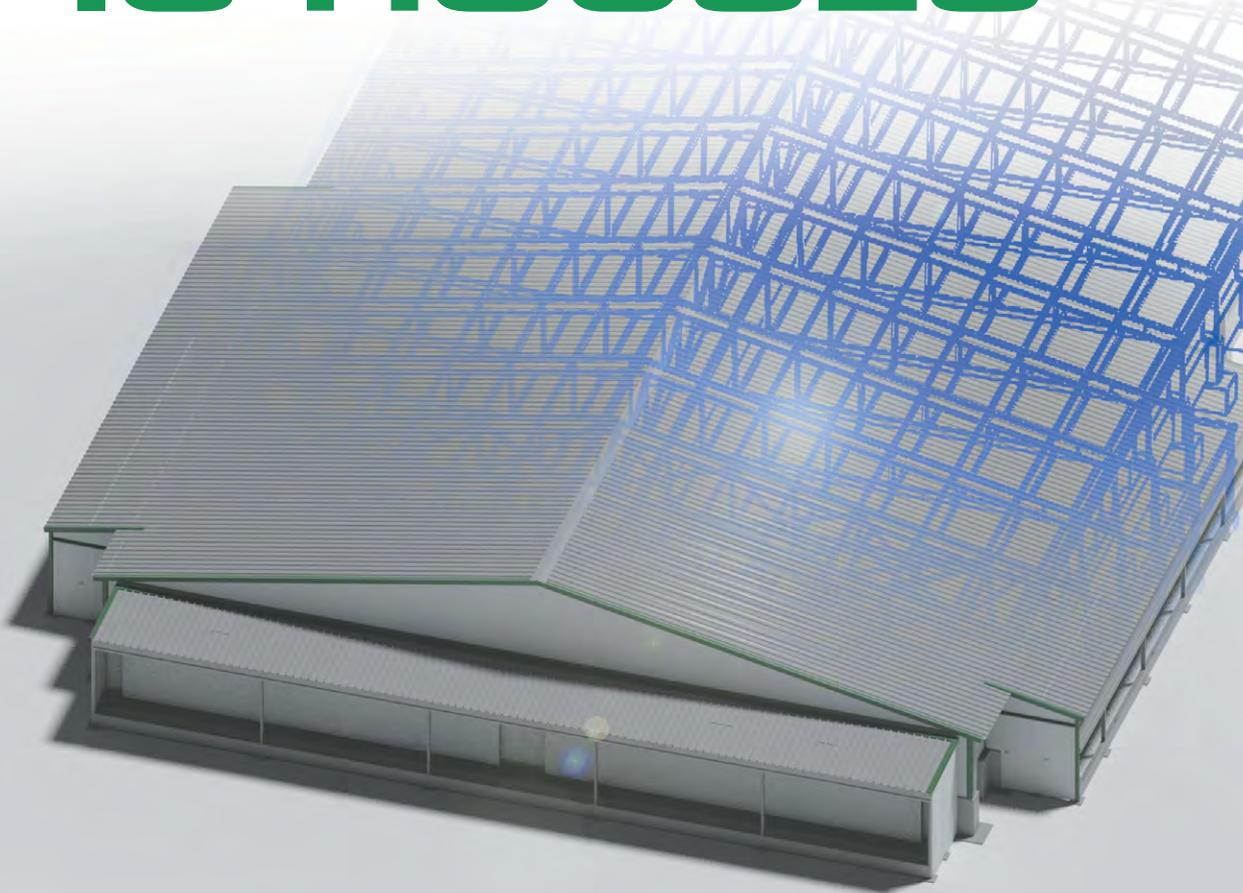
The Yanmar diesel version has a two-year factory guarantee.

"We spared no effort in design and consultation with users to come up with the best machine for this application," Lorenz said.

"Our huge production at our 2.1-acre Castle Hill plant means prices are competitive even in cut-priced international markets."

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## Better managing animal disease threats

AUSTRALIA will be better prepared to manage significant animal biosecurity threats such as African swine fever through a new comprehensive online field guide for emergency animal diseases.

Head of Biosecurity Lyn O'Connell said the guide will help vets with early detection, diagnosis and control of exotic and emerging infectious diseases in livestock.

"Early identification and reporting is critical to minimise the devastating impact these diseases can pose for our animals, industries, jobs and environment," Ms O'Connell said.

"ASF and foot and mouth disease could wipe out industries, jobs and impact on trade and availability of the Australian produce we all enjoy, so we need to be as prepared as possible because the threat is real.

