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WITH COMPLIMENTS OF THE WEST AUSTRALIAN PORK PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION • September 2004
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WAPPA AGM Tackles Big Issues

Record pigmeat import levels were the hot topic at the WAPPA annual general meeting on Friday, August 27.

President Stuart Coole told the meeting, which attracted about 25 producers and other industry stakeholders, that imports had reached an all-time high of 6000 tonnes per month, or twice WA's monthly production.

"These import levels are putting further strain on an industry already hurting from falling prices, the high Australian dollar, high feed prices and a potentially damaging Import Risk Analysis. "Producers have fortunately seen Singapore market share increase due to the high quality of product being produced in WA. Exporters and Department of Agriculture trade officials are constantly working on new marketing and export opportunities.

Promotion Push

"The push for adoption of a home-grown labelling brand, to promote consumption of WA pork over imported produce, is also continuing." Producers were urged to lobby their Federal MPs and Ministers on critical issues affecting the industry. Graeme Dent of Cuballing joined the WAPPA Executive, filling the vacancy left by the retirement of Anne Graham of Pinjarra. He joins Mr Coole, Keith Ashton of Kojonup, Errol Howard of Wannamal and Chris Keene of Gingin. More than 130 people attended WAPPA's annual industry dinner, also held at Ascot Quays on Friday. It was addressed by Agriculture Minister Kim Chance.



Chris Keene of Gingin, John Stephens of Morawa, Steve Martin of Wannamal and Rick Fice of Wesfeeds at WAPPA's 2004 AGM at Ascot Quays.



Errol Howard of Wannamal, Graeme Dent of Cuballing and Agriculture Minister Kim Chance at WAPPA's annual industry dinner at Ascot Quays.

Dinner sponsors were Australian Pork Limited, Bio John, Computing Australia, D'Orsogna, Watsonia, Hyfarm Genetics,

Intervet, Kings Choice, Pfizer Animal Health, PIC Australia, PPC Linley Valley, Portec and Poultry Farmers of WA Co-op.

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WAPPA Life Membership to Rob Wilson

One of the WA pig industry's quiet achievers, Dr Rob Wilson, General Manager of Wandalup Farms and Australia Pork Limited board member, was awarded WAPPA life membership at the recent WAPPA annual industry dinner.

President Stuart Coole said while life membership of a state association such as WAPPA would typically reflect a specific and substantial contribution to WA, Dr Wilson had done that and more. "He has also walked tall on the national stage, although the term stage does not truly reflect WAPPA's newest life member.

"A quiet achiever, he may not always look comfortable on the big stage, but he has certainly starred in most major 'pig productions' for more than two decades," Mr Coole said.

His long and outstanding service to WAPPA began in 1981. Two years later he was Junior Vice President and in 1984, Senior Vice President. "Rob has continued to represent WAPPA and the WA pork industry on countless committees, federations and councils and remains a warm, familiar and wise face at WAPPA meetings, despite his very busy schedule, and we hope he will continue to do so for many years to come. He has invested in the



Wandalup Farms General Manager Dr Rob Wilson (2nd from left) after receiving WAPPA life membership. He is pictured with his wife Lola (left) and WAPPA President Stuart Coole and his wife Helen, of Boyup Brook.

pig industry countless hours of often thankless free consultation and counsel to industry stakeholders, especially producers," Mr Coole said.

Dr Wilson took on the demanding role of chairman of the former Pig Research and Development Corporation (PRDC) and when PRDC was rolled into Australian Pork Limited (APL), along with the Australian Pork Corporation and the Pork Council of Australia, he promptly joined the APL board.

Powerful WAPPA

WAPPA has met with Western Power to seek security of essential energy supplies for piggeries.

