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April 2006

Pig Auctions Knocked Down

Midland saleyards close on April 11, meaning WA pigs can no longer be sold at auction.

To protect the industry and improve food safety and biosecurity, WAPPA, supported by most producers, has consistently preferred the direct sale of pigs from farm to processor.

With increased adoption of the Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ) program and better supply chain partnerships and contracts, producers have adopted a similar view, resulting in pig numbers through saleyards declining by 89% since 1988/89.

Last financial year, 13,439 pigs were sold at Midland (258 per week) and this has dipped a further 10 pigs per week this year.

The WA Meat Industry Authority recognised that based on current sale numbers and the unlikelihood of any increase in numbers of pigs sold, it is no longer viable for agents to support Midland, hence the earlier than expected closure.

In WA, 98% of pigs are sold direct from farm to processor, which is higher than the national estimate of 95-97%.



Last year 98% of WA's pigs bypassed the once popular saleyards and were sold direct from farm to processor.

Sales Dwindle

With the number of pigs sold through the Midland saleyards continuing to dwindle, it was only a matter of time before the enterprise became

unviable. A decision on viability was precipitated by the relocation of the saleyards to Muchea.

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"As you are aware, there has been a continuing trend towards lower throughput through livestock saleyards. The Narrogin and Merredin pig sales ceased some years ago.

I have been advised that pig throughput at Midland Saleyards has continued to decline, with 2002/03 throughput down to 14,700 head, compared to 120,000 head in 1988/89.

Throughput at the Midland Saleyard now represents less than three per cent of total pig sales in WA.

Given this falling throughput, it is unlikely that any new pig saleyards built in WA would be viable. Indeed, to provide adequate returns for growers, fees at any new facility would need to increase dramatically and possibly to levels that would further accelerate the shift to direct selling."

Minister for Agriculture, The Honourable Kim Chance, writing to WAPPA, March 9, 2004.

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WAPPA Presidential Profile

Graeme Dent's farming career at Cuballing in WA's Great Southern has always involved pork production.

Over the years his herd has grown from 60 sows to 250. Mr Dent's commitment to the development of the WA pork industry is evidenced by the various positions he holds.

Besides his current role as WAPPA President (elected 2005), he is also a member of the Agricultural Produce Commission's Pork Producers' Committee and a WA delegate to Australian Pork Limited.

In the past, Mr Dent was heavily involved with Rural Youth for three years (1986-88) and was President of Pingelly Rural Youth group for two years (1987-88).

Industry Development

Mr Dent is committed to the continual development of the pork industry and believes WA's producers need to continue to commit to delivering a quality, APIQ Certified product.

"Quality can never be sacrificed, especially with changes to labelling that enable shoppers to buy local or not.

"We want to ensure consumers buy locally produced pork and once they have bought local they keep on buying local, which means we need to supply them with a superior product."

Mr Dent emphasised that delivering a quality pork product was essential for maintaining global competitiveness.

Aside from his passion for pork, Mr Dent has a passion for his family. He has a 14 year old daughter, Ashlee and a 10 year old son, Mathew, with his wife, Belinda.

Graeme Dent, Tel 9883 6060



Belinda and Graeme Dent, with son Mathew, who believes that because his dad is WAPPA President, he is the President of Hungry Jacks and he can have as many 'whoppers' as he likes.



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BAM Bill Put Up

Agriculture Minister, Kim Chance, has released the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Bill (BAM Bill) for public consideration before it is formally introduced and debated in Parliament this autumn.

An important piece of legislation, the Bill is being developed in partnership with key primary industry, natural resource management and community groups. It will replace 17 existing Acts within the agriculture portfolio. The proposed Bill seeks to establish a modern biosecurity regulatory scheme to prevent serious pests, weeds and diseases from entering WA and to minimise the spread and impact of any present within WA. Border security is a key component of the Bill, which establishes controls in relation to agricultural and veterinary chemicals, fertilisers and animal feeding materials and recognises and supports industry codes of practice and the APIQ program.

Adverse Effects

Plant and animal pests and diseases are having serious adverse effects on agriculture, the environment and community amenity in every region of WA. The new BAM Bill will be WA's primary biosecurity legislation and the primary regulatory framework in continuing efforts to reduce the effects of these pests and diseases. Unlike the statutes replaced by the new legislation, the operation of the BAM Bill won't be hindered by arguments about if particular pests or diseases are regarded as threats to agriculture as well as, or rather than, threats to the environment, the economy or humans (public safety and amenity). The Bill does not cover human diseases.