"Australia's vets are vital for biosecurity.

"If the unthinkable happened and a significant animal disease was to hit our shores, our vets would play a key role in managing and minimising the risks.

"This guide will help vets identify emergency animal diseases in the field, ensure they consider priority diseases when conducting diagnosis and take appropriate action when they suspect signs of a biosecurity threat.

"The disease list included in the guide will be reviewed and updated to address emerging threats, so we are best placed to manage them as they arise.

"We have some of the best vets in the world and this gives them another tool to improve the work they do in protecting Australia from deadly animal diseases."

The guide is in addition to a range of measures in place to better manage animal biosecurity threats.

This includes increased intervention measures at our borders, testing of intercepted meat produce for ASF and FMD, as well as stronger enforcement approaches for biosecurity breaches relating to meat products.

A roundtable was recently held between leaders, scientists and governments to discuss the actions needed to keep ASF out of Australia.

A simulation exercise will also be held later this year to test our disease response capabilities to make sure we're as prepared as we can be.

The field guide was produced by the Department of Agriculture and Australia's Animal Health Laboratory.

The 270-page resource is available on the Outbreak website at [outbreak.gov.au/for-vets-and-scientists/emergency-animal-diseases-guide](http://outbreak.gov.au/for-vets-and-scientists/emergency-animal-diseases-guide)

# AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship applications open now

APPLICATIONS for the AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship are now open.

Students studying an agriculture-related degree or STEM degree and in their last two years of study are eligible to apply.

The AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship, in partnership with industry sponsors, provides an annual \$10,000 bursary over two years and professional development opportunities for eligible university students.

The AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship also offers students annual industry work placements, access to industry leaders, professional development assistance and opportunities to network and gain knowledge at a range of industry events.

Students studying the following agriculture-related degrees are eligible to apply:

- Agricultural Science;
- Rural Science;
- Livestock/Animal Science;
- Veterinary Science;
- Agribusiness;
- Plant Science;
- Agricultural Economics;
- Resource Management;
- Sustainability;
- Food Security; and
- Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths (STEM) with major studies and subject selections relevant to, and aligned with, agriculture.

AgriFutures Horizon Scholar Emma Moss

is currently studying a Bachelor of Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Queensland and has been on the program for two years.

"The Horizon Scholarship program has given me confidence and a way to channel my passion for agriculture into things that will make a genuine difference," Ms Moss said.

"I have had so many amazing experiences over the past two years, from speaking at EvokeAG 2019 as a Future Young Leader, being involved at EKKA through my sponsor, Meat and Livestock Australia, and being invited to present at schools – the confidence I have gained through the program has really helped me embrace these opportunities and put myself out there more."

The Horizon Scholarship program assisted Ms Moss with work placements across the Northern Territory.

"Most of my work placements have been in areas that are quite expensive to get to, so I probably wouldn't have been able to complete them without the assistance the Horizon Scholarship program provides," she said.

"I'm so grateful for the opportunities I have been exposed to and for the amazing people I've met who have shown me different ways to think

about agriculture.

"Through the Horizon Scholarship program I have learnt how important it is to have a strong network of industry contacts.

"Not only have I been able to build my professional network through my work placements, but I've developed lasting relationships with the other scholars on the program.

"It has been amazing to meet people my age who share my passion for agriculture."

AgriFutures Australia recognises there is a broad range of skills that contribute to all areas of rural industries and are looking to attract those skilled individuals into careers in agriculture.

AgriFutures Australia managing director John Harvey said, "As an organisation dedicated to the long-term prosperity of our rural industries, we are committed to supporting the next generation of leaders within the Australian agricultural landscape."

"The Horizon Scholarship program provides networking and professional development opportunities, along with valuable industry placements, which allows our scholars to begin their careers in agriculture with direction and readiness."

Students must be entering their last two years of university to be eligible for the AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship.

All applicants must have commenced their tertiary studies no longer than two years after leaving high school.

Scholarship recipients will be selected on the basis of their commitment to a career in agriculture, as well as their leadership potential and tertiary academic record to date.

Applications close at 5pm AEDT Friday, November 22, 2019.

Shortlisted applicants must be available for a telephone interview in February 2020, and scholarship winners will be announced in April 2020.

For more information and to apply, visit [agrifutures.com.au/horizon](http://agrifutures.com.au/horizon)



# Strengthening our borders to stop swine fever

WITH African swine fever confirmed less than 700km from Australia's northern border, Agriculture Minister Bridget McKenzie is calling for heightened vigilance to keep the disease out.

