



## **Establishment of the National Centre for Pork Industry Training & Education**

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The National Centre for Pork Industry Training & Education (NCPITE) was established to address the challenges of attraction and retention of personnel in the Australian pork industry. By providing targeted, resourced training at school, vocational and tertiary levels it is hoped that more school leavers and tertiary graduates are motivated to join the pork industry.

The NCPITE concentrated on four areas including activities at school, TAFE (or vocational) and tertiary level, and life-long learning.

At school level, a complete CD-based teaching package, called "PigEd", was developed using video material, diagrams, animations and photographs to convey learning of the basic principles of pork production. The PigEd CD was distributed to 600 schools offering specific agriculture-related subjects in years 8-12. A glossy "Careers in the Pork Industry" booklet also aimed to demonstrate to secondary school students the range of interesting careers available in the pork industry.

The NCPITE coordinated the development of a set of best-practice PowerPoint presentations to provide underpinning knowledge for all pig related competencies at level 2 and 3 in the Rural Production Training Package. The final package, called "PigTrain", was released as a free CD made available to all known industry trainers.

Tertiary level activities involved the proposed delivery of a coursework Masters program in Pig Science & Management. The program was developed and marketed to two potential groups of students, including those already working in the industry as well as recent graduates wishing to develop their career in the commercial sector rather than research. Unfortunately insufficient enrolments were received to justify its delivery.

The fourth element of the NCPITE was life-long learning. A major component of this was an initiative called "PigLink" where producer seminar presentations were disseminated on CD or web download, coupled with a teleconference with the speaker and other participants to discuss each topic. PigLink enables wider access to international and local experts in all areas of production and has been outstandingly successful with very high subscription rates. Refresher Courses for consultants and key influencers were delivered as part of life-long learning, and finally the NCPITE delivered an annual two-week course on "The Science & Practice of Pig Production", attracting undergraduates and industry personnel, and providing a means for APL and Pork CRC-funded postgraduate students to enhance their background knowledge of the pork industry.