Enabling Legislation

The new Bill is 'enabling' legislation, meaning it will enable various things to be done by regulations and other subsidiary regulatory instruments, streamlining the management and protection of all WA rural industries. WAPPA Executive Officer, Russell Cox, reviewed the Bill and is currently seeking clarification on a number of components to ensure pork producers are not disadvantaged by the legislation.

An electronic version of the Bill is available from www.parliament.wa.gov.au and printed copies from the State Law Publisher, Tel 9321 7688.

This year is flying by, which means the first general meeting of 2006, to be held on Friday April 21, is almost upon us.

It is important that as many producers as possible attend to express their views and concerns and assist in making a difference to their industry and its future. The April 11 closure of the Midland Saleyards spells the end of a long chapter for the pork industry, however for most WA pork producers the live auction sale of pigs ended a long time ago.

BAM Bill

Agriculture Minister, Kim Chance, released the proposed Biosecurity Agriculture Management (BAM) Bill for public consideration late last year before it was formally introduced and debated in Parliament. The BAM Bill seeks to establish a modern biosecurity regulatory scheme to prevent serious pests, weeds and diseases from entering WA and to minimise the spread and impact of any already present.

WAPPA has been actively working with DAWA on components of the Bill because it will be in place to service and protect WA's pork industry (see story opposite). WAPPA has trained five Industry Liaison Officers (ILOs) allowing it to quickly respond to any biosecurity issues. Along with myself, the other ILOs are WAPPA Executive Officer, Russell Cox, Richard Evison of Albany and



Errol Howard and Steve Martin, both of Wannamal. A further five ILOs will be trained in early 2007. Their names have been added to the Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) database maintained by Animal Health Australia (AHA). In the event of an EAD response, selected ILOs will perform their role within a Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC).

All our ILOs have communication and negotiation skills, extensive knowledge of the WA industry and local areas and an understanding of the possible logistical and information requirements of the LDCC in an EAD response. Hopefully, we won't need to use the ILOs, but having five trained officers is a good reputation for the WA pork industry and they are there if needed.

WAPPA looks forward to seeing everyone at the next General Meeting, to be held on April 21 at Pastoral House, Belmont, commencing at 1pm and to be followed by a Cost of Production seminar.

continued from front

Pig Auctions Knocked Down

According to WAPPA President, Graeme Dent, WAPPA accepts that small producers are no longer guaranteed that processors will take their pigs if there is no auction facility available.

"However, the closure of the Midland Saleyards shouldn't deter those producers from maintaining a partnership with their preferred livestock agent to find a market for their pigs, or from sourcing other market opportunities," he said.

Auction Options

However, WAPPA has addressed available options for maintaining a live auction system and to date there is no financially viable alternative identified, based on the current number of pigs sold through Midland.

"WAPPA would support retaining an auction system if it had the support of livestock agents, processors and the WA Pig Biosecurity Consultative Group, the group re-

sponsible for administering the WA Pig Industry Biosecurity Plan," Mr Dent said.

The interests of the industry would also have to be protected through meeting best practice management in biosecurity, animal health and welfare and food safety through the APIQ program.

Compliance with the national performance standards for the traceability of pigs is also a major requirement. Environmental and animal welfare groups generally see the use of saleyards for pig related transactions as inappropriate.

Risk Area

"It must be remembered that moving, mixing, unloading, yarding and reloading pigs is a risk area for bruising and physical damage. This handling at saleyards contributes to the majority of pigs being consigned direct to processors," Mr Dent said.

Recognising its commitment to protect the WA pork industry, DAWA has produced a brochure, 'Swill feeding is illegal', that outlines the risks of swill feeding.

Most people involved in the pork industry are well aware of the potentially disastrous consequences for the Australian economy of feeding swill to pigs. As part of its ongoing activities to keep exotic animal diseases out of Australia, DAWA must continue to advise producers that it is illegal to feed swill to pigs, or to supply swill that could be fed to pigs.

The brochure aims to inform pork producers and potential suppliers of swill why it is important that swill is not fed to pigs. The swill feeding ban is to help prevent the introduction and spread of exotic animal diseases such as foot and mouth and swine fever. Feeding swill to ruminants can introduce bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease).

