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APL Chairman calls for more focus

Australian Pork Limited (APL) Chairman Dr Paul Higgins has called on all sections of the pork industry's supply chain to focus on achieving the main components of the industry's draft seven year Restructure Plan.

In speaking at opening day of the Australian pork industry's Annual General Meeting and Conference, Dr Higgins warned that, while the industry's draft Restructure Plan was a good blue print for a sustainable future, without a real commitment to lasting change and structural reform the industry would still be facing the same challenges in three years time.

"If we can remove blockages surrounding carcass measurements and sizes, unfair trading conditions, subsidized imports and the inability of consumers to distinguish product country of origin at point of sale then we will have a competitive platform from which to achieve real structural reform. This is exactly what the Industry Restructure Plan has been designed to achieve."

Dr Higgins also took the opportunity of paying tribute to the contributions of outgoing APL Board directors Mr Robert Bothwell and Dr Robert Wilson.

"Between them Bob Bothwell and Rob Wilson have twenty years experience in the industry. Bob Bothwell has been a passionate advocate for the industry's advancement bringing all his expertise from his time in senior roles with Pepsico International Restaurants.

"Rob Wilson has been involved with the industry as a producer and as a research scientist and was recently honoured with a life-time membership of the West Australian Pork Producers' Association. Both will be missed."

The appointment of new APL directors Dr Robert van Barneveld and Mr Enzo Allara is expected to take place on Wednesday during the AGM.

Dr van Barneveld is an eminent agricultural research scientist with a strong focus on the pork industry.

Mr Allara has an extensive background in the food industry and is the current Chairman of Foodbank Australia, as well as being a member of the National Food Industry Council and a director of National Food Industry Strategy Limited.

Dr Higgins said he was confident the skills and expertise Dr van Barneveld and Mr Allara brought to the APL Board would continue on the good work of Mr Bothwell and Mr Wilson.