"One quarter of the world's pigs will be dead by the end of this year from African swine fever, which kills about 80 percent of the pigs it infects and there's no vaccine and no cure," Minister McKenzie said.

"Our government is stepping up our border intervention to make sure we keep it out, not just to protect our 2700 pork producers but also protect Australia's global reputation as a supplier of clean, green, safe and nutritious food.

"In increasingly com-

petitive markets our freedom from diseases like ASF is central to our trade proposition across all our agricultural products and we need to protect that.

"We're boosting our biosecurity effort at international airports to target those flights from countries affected by ASF and in coming weeks we will be undertaking spot checks of each and every person arriving on selected flights.

"I've asked my department to employ detector dog capabilities in Darwin given the heightened risk direct flights from Timor Leste could pose.

"We're also working with airlines in countries that have ASF to make sure passengers understand our requirements and have every opportu-

nity to comply.

"Earlier this year we implemented changes to immigration legislation so international visitors who bring in undeclared high-risk items, like pork from ASF-affected countries, can be sent back home.

"They can be refused entry to Australia and have their visas cancelled for up to three years.

"Since we increased border checks, we've been seizing 100kg a week in illegal pork products.

"Between November 5, 2018 and August 31, 2019 over 27 tonnes of pork was intercepted on air travellers entering Australia.

"We need every Australian and all our visitors to play their part and leave pork products overseas."

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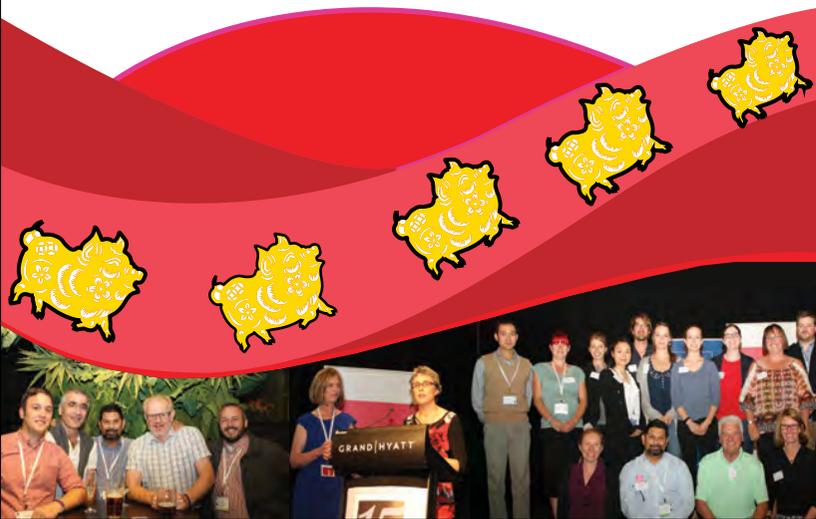
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# NFF meets with PM to discuss immediate and long-term drought management

THE National Farmers' Federation recently met with Prime Minister Scott Morrison to discuss both what more could be done to assist farmers and communities managing this drought and a long-term policy to guide the nation's response to future droughts.

Drought Minister David Littleproud and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack also attended the meeting.

NFF president Fiona Simson said, "The Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Littleproud absolutely understand the gravity of the current drought situation and we appreciated the opportunity to discuss further measures to assist farmers and communities in the management of what is now one of the worst droughts in living memory."

"Drought is complex, it is not the same for any one farm business, family or community.

"While one support mechanism will suit someone, for another it might not be the right fit or they may not be eligible.

"The NFF acknowledges the measures already in place at federal and state levels.

"The additional six measures proposed by the NFF are designed to complement these and together,



er, address the varying circumstances farmers and agricultural-reliant communities are facing right now."

As a result of consultation with its members, the NFF has proposed the following immediate measures for consideration by government:

1. Support for local council rate relief.
2. Commonwealth Government subsidies for the payroll expenses of farming businesses equal to the Newstart Allowance to support local communities.
3. Top-up payments of at least \$2000 per child to the Assistance for Isolated Children allowance and additional funding for rural schools and additional support for early learning services in severely drought-affected communities.
4. A two-year interest-free period for Regional Investment Corporation Drought loans.

5. An increased federal-state focus on the eradication of feral pigs, which are a biosecurity risk and a highly destructive pest, particularly in drought.

