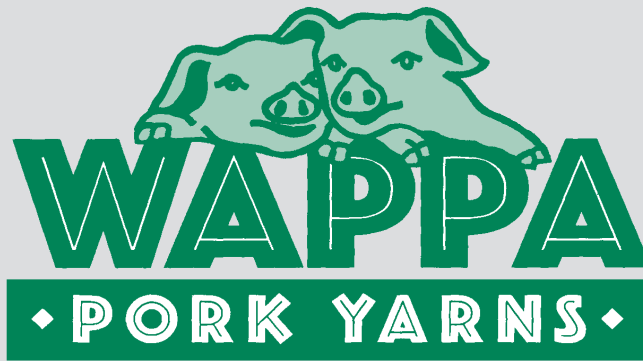


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WITH COMPLIMENTS OF THE WEST AUSTRALIAN PORK PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION • July 2004  
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# Pork Picks Apple Approach

WA's 360 pork producers continue to pressure Federal and State governments in a bid to stop any relaxing of import protocols for pigmeat, which they claim will bring unwanted diseases and devastate their \$112 million per annum production industry.

WAPPA recently met with representatives of WA Agriculture Minister, Kim Chance and the Department of Agriculture (DAWA), seeking support for a rigorous, independent review of Biosecurity Australia (BA) and the CSIRO analysis and import risk analysis (IRA) process. Boyup Brook producer and President, Stuart Coole said the second such meeting with the Minister's office in three months showed pork producers were "deadly serious". "We know our fate on this very serious issue is largely in Federal Government hands, but that won't stop us soliciting support from whoever we believe can aid our cause.

## Decisive Action

"As yet, we've not seen any clear, decisive action on our behalf from the WA Minister's office, but we're hopeful that will change very soon." Mr Coole said he was aware that Minister Chance had recently advised WA's 400 apple and pear producers, who are also questioning the validity of an IRA, that if risks were not adequately addressed, his Government and DAWA would vigorously pursue all means available to ensure biosecurity risks to WA were adequately addressed.

DAWA had a team of scientists and policy officers critically reviewing the apple IRA and

the State had received a personal assurance from the Federal Agriculture Minister, Warren Truss that it would be fully and properly consulted on the issue. Mr Chance told apple producers his Government supported a science-based approach to quarantine established internationally under the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement and this continued the commitment made in 1995 when WA signed the national memorandum of understanding on animal and plant quarantine measures.

## Protest Success

At the recent National Apple Day, WAPPA

joined with the WA Fruit Growers' Association to protest against pigmeat and apple IRAs with a barbeque lunch, apple giveaway and information session at Solidarity Park opposite Parliament House. Former Executive Officer, David McFerran said it was one of the most successful lobbying events he had been involved in, with the opportunity to address members of parliament from all parties. Mr Chance attended, plus other state parliamentarians Adele Farrino, Mick Murray, Tony Dean, Martin Whitely, Carol Martin, Paul Omedei, Robin McSweeney, Peter Foss, John Day, Murray Criddle, Dr Christine Sharp, Frank Hough and John Fisher.

## Workshopping Worksafe and Wages



At an occupational safety and health workshop at WAPPA were Sharon Martin, Wannamal, Anne Graham, Pinjarra, Annette Howard, Wannamal and Karen Van Beek, Moora. (see page 3 for full story)

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# Model Welfare Code Paraded

A review of the National Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (Pigs) is up to second draft stage, according to Writing Group member, Michael Paton of the Department of Agriculture (DAWA).

The Group comprises representatives of the Animal Welfare Working Group, Australian Pork Limited (APL), Australian Veterinary Association, the pork industry and animal welfare groups. At the June 18 WAPPA General Meeting, Dr Paton outlined the review process. "Following the first draft, suggestions were received, which have been discussed and processed and are being made into the second draft."

## Sow Stalls

According to Dr Paton, sow stalls are the most contentious issue.

"DAWA has suggested use should be phased out, so by 2015 dry sow stalls will be used only in the first four to five weeks of pregnancy. There has been a range of views presented on this issue, from complete phasing out through to continued use of dry sow stalls.

