

In this Issue

- Organic Pork
- Brand Protection
- President's Address
- Daph's Kitchen
- Skills Centre

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Pork Yarns



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WAPPA calls for Innovation

Sourcing skilled staff to work in WA piggeries and tapping into niche markets for pork are two identified challenges for the WA Pork Producers' Association (WAPPA) in the next 12 months.

Addressing WAPPA's 2007 General Meeting at Pastoral House, President Graeme Dent of Cuballing said innovative, creative thinking was needed.

"As we compete for staff with a buoyant WA resource sector, we need to consider supplementing our rural workforce through accessing appropriately trained staff internationally," he said.

"This has to be done to meet the immediate employment demand, while we rationalise and vigorously pursue a full range of professional development and training opportunities to support those committed people already working in our industry."

Mr Dent said exploring and developing innovative niche markets was vital for the future of WA's 300 pork producers.

One opportunity was the organic market, with Australia having about 2000 certified organic producers, processors and retailers of organic food and fibre products across grains, horticulture, viticulture, beef, dairy, honey and, to a limited extent, pork.

"Collectively these enterprises account for products valued at an estimated \$180 million annually at the farm gate and such an emerging market warrants exploring as research suggests consumer demand is rising," Mr Dent said.

On a less optimistic note, Mr Dent reported that yet another year of drought across much of the state, had led to increased production costs and some issues of feed security, including poor quality and lack of availability.

At WAPPA's 2007 Annual General Meeting, Mr Dent welcomed PPC Agribusiness Manager, Lui Rinaldi, to WAPPA's Executive Committee.

Mr Rinaldi replaced Darren Edwards of Popanyinning and joins Mr Dent and Vice-President Richard Evison of Albany, Treasurer Errol Howard and Steve Martin, both of Wannamal.

After the AGM and general meeting, which included addresses by Dr John Carr and Dr Robert van Barneveld, WAPPA held its annual industry dinner at Broadwater Pagoda Resort Hotel, Como.

Dr Carr, a Portec Australia veterinarian with global experience, was optimistic about the future of WA's pork production industry.

Dr van Barneveld, a nutrition consultant and Director of Australian



Gaetano Armenti, retiring after 50 years cooking sausages at D'Orsogna.

Pork Ltd and the Pork Cooperative Research Centre, urged producers to take an active role in research.

"Producers must ensure they get value out of the \$5 a pig they effectively spend on research and development and make R&D and training an integral part of their operations," he said.

The WAPPA dinner, attended by 130 people, including WA Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Food Gary Snook, featured a special presentation to Gaetano Armenti, an Italian immigrant who has worked for 50 years in the cooking department at D'Orsogna.

Mr Armenti was honoured with the 2007 WA Pork Producers' Association (WAPPA) Special Industry Award for services to the industry.

After dinner speaker, Professor Kadambot Siddique, Director of the Institute of Agriculture and Chair in Agriculture at the University of Western Australia, gave WA pork producers some cause for optimism with his projections for increased world protein demand, but cautioned them to the potential constraints to production of climate change.

continued on page 3



According to PPC Technical Manager Julia Zubko (pictured), the Woolooloo plant was already state of the art, so there were few requirements to satisfy in gaining organic certification.



PPC Woolooloo: Now accredited by the National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia (NASAA), meaning WA pork producers can grow organic pork and have it processed for domestic and export markets. NASAA is nationally accredited and audited under the AQIS Organic and Biodynamic program.

**Key contacts: Livestock Co-ordinator, Dean Romaniello, 0418 458 615
Agribusiness Manager, Lui Rinaldi, 0417 172 153 General Manager, Ron Penn, 0418 906 278**

PPC Opens Organic Door

PPC Linley Valley Fresh, part of the Craig Mostyn Group, now has organic certification at its Wooroloo processing facility, meaning WA pork producers can grow organic pork and have it processed for domestic and export markets.

Accreditation by the National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia (NASAA), the leading organic certifier, facilitates worldwide organic market access. NASAA is nationally accredited and audited under the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service Organic and Biodynamic program.

PPC General Manager, Ron Penn said PPC was leading the way with its timely, pro-active response to demand growth in the organic pork market, both in Australia and overseas, particularly in Singapore.

Mr Penn and PPC Agribusiness Manager, Lui Rinaldi recently returned from Singapore, where PPC confirmed its ranking as Australia's number one supplier, by volume and quality, of fresh pork.

"We pride ourselves on being market leaders," Mr Penn said "and

are now the preferred fresh pork supplier to Jordon International, which supplies the Dairy Farm Group's chain of Shop n Save Supermarkets.

"Back home in WA, we work alongside producers to help build the industry for all stakeholders, hence why we made the investment in organic accreditation," he said.

