

MEDIA RELEASE – April 9, 2002

HEAT TURNED UP ON PORK EATING QUALITY

A pork eating quality workshop will generate heated debate at the April 17 general meeting of the WA Pork Producers' Association (WAPPA) at Pastoral House.

A panel comprising Daph Kavanagh, Australian Pork Ltd., Dr Darryl D'Souza, Department of Agriculture, Joe Coelho, Watsons, Ron Penn, PPC and Dr Chris Brennan, Select Pork will share their views before the subject is opened to the floor.

WAPPA Executive Officer, Lea Newing said most of WA's 350 pork producers now understood they were food producers, not simply pig producers.

“With demand for consistent taste and flavour being driven by increasingly discerning consumers, it is essential that producers, processors, wholesalers and retailers work together to meet customer expectations every time a pork product is purchased.

“Further along the chain, the industry must also take an educational role to ensure that consumers handle and cook pork appropriately and this is where APL's cook it right and pork safe campaigns should have a positive impact,” she said.

Ms Newing added that although WA's pork industry, with a gross value of production of \$80 million a year, was healthy and viable at the moment, producers remained acutely aware of costs and, in particular, the cost of production versus returns.

“At the request of producer members, WAPPA therefore earlier this year commissioned a consultancy to investigate why prices paid in WA for pigs were generally lower than eastern states prices in the last 18 months,” she said.

The consultant, Bruce Watkins, will table his findings at the April 17 meeting.

Other reports will be delivered by Australian Pork Ltd (APL) CEO Brian Ramsay and Director Dr Rob Wilson (APL direction), WAPPA President Ken Boughton (expanding WAPPA to include more of the supply chain), York producer Sandy Gardiner (encouraging growers to alliance and market together), Paul Frapple of the Department of Agriculture (trade mission to Europe) and Dr Bruce Mullan (WA Pig Industry Training and Extension Centre).

All producers are invited to attend the meeting, which begins at 9am and concludes with a complimentary working lunch at noon. Enquiries to WAPPA, Tel 9472 7315.

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Authorised by WAPPA and issued on its behalf by Brendon Cant & Assoc., Tel 08 9385 7779

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