

PIG AND PIGMEAT INDUSTRIES SAFEGUARD ACTION AGAINST IMPORTS

This submission on behalf of the Australian Pig Breeders Association calls for a Safeguard Action against Imports to be imposed, immediately, due to the hardships placed on Pig Farmers and the consequent reduction of Australia's Pure Bred Gene Pool.

Sudden exposure to uncontrolled competition at Producer level forcing prices below the cost of Production will see many progressive Pig Breeders forced away from an unviable industry. This will create a significant reduction in the Gene Pool to a situation where it will not have sufficient diversity to satisfy options for the continued improvement of the Australian Pig Herd.

The Structural changes in the Industry from where many Grain Farmers and Dairy Farms had some extensive production of Pigs to supplement their incomes to a position where Pig Farmers became specialists in Intensive Production of Pigmeat at enormous costs have been significant. However these changes initiated by Market demand for a quality product has seen a dramatic downturn in Producer numbers. Relatively the number of Stud Breeders supplying those Farmers was also reduced.

However those Specialist Stud Pig Breeders have made a remarkable success of altering the structure of the Pig and improving Pig Meat quality as the market has demanded. This has enabled them to supply the commercial market with top quality breeding stock to produce top quality market animals.

The "Closure" of production units from the introduction of live animals as a precaution against Disease has only been enabled with the knowledge that a Gene Pool of sufficient quality was available through Artificial Insemination. This Genetic Pool has allowed these Production Units to continually improve their performance standards of production.

Specialist Stud Breeders have also been able to source important export markets for their Breeding Stock in Asia, especially the Philippines and Korea (where only Registered Stud Animals are accepted). The quality of stock exported is reflected in the fact that Progeny from Australian Pigs have won top performance awards under Test Station Conditions in Korea.

Stud Breeders receive a premium from sales of Breeding Animals but their production is also commercially orientated to the slaughter market. If this market is unviable, their ability to remain in the industry is negligible.

Table 1. indicates the loss of Stud Breeders by State and Year to the industry. It must be noted that only 26 of these have actually registered stock to August 1998.

Industry changes have already reduced the Large Black, Tamworth & Wessex

Saddle Backs to a rare or minority Breed Status. As extensive rearing of Pigs is regaining some popularity, the Genetic traits of the coloured Breeds may be required for this type of Pig Farming to be again successful in Australia.

A further loss of Producers from the Industry as is predicted due to unrestricted imports will bring the Berkshires, Duroc and Hampshire Breeds into the rare or minority breed status with the Landrace and Large White Breeds seriously depleted of Bloodlines.

Table 2 indicates the serious threat to Australias Genetic Pool of registered pure bred Pigs. As the Registration of Pigs allows for late Registrations it can be seen that many breeders may be considering the future of the Australian Pig Industry and their part in it before committing themselves to the added costs of registration.

The Australian Pig Breeders Association is most concerned at this alarming drop in registrations as it is indicative of a decimation of the Australian Pure Bred Gene Pool.

An immediate implementation of a Safeguard action against imports allowing the industry to maintain viability will allow the specialist Stud Breeders with their expertise to remain in the industry hence ensuring the maintenance of a successful Gene Pool for the continuance of excellence in the industry.

Compiled By: Adrian Saines
Postal Address: PO Box 538
YOUNG NSW 2594

Position: Member - Australian Pig Breeders Association
Representing as Director Chairman of Kiama Stud
Registration Centre Limited.

TABLE 1. Number of Registered Stud Breeders by State and Year

| | 1978 | 1988 | 1997 | 1998 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Queensland | 66 | 38 | 17 | 6 |
| New South Wales | 174 | 60 | 25 | 18 |
| Victoria | 69 | 25 | 22 | 13 |
| South Australia | 128 | 38 | 13 | 9 |
| Western Australia | 95 | 34 | 14 | 18 |
| Tasmania | 18 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| | 550 | 202 | 91 | 64 |

Only 26 of Members in 1998 (64) have actually registered Pigs in 1998.

TABLE 2.

Pig Registrations by Breed, Sex & Year

BREED SEX REGISTRATIONS

| BREED | SEX | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 (to 21 Aug) |
|-------------------|--------|------|------|------------------|
| Berkshire | Male | 41 | 21 | 21 |
| | Female | 57 | 59 | 58 |
| Duroc | Male | 10 | 10 | 1 |
| | Female | 12 | 18 | 2 |
| Hampshire | Male | 23 | 4 | 8 |
| | Female | 43 | 12 | 23 |
| Landrace | Male | 186 | 84 | 25 |
| | Female | 487 | 190 | 30 |
| Large Black | Male | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| | Female | 9 | 12 | 13 |
| Large White | Male | 187 | 142 | 51 |
| | Female | 414 | 267 | 120 |
| Tamworth | Male | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| | Female | 7 | 18 | 8 |
| Wessex Saddleback | Male | 6 | 19 | 3 |
| | Female | 11 | 23 | 5 |
| | | 1496 | 893 | 373 |

As most Shows and Fairs have been completed where registration is required for entry it is not expected that the 1998 total will increase significantly.