"This is the sort of issue which will hopefully be resolved at the next Writing Group meeting in September." Reviewed every five years, the Code of Practice provides a guide for all



Dr Michael Paton of the Department of Agriculture discusses the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals review with Gingin producer Chris Keene.

people responsible for the welfare of pigs under both intensive and extensive systems.

## Producers Commended

WAPPA President Stuart Coole commended producers who attended workshops on May 13 in Narrogin and May 14 in Perth. "Meetings were arranged by APL and WAPPA to update producers on the review and give them an opportunity to provide input to the process. APL and WAPPA thank producers for their honesty and contribution on such an important issue for the future of the pork industry," Mr Coole said.

Similar meetings were held in other states and it is expected that the final Code will be approved in mid-2005.

# Feed Grains to Fill the Gap

With feed inputs comprising up to 80 per cent of cost of production, pork producers are, not surprisingly, looking at all avenues to improve margins.

At WAPPA's June 18 General Meeting, it was suggested research and development (R&D) corporations be approached to assess the status of feed grains R&D. Queries arising from the meeting were directed to Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Feeds Grains Program consultant and former Pig Research and Development Corporation Chief Executive, Mike Taverner.

## Major Investment

He said the Premium Grains for Livestock Program (PGLP) was the GRDC's major investment in feed grains quality. "GRDC has been the major investor in this program during the past six years, with Australian Pork Ltd (APL) also involved as a significant partner. Possible outcomes for the pork industry include a capacity to better measure and monitor the nutritional value of grains, which will potentially help with purchasing decisions and providing more accurate diet formulation." Dr Taverner said.

Some trials are incomplete, but new calibrations are expected by the end of 2004.

# WAPPA Questions Taylor Made Decision

**Federal Agriculture Minister, Warren Truss, should immediately ask Michael Taylor, Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine, to withdraw his determination relating to quarantine regimes for importation of pigmeat.**

WAPPA President Stuart Coole said such quick action was the only acceptable response to the release of the Senate's Rural and Regional Affairs Committee report into the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) of pigmeat. "We're asking the Minister to do nothing less than act on precisely the first of the Committee's two recommendations. We also endorse similar swift action on the second recommendation, that Biosecurity Australia invoke Article 5.7 of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement in relation to the devastating disease Post Weaning Multisystemic Wasting Syn-

drome (PMWS)." Article 5.7 allows for imports to be banned where the science was insufficient. Mr Coole said such a ban could stay in place until the additional information needed to make a more objective assessment was available.

"It is clear that evidence presented to the committee highlighted the lack of understanding of how PMWS is transmitted, making it virtually impossible to develop a protocol to keep the disease out of what is, arguably, the world's cleanest pig herd." Mr Coole said WAPPA was also concerned about the timing of release of reports. "We question why on May 10 the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine would release a new quarantine policy without informing the Senate committee which was releasing its recommendations only three days later."



At the June General Meeting, Cuballing producer Graeme Dent (centre) raised the issue of feed grains, and suggested WAPPA investigate current feed grains programs undertaken by the GRDC. He is pictured with Dr Bruce Mullan of the Department of Agriculture and Wannamal producer Steve Martin.

## Clear Criteria

"The PGLP will also provide cereal breeders with much clearer selection criteria for pigs, as the grain quality criteria for pigs and poultry are quite different to that for cattle and sheep, and even more specific grain breeding for pigs is possible," he said. "Discussions are now taking place with some of the feed grains breeding programs. Of particular interest are the barley, oats and sorghum programs. There is also a need to upgrade discussions with triticale and wheat breeders, GRDC's other major investments in feed grains research."

GRDC projects involving mycotoxins and pesticide residue testing, with a major focus on feed grains, are also underway.

## Industry Involvement

"In all cases where the GRDC is conducting feed grain research, there is some level of involvement with the end-use industries," Dr Taverner noted. Also of interest to producers is the new Pork CRC bid, which has a major focus on feed grains, with a specific contribution promised from the WA pork industry. The CRC program builds on the PGLP and extends to grain breeding, to ensure high yielding and high quality cereals and pulses in areas close to pork production sites.