6. Exit packages for farming families looking to exit farming after an assessment of their long-term viability.

The NFF recently provided the Government its newly endorsed National Drought Policy, a proposed Commonwealth framework for a more strategic approach to preparing for managing and recovering from drought into the future.

The meeting was the first opportunity to talk through the long-term policy.

"We spoke to the Prime Minister about a new long-term constructive approach to future drought policy that enhances and builds on the current National Drought Agreement," Ms Simson said.

"It is important to be

clear that NFF's National Drought Policy is not about this current drought, but rather a new, more strategic approach to managing droughts into the future.

"We acknowledge the current National Drought Agreement.

"The NFF's policy provides a more detailed description of the roles, responsibilities, expectations and accountabilities outlined in the Agreement of all stakeholders including the Commonwealth, states and industry – an approach the Prime Minister welcomed."

The NFF understands the policy will now be discussed at a meeting of state and territory agriculture ministers.

"We want all levels of government to support this approach and we will continue to talk to the Federal Government and their state counterparts to encourage the policy's adoption."

Ms Simson thanked the Prime Minister for his government's continued prioritisation of farmers and regional communities as they live through an almost unprecedented drought situation.

"It's critically important we focus on assisting those impacted by this drought and to act now, as a nation, to ensure we are better prepared for the inevitable droughts of the future."

## New wastewater pumps from Gorman-Rupp

GORMAN-RUPP, the world leader in solids handling self-priming centrifugal pumps, has released the most advanced pump for handling solids-laden liquids according to Australian distributor Hydro Innovations.

Called the Eradicator Solids Management System, the technology is ideal for the challenges facing wastewater pumps, including the handling of stringy solids such as rags, feathers and twine, which find their way into meat processing plant wastewater systems.

The new system comes as an option on the Gorman-Rupp range of Super T Series pumps and is also available as an upgrade kit on existing Super T Series pumps already in the field.

The Eradicator system features an aggressive self-cleaning wear plate incorporating a number of notches and grooves as well as a patent pending lacerating tooth that helps break up stringy materials, scrape them off the impeller vanes and pass them through the pump – all without impacting performance or interrupting service.

A special cover plate

with the system includes a smaller, patented lightweight inspection cover that can easily be removed to inspect pump internals.

System benefits include improved operational efficiency, increased uptime, reduced maintenance costs, lower life cycle costs and easier access to the impeller.

Operators will also find the lighter cover plate is easier and safer to work with.

Eradicator-equipped pumps do not require expensive chopper blades that need periodic replacement but rely on passing large solids and stringy materials straight through the pump.

The system is available with carbon steel or hardened alloy steel wear plates.

Pumps can handle flows from 5l/ps through to 200l/ps and heads to 45m, and Gorman-Rupp Super T Series pumps are able to be mounted high and dry above the wastewater (up to 7.6m) so operators gain easy access without the need for cranes and other lifting devices.

More information on these pumps and the Eradicator system can be obtained from Hydro Innovations at [info@hydroinnovations.com.au](mailto:info@hydroinnovations.com.au) or by calling 02 9898 1800.



## China protocol update: APL signs co-operation agreement with China Meat Association

ON September 24 in Chengdu, China, Australian Pork Limited CEO Margo Andrae signed a strategic agreement with president of the China Meat Association Mr Li Shulong.

The 'Strategic Framework Agreement on Technical and Trade Development Cooperation' was agreed to during discussions between APL, CMA and Australian exporters in Shanghai in May this year.

At a time when African swine fever is devastating Chinese industry, APL stands ready to assist, including by sharing experiences on biosecurity practice, exchanging technical and other data and establish-



ing trade channels for Australian pork to enter the China market.

The agreement provides a platform for information exchange, training programs, regular joint meetings, mutual support for each other's objectives and two-way visits.

The signing took place during the China International Meat Industry Week, which was jointly hosted by the CMA

and International Meat Secretariat in China's Sichuan province.

As part of 'Meat Week', APL attended the IMS 2019 World Pork Conference where APL General Manager of Research and Innovation Dr Heather Channon presented on Australia's sustainability credentials.

During the conference, global industry leaders discussed the outlook for world pork production and trade.

Chinese participants were sanguine about the challenges presented by ASF but confident China would rebound faster than most expected.

APL spoke to a range of participants, including industry and peak

body representatives, importers, meat trade experts and government officials.

All were confident Chinese government would need to start accelerating new market access arrangements to secure more pork supply from abroad, including from Australia, in coming months.

While we interpret this as an encouraging signal, nothing is certain.