Significant Fines

It is illegal and the penalty for swill feeding is \$5000 for the first offence

and \$10,000 for the second. Swill covers any meat or meat products and includes blood, bones and any food waste containing meat, or that may have contacted meat, such as household, restaurant or supermarket waste.

It includes animal carcasses and used cooking oil that has not undergone an approved treatment process in accordance with the Feed Milling Industries QA program, Feedsafe. Some people understand why meat or meat products should not be fed to pigs, but are unaware that bakery waste may contain meat.

Even fruit and vegetable waste may have been in contact with meat and can only be fed to pigs if it is known it hasn't been in contact with meat or meat products.

Anyone suspecting someone of providing swill for feeding to pigs, should contact their local environmental health officer and alert the nearest veterinary officer, stock inspector or biosecurity officer for on-farm follow up.

Copies of the brochure are available from DAWA, Tel 9368 3333.

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Daph's APL Kitchen

by Daph Kavanagh,
State Manager,
Australian Pork Limited

One would think that after all these years I would have run out of tasty new pork recipes.

Luckily, pork is a meat with an extremely diverse cooking capability, which can evolve with people's palates.

This has allowed me to find yet another tasty new pork recipe for you, maple roasted pork with sweet potatoes, especially suited to those people with a sweet tooth - isn't that all of us?

The easy-to-cook recipe is a tasty fusion of sweet and savoury flavours, just perfect for dinner parties or spoiling the family.



The sweet maple syrup infused meat is easy to get children to eat and the sauce is great to drizzle over brussel sprouts or any vegetable your kids usually refuse to eat.

Once cooked, the sweet maple syrup infused bacon is delicious and complements this tasty dish.

Bon Appetit!

Maple Roasted Pork with Sweet Potatoes

Serves Four to Six
Preparation Time: 10 mins
Cooking Time: 75 mins

1.3 - 1.5 kg boneless rindless pork roast (loin, rump, leg or scotch)

100 g rindless streaky bacon

200 ml maple syrup

1 kg peeled sweet potatoes, cut into large pieces



Pre-heat oven to 220°C. Arrange the bacon over the pork roast and secure with string or toothpicks. Place the pork roast into a small, but deep, baking dish and pour maple syrup over. Bake pork roast in the pre-heated oven for 20 minutes, then reduce temperature to 180°C.

Add sweet potatoes to baking dish and roast for a further 45 minutes, or until pork is cooked to your liking.

Baste occasionally. Slice pork roast and serve with sweet potatoes and steamed green vegetables. If you wish, drizzle with pan juices. To give the pork roast a slightly more sophisticated flavour, substitute slices of prosciutto for the bacon.

Publisher's Note

Brendon Cant and Associates, publisher of **WAPPA Pork Yarns** together with WAPPA Executive, are committed to delivering pork producers relevant, informative and entertaining reading in the best possible format. That is why **WAPPA Pork Yarns** has entered a new and colourful era in 2006, with the support of our much appreciated sponsors, PPC, Bio-John, Watsonia, PIC, Wesfeeds, APL and Intervet.

We hope everyone enjoys the colourful new format.

Impostor Animal Welfare Investigator Alert

Producers may have noticed advertisements in rural newspapers showing a Downer sheep, which request that people report instances of animal suffering to a 1800 number.

Australian Pork Limited (APL) is aware an activist group has hired a private investigator to follow up on some of the calls made in response to this advertisement.

This person has no inspectorial powers to collect evidence under animal cruelty legislation and they can only enter your property if given permission by you.

Any information they obtain while on your farm, at your invitation, is admissible. Each state and territory has nominated inspection officers responsible for enforcing the animal suffering acts (Police and RSPCA in

all states, along with stock inspectors from departments of agriculture).

Proper Identification

All of these inspection/enforcement officers have identification, which they are required to show when investigating complaints. WAPPA reminds all producers that if any person requests entry onto your property, tries to stop a vehicle and wishes to inspect or seize stock or facilities, wishes to take photographs or collect any form of evidence, they must show you their official identification before acting.

If the person has no identification, you are within your rights to refuse entry to your property.

For another copy of APL's "Know your animal welfare rights" brochure, or for further information, please contact Amanda Reagan, Freecall 1800 789 099.

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The publisher and the Association accept no responsibility for the views expressed and suggest growers seek independent advice before acting on any information contained herein.