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## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

by Stuart Coole, WAPPA President

**Exchange rate pressure, feed grain security, recovery from drought and tough competition from subsidised imports are all adversely impacting the pork production sector.**

There are also the unknown benefits from the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement and our industry's concerns with the relaxation of our quarantine standards. I understand relaxing our quarantine standards was a precondition for US farmers to support the agreement. Nationally, the industry provides an interesting study where all of the challenging factors can be tested against the ultimate guide, the market-place.

Encouragingly, there are some real positives from the efficiencies created in the industry in recent years. Australia's pork industry has had one of the fastest rates of export growth for any agricultural industry, with export earnings now worth \$230 million and wealth

generation to the national economy, across the supply chain, worth \$2.6 billion. And the industry employs more than 33,000 across that supply chain.

Fresh pork has also scored the fastest growing share of the fresh meat market on Australian plates for the third consecutive quarter. Our industry's clean and green image has been a significant marketing advantage. Effectively, this is due to stringent quarantine standards and our proximity to quality conscious Asian markets. This advantage has allowed Australia to capitalize on markets in Taiwan, Japan and, particularly for WA producers, Singapore. To nurture and grow these markets, our herd health status and our traditionally conservative approach to quaran-



WAPPA President Stuart Coole with recently appointed Executive Officer Russell Cox at the June General Meeting (see story below).

tine must be maintained. While our pork industry doesn't advocate a zero risk policy in relation to quarantine, we equally don't advocate a position where changes to our quarantine regime mean we will effectively be importing disease. There is simply no way a 95-99 per cent likelihood of exotic disease outbreak within the next 10 years can ever be regarded as an appropriate level of risk. To remain competitive in the current environment, we must build on

efficiencies we've created, while also lobbying industry leaders and Governments to ensure our clean and green image is maintained globally.

This, combined with a possible major restructure of the industry to make it more globally competitive, will, in time, be good for producers. Possible measures in the restructure include producing larger pigs, reducing feed costs, improving animal health, streamlining processing, adjusting pricing systems and improving marketing and retail presentation.

## New WAPPA Executive Officer

**Russell Cox is WAPPA's new Executive Officer, replacing David McFerran who now works for the Meat Industry Authority on the relocation of the Midland saleyards.**

WAPPA President Stuart Coole said extensive managerial experience and a wide range of skills made Mr Cox the preferred applicant. "While we thank David for his excellent contribution, we look forward to moving to yet another level, with Russell's understanding of management, business development, communications and corporate governance sure to serve WAPPA well. A key aspect of the position is to lobby government and industry on behalf of producers, and Russell's experience working in a political environment, on the staff of a former Federal Minister, gives him an ideal background." Mr Cox's extensive managerial experience includes Executive Manager (WA) of the Australian Kidney Foundation, General Manager of the Swan Districts and Claremont Football Clubs and inaugural Football Manager of the West Coast Eagles. After commencing at WAPPA on June 8, Mr Cox said he hoped his enthusiasm would generate enthusiasm in others. "My experience in a broad range of disciplines and industries, including the meat industry, should allow me to understand issues facing the pork industry, and I look forward to tackling the challenges this represents."

## Worksafe and Wageline Workshops

**WAPPA and Pork Industry Training successfully held follow-up workshops in May to assist those producers who attended the initial occupational safety and health (OS&H) workshops in late 2003, in developing OS&H plans for their piggeries.**

WAPPA also invited Wageline representatives to the workshop to assist producers with issues surrounding employment. This complemented the WAPPA-developed manual for worker induction and job safety analysis worksheets. Margaret Lockyer of the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection presented on Industrial Relations: How it impacts on Piggeries in WA. She covered what governs employment - the industrial framework; understanding your award; casual versus permanent employment and termination.

OS&H consultant Ben Olsen conducted the afternoon session, a follow-up session to help producers develop an OS&H plan for their piggeries to help comply with WorkSafe's plan to inspect all WA piggeries. There is still a need for WAPPA to ensure those producers who attended the initial workshop are delivered the new manual, and organise workshops for those producers who do not have an OS&H plan. Producers without an OS&H plan, or those concerned about receiving a visit from WorkSafe, or those needing assistance in implementing the OS&H plan, or the employee induction documentation, should contact WAPPA, Tel 9479 7315.