Australian authorities are yet to hear back from their Chinese counterparts in relation to the export protocol, but we will continue to pursue all market access opportunities including China.

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## Swine fever wipes out 20 percent of Vietnam pig herd

US Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Ted McKinney has spoken out about the African swine fever outbreaks in Vietnam, explaining the current death toll is estimated to be 20 percent of the national herd.

There were some reports the number might be higher.

Vietnam government officials said the spread of the disease has shown signs of slowing and are urging farmers to restore pig herds battered by the outbreak.

"It's tough to say whether ASF is contained," McKinney said.

McKinney has met with overseas buyers as well as Vietnamese government officials during his recent trip.

Still, McKinney pointed to one positive sign: the chief executive of a large Vietnamese feed company told him the spread of ASF does not seem to have accelerated in the country.

US pork exports have jumped and pig processors have been vying for business in China, the world's biggest pork consumer, and other markets in Asia, where ASF has

devastated hog herds, pushed pork prices to record highs and sent imports rocketing.

Though not harmful to humans, the disease is deadly to pigs, with no vaccine available.

USDA pork export sales data issued for the period from October 4-10 included 'a significant quantity' of sales that may have occurred in previous weeks - including exports to Mexico jumping to a weekly record of 132,381 tonnes, from 2692 tonnes a week earlier.

In addition to pork, Vietnamese buyers are also buying poultry, beef and water buffalo as part of the country's preparation for the Lunar New Year celebrations in January.

"African swine fever continues to clearly be a problem, not just for the countries that have it, but countries like our own that don't want to get it," McKinney said.

The delegation took special precautions ahead of the trip to Vietnam - including no visits to Vietnamese farms - to help ensure members did not accidentally bring ASF back with them to the US.



Photo: straitstimes.com

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FLEX

# Fire and drought throughout Australia

AS if regional Australians haven't had it tough enough with the worst drought in 100 years, they are now gearing up for a fire season from hell.

The concept of city people "there's nothing to burn" couldn't be further from the truth.

National parks, woodlands, scrub and what's left of grasslands are tinder dry and ready to go up in flames.

Aussie Pumps knows this and is geared to double production of petrol and diesel-drive pumps to help farmers and homeowners combat the potential 'fire storm'.

The company's flagship product, the Aussie Fire Chief, is regarded as the world's finest lightweight portable fire pump.

It is the only pump that comes with a five-year

warranty and is powered by a top-quality Honda engine with an international guarantee.

Aussie Pumps operations manager Hamish Lorenz said, "We choose Honda to drive our pumps because of their reliability, power and torque."

"They start first time, every time."

The Fire Chief delivers more water and pressure than other pumps because of its huge 7.5" diameter impeller.

The impeller runs in a superbly matched and designed volute that enables the pump to not only prime from a depth of 7.6m vertical lift but also provides a tremendous combination of pressure and flow designed for fighting fire or transferring water.

The pumps offer a unique bolt-on flanged in-

let and outle, which enables them to be modified into different configurations.

For example, the standard Fire Chief product comes with a big 2" suction port and a three-way outlet.

It can be modified by changing the outlet to a 2" setup, reducing friction loss.

The three-way outlet enables the operation of two 1" hoses with nozzles or alternatively a 1.5" outlet that enables huge amounts of water to be thrown at the fire.

"Running an Aussie fire pump with a 1.5" hose and good-quality firefighting nozzle impresses," Lorenz said.

"We've operated alongside other brands and it astonished Rural Fire Services volunteers how the spots we extin-

guished stayed out.

"It's all about how much water and pressure you can apply."

All Aussie Fire Chief pumps are fitted with steel skids and anti-vibration mounts to prevent the pumps toppling over during operation.

The Honda engines come with a unique Oil Alert feature that will turn the pump off in the event of it being run at an extreme angle (toppling over, for example).

Aussie Pumps is also predicating increased demand for Aussie Mr T twin-impeller pumps, reflecting a growing need for more capability.

Lorenz, who understands what it's like to be in the middle of a bushfire, saved his own property on the outskirts of Sydney in Arcadia by battling fires alongside the RFS.

"We admire the firies tremendously," he said.

"Those men and women, young and old, give up their free time to train and support homeowners.

"Then they put their lives on the line during bushfires, often for very little thanks."

Aussie Pumps produces a free comprehensive Fire Survival Guide.

The guide is a great document that shows how to protect crops, livestock, houses and workshops from an impending bushfire.

The Survival Guide is a summation of everything Aussie Pumps has learnt about firefighting over the past 25 years.