WAPPA President Stuart Coole said that without security of energy supply, animals could be put at risk due to failure to deliver timely feed and water supplies and this was simply not acceptable. "We have increased obligations to meet under the new 'Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals-Pigs' and we can't afford our efforts to be compromised by our state's power supplier not delivering," he noted. Subsidies for producers who purchase and install emergency generators to ensure they can supply water and feed to stock if power failure is experienced over a 24 hour period will be explored with both Western Power and the State Government. Mr Coole said other power issues concerning pork producers and WAPPA were: continuity of supply during peak demand; the frequency of power failures in certain areas; the perceived lack of sustainable maintenance and producers' inability to get a response or be able to contact Western Power during failure.

"We will continue, on behalf of all pork producers, to get satisfactory answers to these very important questions. Access to consistent power is a right not a privilege, especially where the welfare of animals is concerned," he said.

WorkSafe Working Well With Pork

Success by the pork industry in adopting Occupational Safety and Health (OS&H) practices has seen it recently classified as a phase four project, meaning WorkSafe will not conduct further pro-active inspections as they are satisfied members are meeting obligations under OS&H laws.

Commenting on the classification, WAPPA President Stuart Coole said while the industry had been exemplary in its adoption of WorkSafe practices, it was important producers maintain their systems and keep updated on issues.

WAPPA and Pork Industry Training held eight workshops during the year, delivered

by OS&H consultant Ben Olsen, to assist producers develop OS&H plans for their piggeries.

The workshops led to a manual being developed for worker induction and job safety analysis worksheets. WorkSafe also conducted a number of trial inspections of piggeries and were particularly impressed with producers' commitment to on-farm safety.

The main areas of concern identified by WorkSafe were the integrity of silos, the footings of silos and transport of hay and straw. Mr Olsen is available through WAPPA or Pork Industry Training for assistance with individual safety plans for piggeries and farms in general.

Productivity Commission Inquiry

After months of being consistently lobbied the Australian Government has agreed to hold a Productivity Commission Inquiry into the state of the Australian pig industry, including the impact of imports.

In the past 10 years, the Government has agreed to only two such inquiries. WAPPA President Stuart Coole welcomed the joint announcement by Federal Treasurer Peter Costello and Minister for Agriculture Warren Truss, which followed intensive lobbying from WAPPA and Australian Pork Limited.

"The announcement is a positive signal of the Government's commitment to the industry and willingness to work with it to progress its long term future through restructure and achieving greater efficiencies.

"We hope the inquiry will provide an independent assessment of the industry, especially the impact of subsidised imports, and identify measures to safeguard pork producers from inequitable global trading practices, which is vital for future sustainability.

"It will allow the Government to make informed decisions on what measures will enhance the competitiveness of the industry, including the production and processing sectors.

"The industry realises that in order to remain competitive, it must remain competitive on a global stage and the inquiry is a step in the right direction to achieve this," Mr Coole said.

The Productivity Commission will shortly invite expressions of interest. All interested parties are encouraged to make submissions.

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

by Stuart Coole, WAPPA President

In the past 12 months many major issues have affected the pork industry.

Imports have been at an all time high at about 6000 tonnes per month, equating to twice WA's monthly production. We had the threat of EU subsidies, which was thankfully quashed by Agriculture Minister Warren Truss.

While Asian bird flu wreaked havoc in the Asian chicken industry, it luckily had a positive impact on the pork industry. The Australian dollar has been bouncing around the mid to high 70 cents US mark, which has lent itself to high imports and reduced exports.

As we face these obstacles, we still need to keep pushing forward - life wasn't meant to be easy. If it was, we'd have every man and his pig trying to get into the industry. On a positive note, we've had a very successful program with the occupational health and safety launch.

WorkSafe was more than happy with the response from producers in helping eliminate unsafe practices within their units.

Biosecurity Aware

The pig industry needs to be very aware of biosecurity. The foot and mouth outbreak in Europe and Post Weaning Multisystemic Wasting Syndrome in New Zealand highlighted the need to be vigilant against these and other disease threats, hence the establishment of a biosecurity consultation group to help secure our valuable industry.

