



30 September 2004

Pork industry must participate in Inquiry

Australian pork producers have been urged by the industry's national representative body, Australian Pork Limited (APL), to make submissions to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the competitive situation and outlook for the pigmeat industry before the cut-off date of 6 October.

According to Kathleen Plowman, General Manager of APL's Policy Division, the Productivity Commission (PC) inquiry is of crucial importance to the industry's future with its recommendations likely to shape Government policy and subsequently affect the industry's long term sustainability and its ability to compete with subsidized imports.

"With the due date for initial submissions being 6 October, it is absolutely vital that as many pork producers as possible make their views known to the PC so the Commission is fully informed of the industry's current situation."

The PC is charged with:

- examining the competitiveness of the industry, including key factors influencing profitability and the extent to which these factors are short or long term influences;
- whether the circumstances are such that Government and/or industry measures are necessary to enhance the industry's competitiveness; and
- what these measures should be.

Producers and the industry should be aware that the PC's terms of reference means the inquiry is not a safeguard investigation. However, APL believes it is within the scope of the PC to address:

- what effect pork imports are having on the Australian industry;
- whether measures such as an increased tariffs or quotas would benefit the Australian pigmeat industry; and potentially
- consider whether a safeguard investigation is warranted.

Ms Plowman said producers should not be discouraged from participating in the inquiry by thinking submissions had to be made in any specific format.

"It does not matter what format producers use in making a submission. What is important is that producers recount their own business experiences relating to production and how the impact of subsidized imports, drought, feed grain and pricing practices, both at the input and supply side, has affected their business operations and livelihood.

Media Release



“This type of information is critical in enabling the PC gain a full understanding of the cost imposts facing producers and the effect on their future business plans and by implication their communities and regions.”

Key inquiry dates are:

- due date for initial submissions – 6 October;
- release of discussion draft – early November 2004;
- due date for discussion of draft submissions – late November 2004;
- Public Hearings – early December 2004; and
- Final Report forwarded to the Australian Government – 31 January 2005.

Producers can participate directly with the inquiry by registering their interest with the PC by telephoning (03) 9653 2209, or visiting the Commission’s web site at: www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/pigmeat/registrationform.html

APL has also provided a template as a guide to producers which can be found at www.australianpork.com.au

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