Pinjarra producers Roy Christmas and Trevor Taylor catch up during a break at the OS&H workshop.

All producers & industry representatives are invited to attend the

**WAPPA Annual General Meeting, 1.30pm & Annual Dinner, 7.00pm for 7.30pm**

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by Daph Kavanagh, Sales Supervisor,  
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The secret to perfect crackling is salt, oil and heat. Preheat the oven to 220°C and make sure the oil and salt is rubbed well into the scores in the rind. Cook the pork for 20 minutes at high heat before turning down the oven temperature.



## ROAST PORK WITH LEMON AND CAPERS

**Serves: Six**

**Preparation Time: 20 mins**

**Cooking Time: 80 mins**

- 1 1/2 kg unrolled boned pork loin, scored rind
- 1 tbsp rinsed capers, finely chopped
- 1 tsp grated lemon rind
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon thyme leaves
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tbsp olive oil Juice of one lemon Salt

Pre-heat the oven to 220°C. Combine the capers, lemon rind, thyme, parsley and 1 tbsp oil. Rub all the mixture into the underside of the pork. Roll up pork and secure with cotton string. Rub pork rind with the remaining oil and salt, ensuring to rub salt well into the scores in the rind. Place pork on an elevated rack in a baking dish and into the oven. Cook for 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 180 degrees and cook for a further 35-45 minutes per kilo, or to your liking. Remove from oven and allow to rest for 10 minutes before serving. There is no need to cover a roast with crackling while it rests. Serve with roasted vegetables.

**Bon Appetit!**

## WA's Pork Industry a 'Sacrificial Lamb'

**With the Federal Government's rejection of all appeals against new import regimes for pigmeat, WA pork producers have described their industry as a 'sacrificial lamb'.**

WAPPA President, Stuart Coole said the ill-advised decision put at risk an industry worth more than \$112 million at the WA farmgate.

"Effectively, we have been sacrificed, on the altar of free trade.

"By not upholding appeals against Biosecurity Australia's new import quarantine policy for pigmeat, the Federal Government has not only forever jammed open the entry door to one of the world's cleanest pork producing countries, but has opened the exit door for local producers already battling high costs and low returns.

"We're all for free trade, but we're all against letting in potentially disease riddled product from countries whose producers already benefit from distorted tariffs and government subsidies.

### Fair Go

"We don't want hand-outs and simply ask for nothing more than a fair go from our Federal Government, who in an election year may pay a costly price for upsetting thousands of producers across Australia," Mr Coole said.

"A PMWS outbreak would add at least 15 per cent to our cost of production, and we simply can't absorb such an unnecessary imposition," Mr Coole said.

WAPPA maintained that the handling of the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) process by Biosecurity Australia (BA) had been very poor.

## Legal Action? WAPPA Says Yes

**WAPPA fully supports the decision by Australian Pork Limited (APL) to pursue legal action in the Federal Court against a new quarantine regime proposed by the Australian Government.**

The unanimous decision by the APL Board to file an application in the Federal Court to set aside the determination of quarantine conditions by the Director of Quarantine is groundbreaking.

It is believed to be the first time an Australian agricultural industry has legally challenged an Australian quarantine protocol.

APL Chairman, Dr Paul Higgins said the decision was not taken lightly.

"APL Directors must make decisions in the best interests of Australian pork producers.

"As the new quarantine regime gives rise to a 95-99 per cent likelihood of exotic disease outbreak within the next 10 years, we simply couldn't sit idly by."

### Watered Down

Dr Higgins described the new quarantine regime as a watering down of Australia's conservative approach to quarantine.

"APL has been warning the Australian Government about the dangers of PMWS for several years now.

"By not sufficiently tightening import protocols for pork in the light of the worldwide problems with PMWS, it's clear our concerns have been falling on deaf ears." Dr Higgins said Australian pork producers have been backed into a wall by this quarantine decision and had exhausted all quarantine appeal processes.

"As the Government has shown no sign it will adopt the recommendation of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs Committee's report to withdraw the quarantine decision, our only hope of keeping PMWS out of Australia and maintaining our clean, green image is to pursue an action in the courts."

### PUBLISHER'S DETAILS

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