PPC Technical Manager, Julia Zubko said that because PPC's plant was already state of the art, there were few requirements to satisfy in gaining organic certification.

Organic pigs will be processed first in the morning and carcasses will be stored in a separate, clearly identified area in chillers and will be clearly identified by branding.

According to Ms Zubko, PPC is currently designing an organic NASAA stamp.

"As with non-organic pigs, processing at Wooroloo is carried out quickly and without stress and pigs are given rest, shelter and water after unloading," she said.

Producers supplying organic pigs



According to PPC Technical Manager, Julia Zubko (pictured), PPC's Wooroloo, WA plant was already state of the art, so there were few requirements to satisfy in gaining organic certification.

to PPC also have some responsibilities: they must feed only organic feed to their stock, must provide clean shelter and shade against the elements and must house or run pigs at minimum "on ground" densities.

PPC Linley Valley at Wooroloo processes 98 per cent of the pork produced in WA and this year has invested more than \$4 million upgrading its boning room to become the most modern in Australia.

Protecting The Brand

All owners of pigs, including those owning pigs as pets, must have a registered stock brand.

DAFWA veterinary officer Dr Roy Butler said pet pigs had to meet the same legal requirements as any pig on a farm.

Anyone owning a pig, regardless of its breed, had to apply to the brands office brands@agric.wa.gov.au or Tel 08 9780 6100 for a registered stock brand.

"It is illegal to keep pigs without a registered stock brand, and it is also illegal to import pigs into WA without notifying a Department of Agriculture and Food inspector," he said.

Dr Butler recommended that anyone intending to keep a pet pig should check with their shire, town or city council about the local regulations.

"Most local government authorities prohibit the keeping of any hoofed animals within town sites or residential areas. Some also have restrictions on keeping pigs within special rural areas."

Dr Butler also recommended a check with local veterinarians on the care of pigs.

"Pigs can carry diseases that are communicable to humans, so if you want to buy a pet pig it is advisable to vaccinate them against conditions such as leptospirosis and erysipelas," he said.

"Like humans, all breeds of pig require a balanced diet with adequate protein. It is not enough to simply feed them fruit and vegetables. People need to pay special attention to their pet's diet. Specially formulated pig feed can be obtained from feed and rural merchandisers."

Dr Butler said it was illegal to feed pigs swill, or food containing meat or meat products or any waste not known to be free of meat or from contact with meat.

Swill includes home food scraps, waste from eating establishments and rubbish dumps.

"Cereal, fruit and vegetable scraps from home kitchens are acceptable, but it is illegal to feed scraps containing meat or preserved meat products."

"These meats may carry exotic diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease, which would devastate livestock industries and damage Australia's economy," Dr Butler said.

Information on keeping pigs as pets is available by down-loading Farmnote 3/2005 from the DAFWA website www.agric.wa.gov.au

WAPPA Executive Officer, Russell Cox supported DAFWA and Dr Butler, saying WAPPA believed it was highly irresponsible for anyone to keep pigs without having a registered brand.

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President's Address

by Graeme Dent,
WAPPA President

It's been a challenging year for WAPPA, as it has been for many other primary industries, however we have strengthened partnerships, improved quality systems and overcome issues of drought, food security, animal welfare and workforce development.

This year has seen yet another year of drought, leading to increased production and feed costs and issues of feed security including poor quality and lack of availability.

Additionally, the animal welfare issue is front of mind for us all. In response to this issue APL, in conjunction with WAPPA, had input into the revision of the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals-Pigs.

The Code improves standards of animal care in the industry, protects producers and promotes a 'Clean, Green and Humane' image to consumers, which is important to our animals and bottom lines.

The Code has resulted in strengthening of Quality Assurance (QA) systems, which help reassure consumers they are receiving a quality, safe and humanely produced product, with consumers becoming more educated and discerning in how they spend their dollar.



Consumer choice is no longer just based on taste and budget, now considering quality, production methods, environmental issues, nutrient content, taste and cost.

We must ensure we can tick off as many of these elements as possible to ensure pork makes it into their shopping trolleys.

Industry Training

Last year saw Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) training, to assist in the event of an exotic disease outbreak.

WAPPA demonstrates a continued commitment to providing skilled people working to develop the industry through ongoing ILO training opportunities.

The industry needs highly skilled, well trained, committed people as human resources are one of our most precious assets.

This year we will explore options to increase the availability and ac-

cess of skilled labour, while maintaining the integrity and skill level of the existing workforce.

This requires innovative and creative thinking as we compete against the buoyant resources industry for staff.

One strategy is to supplement the workforce through international staff who will be utilised to meet the employment demand while the industry continues to pursue a full range of professional development opportunities.

