

Update 26th February 08

Urgent, Urgent, Urgent.

Wake Up - Australian Pig Industry

Politically we are very unlikely to get support.

We have been way too apathetic for too long.

We are in urgent need of change.

We as a whole industry must be prepared to act now.

Do what, you ask?

We must have our pork so that it is all consumed fresh and for processors using Australian only pork.

Do you know where your pork goes if you sell to a wholesaler?

APL must research and develop and promote styles and packaging of cuts with the intent of the previously mentioned. We must also invest into educating (enticing) the consumer to eat a different variety of cuts. We must think outside our box and take note of what the best of the overseas countries are doing.

We must not have any product left that needs to go to the processors who import.

We will be continually screwed if we do.

Commissioner Banks has been criticised for not being able to see the imported product surplus and price and the domestic price correlation.

How big a hypocrite are we when we see it, and keep on supplying the culprits creating the problem, hiding behind the artificial barrier of "it's too hard to do differently".

We must castrate boars.

While we have entire boars we are still in a situation where we have to sell to processors and that we can't guarantee a good eating experience. Sure, the numbers of risk pigs may be low but, we can't afford any.

We must remove pigs from deep litter systems 4 weeks prior to sale.

We hear of too many complaints from the consumer of an unpleasant eating experience from eating pork. With the combination of entire boars, but more so the skatol aroma from pigs from deep litter, we can never guarantee the product quality. The Danes have a 4 week from straw policy for this very reason.

Our efficiencies have to be utilised to their fullest (bigger pigs).

To be more efficient and to compete against the other meats we must be as efficient as possible. Part of this formula is to produce bigger pigs. This must be part of our sales strategy and development.

Our eating quality must be 100% guaranteed.

In our day and age, what commodity does well if it isn't right all of the time. This needs to be a major focus point.

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APL and CRC need to have a 100% focus into survival and product development.

The other issues items are OK if the industry is able to survive. There is no future for either if there is no industry left.

We must utilise the best genetics

It has been mentioned several times of late, including in the Commission hearings, that our product is not as good as the overseas product that is imported. Given that the industry wants to keep its health status and so limiting the availability of better pig genetics, then we must know where and utilise the best genetics that we have available in Australia.

Or, develop an absolute minimal risk strategy to import. This may be through a one off joint venture combining interested breeding companies and APL in a controlled environment on an off shore island with extremely ridged protocols. We as an industry are taking the health risk in this case, so as an industry we need to be absolutely certain that we are getting the best available and not what suits an individual breeding companies agenda (pocket).

We must be able to identify what pork has been produced to a minimum standard.

Gilts, castrates and skatol free pork (minimum standard) will be difficult to isolate. This is why a whole of industry compliance is essential. Possibly via our QA program (Govt funds for capital)

It must be APL (Pig Producers) policy to have the whole Pork Industry produce this way.

There has to be a whole industry approach. If you're supplying boars of which parts are being processed by an importer then you are screwing yourself and the rest of the industry by trying to compete against subsidised imports and ruthless importers who, as indicated in some presentations to the Commission Hearing, only care about a cheap price for the consumer; and themselves. I'm sure the later being the most likely.

Our future will be very limited if we continue to produce pork that needs to go to processors who use imported pork.

If we do the previously mentioned and can manage the home market transition, this may well make available more gilts for the fresh trade into the Asian areas. We effectively use the not so good a value product on our home soils and export the cream, as the best of the export marketers do.

We have an advantage of fresh pork and in bone ham not being able to be imported for bio-security reasons. Let's make the most of this advantage.

Act now, or may we all - REST IN PEACE.