"It's a great starting point for anyone preparing their home or property for a tough bushfire season," Lorenz said.

Further information, including the guide is readily available from Aussie Pumps distributors around Australia as well as CRT, Landmark and Elders.



## Farmers call for feral pig cull

THE National Farmers' Federation has called on governments to act immediately to control Australia's 24 million-strong feral pig population.

NFF chief executive Tony Mahar said, "Feral pigs destroy crops, degrade soil and water and spread weeds."

"Alarmingly, they also have the potential to spread endemic and exotic diseases such as African swine fever.

"Specifically, we're asking all levels of government to commit to investing in and working with industry towards the more effective control of feral pigs."

The call comes following the confirmation of ASF in Timor Leste, barely 600km from Australia's shores.

While the Government has implemented a number of measures to reduce the risk of ASF entering Australia, the threat remains very real.

"The spread of ASF to Australia has the po-

tential to decimate our commercial pork industry and the livelihoods of farming families and the communities they contribute to," Mr Mahar said.

Since the disease took hold just over 13 months ago, more than 50 percent of China's commercial pig population has been wiped out.

Analysts estimate the world's pig numbers have already been cut by 25 percent.

At a meeting in Canberra recently, NFF members unanimously agreed to request the Government invest in and strengthen Australia's biosecurity systems to protect primary production, the community, the environment and the economy.

"It is vital that as a nation, we direct the resourcing required to deliver and continually improve the systems that safeguard agriculture from devastating pests and diseases.

"As the risk of major biosecurity threats to Australia continues to

grow, the systems that keep Australia free of the world's worst pests and diseases must be absolute."

Mr Mahar said ASF was a frightening reminder of what could happen without rigorous safeguards and more needed to be done now to bolster biosecurity.

"If we don't step up our biosecurity systems, ASF and other pests and diseases could destroy our agricultural industries and compromise our access to key international markets that value the clean, safe status of our produce," he said.

"Our unique natural environment and way of life are also at risk if unwanted pests and diseases are allowed to enter and establish in Australia.

"Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility and a united call from industry for further government investment and action sends a message on the gravity of the issue."



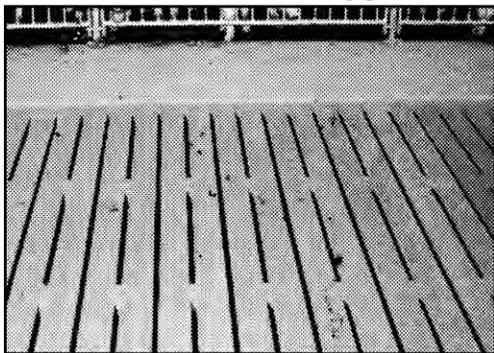
Stuart Marshman has protected his farm with an Aussie Fire Chief for over a decade.

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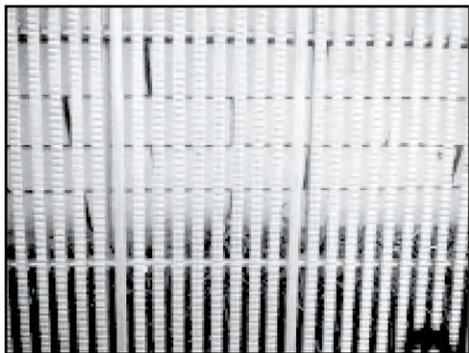
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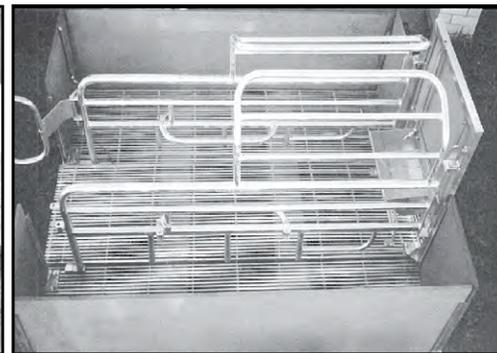
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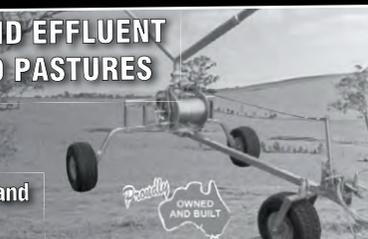
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## New foot and mouth disease test determines infected vs vaccinated pigs

A NEWLY developed foot and mouth disease assay can distinguish between the antibodies caused by immunisation and those caused by actual disease.