Another ongoing challenge is to work out how to maintain current levels of pork consumption and get more pork on peoples' plates!

Most marketing efforts have focused on enhanced product labelling, promotion and education in the hospitality industry, which has led to increased pork on restaurant menus.

Roy Morgan research shows pork consumption has increased 35% in the past four years, however further market research may be needed to determine how to get pork on the table more often.

This brings me to my final point, the need to explore niche markets.

Niche Markets

Developing and exploring innovative niche markets, such as the organic market, will be an essential part of our industry's future.

Worldwide organic food production has increased steadily for several decades and it's clearly not a fad.

Currently, Australia has nearly 2000 certified organic producers, processors and retailers of organic food and fibre products operating in diverse industries valued at \$180 million in farm gate revenue.

Executive Thanks

Finally, thank you to the Executive Committee for their dedication and support, as they have worked hard to meet each challenge throughout the year, with special thanks to Darren Edwards who resigned from the Committee in June 2007.

These committed people continue to enable us to meet challenges ahead.

Thank you all for your support during the year and I wish you all every success and prosperity for 2008.

WAPPA calls for Innovation continued from front



Obviously enjoying the WAPPA 2007 Industry dinner at the Broadwater Pagoda in South Perth were Marty Van Beek, Moora, Derek Smith, Watsons, Errol Howard, Wannamal, Joe Ascenso, Watsons, Graeme Dent, Cuballing and Steve Martin, Wannamal.

Dinner sponsors included Wesfeeds, Milne AgriGroup, Australian Pork Limited, Bio John Animal Health, Computing Australia, D'Orsogna, Watsonia, Hyfarm Genetics, Intervet, Pfizer Animal

Health, PIC Australia, Provimi Australia, Portec Australia and Poultry Farmers of WA Co-operative, with \$1000 worth of moisture infused pork for the dinner supplied by PPC Linley Valley Fresh.

"Tracking animals, especially when the industry might be under a biosecurity threat, is critical," he said.

"WAPPA, working with APL and Animal Health Australia, is actively involved with training producers as part of the Emergency Animal Disease program, for example.

"This helps give producers the necessary skills and information to be part of an exotic disease response," he said.

Mr Cox added that WAPPA would move quickly to sever all ties with any producers known not to have a registered stock brand.

"This would particularly apply to anyone masquerading as a producer and a lobbyist for WA pig producers. All legitimate producers serious about the long term future of their industry know the importance of doing the right thing in terms of regulatory requirements and WAPPA insists they do so," he said.



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Daph's APL Kitchen

by Daph Kavanagh,
State Manager,
Australian Pork Limited

It's been a big couple of months since the last issue.

With APL always so aware of its role in promoting pork consumption, this month I thought I'd 'write in pictures' (sounds like fun), showing you how APL has been out and about.

A special showing for industry and media of No Reservations starring Catherine Zeta Jones was a big hit and I was equally pleased to see pork starring at the opening of the new Inglewood shop of the Prince of Flesh, Vince Garreffa.

Vince stocks PPC Linley Valley fresh pork and has been a great supporter of WA pork producers for many years.



Next time you read Daph's APL Kitchen, it'll be close to Christmas, a very special time of the year for pork consumption and pork producers.

Until then, enjoy your pigs and ensure your customers enjoy their pork.

Bon Appetit!



Chef and PPC retail consultant John Thompson caught up with Sydney celebrity chef Neil Perry at the opening of Vince Garreffa's new Mondo di Carne shop in Inglewood.



The opening of Vince Garreffa's new Mondo di Carne shop in Inglewood.



APL's Mitch Edwards (right) with John and Lois Hooper enjoyed the opening of No Reservations. John formerly owned Halo Restaurant and is now a consultant to the Industry and on the State council of the Catering Institute.

Pig Skills Centre Opportunity

WA Pig Skills Centre Pty Ltd Board of Directors is calling for expressions of interest from parties seeking a new business opportunity in the WA pork industry.

The WA Pig Skills Centre training piggery located at Northam, requires a lessee to operate the facility as a 260 sow commercial breeder unit while providing access for demonstration and pig husbandry training.

The lessee would manage the piggery to the highest industry standard and have a dedicated interest in industry training and skills development.

A lease agreement would be negotiated by both parties prior to engaging in operation. Corporations, owner-operators and unit managers are encouraged to apply for what is an exciting opportunity to invest in the WA pork industry.

Expressions of interest, including a business plan and five year budget, should be addressed to Chris Keene, Chairman of WA Pig Skills Centre Pty Ltd at 277 Great Eastern Hwy Belmont WA 6104 or emalyn@wappa.com.au

For further information, contact Emalyn Loudon, Tel 08 9479 7311.

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