The model code of practice for the welfare of pigs is now under review by the Australian government, with welfare groups around Australia indicating they want dry sow stalls phased out.

Australian Pork Limited (APL) is analysing the requirements of producers regarding the use of crates, both present and in the future.

Lobby Help

As most are aware, the industry has been constantly lobbying state and federal agricultural ministers on critical issues affecting the industry.

The main issues we wish government to consider are the establishment of a home grown labelling brand and funding of a Pork Co-operative Research Centre.

I'm pleased Treasurer Peter Costello and Warren Truss recently announced an inquiry by the Productivity Commission (PC) on the competitive situation and outlook for Australia's pork industry.

The PC inquiry results from the consistent efforts of APL and Minister Truss and builds on the constructive partnership APL has developed with the government through the Joint Industry Government Working Group.

The announcement tells producers and other stakeholders that the government is committed to the industry and will work with it to



progress a long term future through restructuring and greater efficiencies.

Grain Users

There is a review underway involving the intensive livestock grain users group. The industries involved, including pork production, need security of grain in such times as drought and when grain availability is at a premium.

We also need to improve grain efficiency through the grain industry, to reduce the overall cost of production and ultimately the cost of meat production.

If we are to successfully develop exports and reduce imports, we need to improve overall production in WA to make ourselves globally competitive — but we also need to improve the variability in quality.

Productive Processing

Producers need to work with processors and retailers if we are to have a major effect on moving our product. There have been some very positive moves in the processing sector, including reducing the number of killing centres, which gives economies of scale and increases carcase size, thus further improving efficiency.

Tough Year

It has been a tough year as President, with the sudden resignation of WAPPA Executive Officer, David McFerran in April and the ongoing battle with Government for funding and support on our key issues.

Let's hope there's another record harvest to help lower grain costs, the Australian dollar weakens to lower import levels and someone invents a fast food outlet selling hamburgers made with real ham!

'Hello! Life's Juicier With Pork'

Pork is the fastest growing fresh meat of choice for the fourth consecutive quarter, demonstrating a change in Australian eating culture.

Coinciding with the increase was the recent launch of the new 'Hello! Life's Juicier with Pork' marketing campaign.

Australian Pork Limited (APL) National Marketing Manager, David Mogford said marketing objectives were designed to increase consumer awareness of pork.

"Fresh pork is increasingly seen as a legitimate alternative for consumers, as a meat of choice.

"The challenge APL had in devising the new campaign was to build on the platform of this increased consumer awareness and create the ability for consumers to be comfortable in bringing pork into their households.

"We have the strategic goal of increasing domestic pork consumption by 50 per cent by 2007.

"The new campaign needed to assist and train consumers in how to use pork. We want to give them meal solutions, encouraging them to include pork in daily menus.

"The 'Hello' campaign has been specifically designed to build on fresh pork's phenomenal sales growth by attracting further

consumer awareness and interest by providing meal ideas which are simple to cook, versatile, delicious and nutritious."

Mr Mogford said non-traditional cuts had demonstrated incredible increases.

"The 'Hello' campaign will feature a series of six TV advertisements showcasing four

different pork hero meals, featuring the new cuts of pork steaks, butterfly steaks, pork stir fry and pork mince.

The 'hero meals' will be represented in magazines, the APL consumer web site (www.pork.com.au), point of sale recipe leaflet and on pack stickers.

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Rick Fice – Market Manager Pig Feeds

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by Daph Kavanagh, Sales Supervisor,
Australian Pork Ltd

With the advent of spring, we should all look for excuses to get outside and socialise.

Juicy pork recipes will guarantee your next BBQ is a success, with new leaner cuts going easy on the waistline without compromising on taste.

While BBQ pork spareribs and pork chops are always a tasty option, for something a bit different, try sweet and sour marinated pork kebabs.

Since we know it's no fun to be stuck in the kitchen when everyone else is getting stuck into a cold beer around the BBQ, this recipe can be prepared the day before.