On behalf of the Swine Health Information Center, Iowa State University, US has developed a foot and-mouth disease virus enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay for swine oral fluid specimens.

Swine Health Information Center executive director Dr Paul Sundberg said one of the most important distinctions of this test is its ability to differentiate between vaccine antibodies and antibodies that come from exposure to wild type virus.

Speaking to Farmscape, Dr Sundberg said, "There are FMD vaccines available and should we get FMD in North America, those vaccines will probably be deployed to help control and prevent the spread of the virus."

"That would lead to a conundrum if the blood from those vaccinated animals were to be tested for antibodies because the antibodies that will show up from the vaccine

could look like the antibodies that show up from a natural infection.

"The natural infection might result in animals carrying the virus long term.

"The vaccine would not, and it's going to be important to be able to differentiate those two.

"This test has a real advantage in that it can tell the difference between the antibodies that would be caused by vaccine and the antibodies that would be caused by natural exposure.

"Thus, we would be able to differentiate those animals and we'd know which animals are at higher risk of being further sources of virus to other animals – a real important distinction that we'll need to have should we need to respond to an outbreak."

Dr Sundberg said, based on testing in the field, there is a high level of confidence this is a very usable test that could be deployed in the face of an outbreak.

He said it will still need USDA approval for use but represents a big step forward in being prepared for FMD, should it get here.

## Swine fever-infected pigs dumped on Vietnam riverbank

SEVEN sacks containing pig remains infected with African swine fever were found on the banks of the River Nghe An on Wednesday, October 23.

It is believed the pigs had been dumped on the riverbank the previous night.

The owner, upon finding the pigs dead or dying, likely assumed the pigs were infected with the African swine fever virus and dumped the pigs before authorities could discover the outbreak.

After confirming the pigs were indeed infected with the virus, local authorities performed post-mortems and then disposed of the carcasses following biosecurity protocol.

According to Ngoc Son's chairman Thai Van An, dead pigs continue to be dumped in the river despite authorities requesting local producers report any sickness or death in their herds.

The first cases of ASF in Vietnam were confirmed in February 2019 and since

then, about four million pigs are estimated to have been slaughtered as the disease has continued to spread.

Local producers in Vietnam are encouraged to alert authorities immediately upon detecting disease in their herd that could be ASF.

In order to effectively control the disease and prevent further spread, producers and authorities must work closely together.



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# Superb showing at Sydney Royal Fine Food Show

OVER the past two months some of the finest palates in the country have analysed more than 1800 entries into the annual Sydney Royal Fine Food Show run by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

Among these, more than 50 Branded Meat exhibits went into battle under the guidance of Sydney Royal Chair of Judges George Ujvary, with only the best of the best shining through. Rich in history, the Sydney Royal Fine Food Show awards excellence in agriculture, with the humble Sydney Royal Medal becoming a beacon of quality to consumers and industry professionals alike.

While the Sydney Royal Pork Competition is relatively new (introduced in 2017), the Sydney Royal Pig Show began in 1858 and is one of the largest and most prestigious

competitions in Australia, held annually at the iconic Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Mr Ujvary said competitions like Sydney Royal are vital to maintaining a flourishing industry and recognising those at the forefront.

"Australia has a fine reputation globally for high-quality products and it's the producers delivering medal-winning products that are a true testament to the hard work of the industry – they should be commended for that," Mr Ujvary said.

Champions that adorn the Sydney Royal title include Western Australia's CM Farms in 2019, South Australia's Diamond Spring pastoral in 2018 and the very first Champion Pork went to Western Australia's Black Label Berkshire in 2017.

Also judged over the past few months was the Smallgoods and Char-

cuterie competition, with companies such as the British Sausage Company taking out Champion Bacon for its Smoke Streaky Bacon variety and the German Butchery winning Champion Ham with its Prazska Sunka.

Smallgoods and Charcuterie Chair of Judges Greg Bonnefin said exhibitors continue to impress judges with the diverse style of products they present every year.

"The Smallgoods and Charcuterie competition continues to demonstrate that consumers are willing to invest in high-quality products," Mr Bonnefin said.

"Within the ham category, the German Butchery delivered an extremely well-crafted and presented ham, capturing the old-style ham first produced in Prague from the late-1800s.

"The product showed excellence workmanship and attention to detail including the cross-scoring of the skin prior to baking."

Following the Sydney Royal Fine Food Competition, Champion products can go into the running for the ultimate Sydney Royal prize, the President's Medal.

Fostering not only award-winning produce but a triple-bottom-line approach to excellence, recognising those who are at the top of their game in a product's overall financial, social and environmental integrity.

While the Sydney Royal Medal reflects award-winning products, it has grown to be much more than that, becoming a part of a producer's story – a story of passion, growth and true Australian quality. 🐷



## Virtual reality pig farms help US producers connect with consumers

A NEW cutting-edge video series from the US National Pork Board creates opportunities for farmers and others involved in pork production to share with consumers a first-hand view inside today's modern farms.

The virtual reality videos enable viewers to virtually tour gestation, farrowing, nursery and finishing barns.

The video series show how pig farmers and their teams use the latest technology and tools to provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for pigs following the We CareSM ethical principles.

David Newman, National Pork Board president and a pig farmer representing Arkansas said, "The new videos let viewers step into a

barn, take a guided tour and look around through a virtual reality platform in much the same way as if they were actually inside a barn."

"We think this platform will go a long way towards sharing our We Care story with consumers and the lengths farmers go to in order to provide a safe, sustainable and nutritious product."

Pork Checkoff leaders showcased the videos and highlighted the nutritional benefits of pork at the 2019 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo held from October 26-29 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Pork Checkoff manager of nutrition communication and research Adria Huseth said, "The videos will help us share the story of today's pig farming and demon-

strate that what we do – day in and day out – is based on the utmost concern for human health, nutrition and sustainability."

"The videos will showcase our industry to key audiences, including health and nutrition professionals from around the world."

The Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo is the world's largest gathering of food and nutrition experts, with more than 10,000 registered dietitians, nutrition science researchers, policy-makers, health care providers and industry leaders in attendance.

At FNCE, issues of high importance to the health and well-being of American food consumers were discussed and acted upon.

"It's the right platform for showcasing the ef-

forts of everyone involved in pork production to ensure product quality, safety and sustainability," Huseth said.

The videos use VR technology to offer a first-hand view inside different types of pig barns.

The videos can be viewed on YouTube (youtu.be/cQ-5F-gT-6c), Facebook or through a VR headset.

"The high-tech platform is a fitting way to illustrate the cutting-edge tools and processes pig farmers use to provide a safe, secure environment for the wellbeing of every animal on farms across the US," Newman said.

The videos were filmed in partnership with the Minnesota Pork Board and Christensen Farms located in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. 🐷

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## Are producers really breeding giant pigs in China?

REPORTS of Chinese pig producers breeding pigs the size of polar bears have emerged, but are the reports true, and what are the implications for breeding pigs so big?

With African swine fever wreaking havoc in China's pig industry, it is

no surprise that those who can still afford to be in production are now pushing for higher productivity than ever before.

Surviving herds are reaching higher market values as demand far outweighs what China's pig industry can currently produce.

In order to meet consumer demand, China's global imports have increased significantly, but this appears to be merely scratching the surface of the 10 to 15 million tonne supply shortfall predicted by experts.

One proposed solution, embraced by producer Pang Cong in the southern Chinese province of Guangxi, is to breed giant pigs capable of producing 110-130kg of meat and fetching over 10,000 yuan (\$A2068) at slaughter.

Currently Pang Cong is rearing pigs to weights of about 500kg but he has plans to rear bigger animals, comparable in size and weight to a polar bear.

According to reports from Bloomberg, it is not just smaller producers who are investing in higher finishing weights: Wens Foodstuffs Group Co, Cofco Meat Holdings Ltd and Beijing Dabe-

nong Technology Group Co have all confirmed they are selectively breeding to increase the average weight of their pigs.

This is not the first time giant swine have hit the headlines, but many of those animals growing to extreme weights have met untimely endings through a number of health complications.

Broken legs and a general lack of mobility are two previously observed issues in these morbidly obese animals, and both are important welfare concerns.

With an estimated 250 to 300 million pigs slaughtered in China in the past 12 months, many producers are looking to quickly minimise their losses and it may not be long before these enormous animals are a common product of coping with market pressures in modern-day pig farming. 🐷

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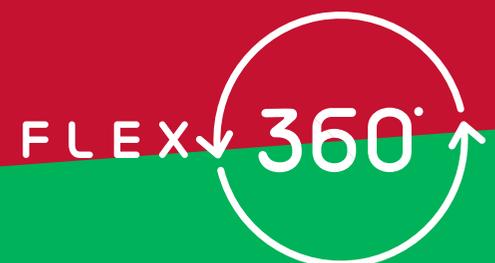
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