SWEET AND SOUR MARINATED PORK KEBABS

Serves: Six
Preparation Time: 30 mins
Cooking Time: 20 mins
 1 kg diced pork
 1 large red capsicum
 1 large green capsicum
 425g can pineapple pieces
 1 cup orange juice
 1/4 cup white vinegar
 2 tbsp soft brown sugar
 2 tbsp chilli garlic sauce
 2 tspn cornflour

Cut both capsicums into 2cm squares. Drain pineapple and reserve juice. Thread meat, alternately with capsicum and pineapple, onto skewers. Combine reserved pineapple juice with orange juice, vinegar, sugar and chilli sauce. Place kebabs in a shallow non-metal dish; pour half the juice mixture over. Refrigerate, covered with plastic wrap, for several hours or overnight, turning occasionally. Place kebabs on a hot, lightly oiled BBQ and cook for 15 mins, turning occasionally, until tender. To make sweet and sour sauce: place remaining marinade in a small pan; mix cornflour with a tablespoon of the marinade in a small bowl until smooth, add to pan; stir over medium heat until mixture boils and thickens; transfer to small serving bowl and leave to cool. Serve kebabs with sweet and sour sauce. **Bon Appetit!**

Biosecurity Threats Attacked on Local Front

by Don Moir, Department of Agriculture, Narrogin

How best to protect WA's \$100 million pig industry from biosecurity threats was the subject of the first meeting of the Pig Biosecurity Consultative Group when it met in Perth last month.

The Group's members are from the Department of Agriculture, producers, WAPPA, Murdoch University and veterinary consultants. Other industry sectors will be invited to join in future to ensure full coverage of issues threatening the industry. The group will consider preparedness and management plans for exotic diseases, endemic and emerging diseases, food safety, chemical and antibiotic residues and animal welfare concerns.

Plan Paramount

Having a plan in place to handle any emergency incident is paramount to the viability and security of the industry, however this planning needs strong industry ownership

and involvement of all stakeholders to be successful. The WA pig industry involves around 360 growers, employs approximately 3000 people and has flow-on effects worth about \$300 million to the state economy. The 45,000 tonnes of pigmeat produced in 2003-04 was worth \$104 million.

Biosecurity planning for the WA pig industry was boosted with the formation of the StockGuard - Pigs Working Group in 2000.

Chaired by Dr Kim Nairn, it produced the Pig Industry Biosecurity Plan, published and circulated in March 2003, which detailed the threats facing the WA pig industry and plans to manage these threats.

The plan made a list of recommendations that government, industry bodies, service industries and producers needed to address. It can be viewed on the Depart-

ment of Agriculture website, www.agric.wa.gov.au Miscellaneous Publication 36/2002.

The consultative group will oversee implementation of these recommendations and act as a forum for government and industry to consider specific biosecurity issues that arise and the adoption of industry Codes of Practice. As with other livestock industry consultative groups, there may be smaller task force groups established to deal with defined issues if required.

For more information, contact Don Moir, Executive Officer, Pig Biosecurity Consultative Group, Tel 9881 0222 or email dmoir@agric.wa.gov.au, or Russell Cox, Executive Officer, WAPPA, Tel 9479 7315

Export Opportunities Open Up

While this year has seen record imports of pork into Australia, the WA industry has fortunately seen its Singapore market share increase, due to the high quality of product being produced in WA.

Exporters and Department of Agriculture trade officials are constantly working on new marketing opportunities in the Asian region which, due to WA's closeness to these markets, can only benefit the pork industry in this state. Agriculture Minister Kim Chance and Department staff recently toured the region and in a meeting with WAPPA and industry representatives indicated that opportunities were opening in Korea, Japan and China (through Hong Kong). Minister Chance has indicated the key issue is the way these markets are nurtured, developed and built. This will, in part, determine the future growth of the pork industry in the state.

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