



**DVA - Options for Alternative Farrowing Accommodation (Prof Sandra Edwards to Visit Australia & Dr Rebecca Morrison to Visit UK)**

APL Project 2009/I003.329

2010

Rivalea Australia

Morrison R.

This award provided for Prof Sandra Edwards of Newcastle University to visit Australia and for Dr Rebecca Morrison of Rivalea Australia to visit the UK to look into alternative farrowing accommodation.

Dr Emma Baxter from the Scottish Agricultural College also visited Australia during this time. Rivalea covered the cost of her meals, internal travel and accommodation. Dr Baxter provided commercial, practical insight on the management of the PIGSafe system, and discussed future possibilities for research collaboration.

Prof Edwards and Dr Baxter visited Rivalea to discuss implementation of the PIGSafe system and sow group housing. The PIGSafe system is a non-crated farrowing system that meets the pre and post-farrowing welfare requirements of the sow and piglets. The piglet mortality levels are similar to commercial crated farrowing systems in the UK. The project is at the stage where commercial applications are required to assess the true commercial viability of the system. Rebecca is coordinating and facilitating a research program to investigate the PIGSafe system on a commercial operation.

Prof Edwards and Dr Baxter also presented at APL/AWSC workshop "Identifying R&D options for alternative farrowing accommodation" on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

Dr Morrison's trip to the UK was to discuss and view the PIGSafe system at Newcastle University and the Scottish Agricultural College, United Kingdom. Dr Morrison met with Prof Edwards to discuss the UK pig industry and PIGSafe program, she then toured pig facilities at Newcastle University and met with Dr Baxter and Lisbeth Ravn of the British Pig Executive (BPEX) Knowledge Transfer Team. Dr Morrison presented an overview of Rivalea/APL/AWSC funded research. She then travelled to Edinburgh to the Scottish Agricultural College where she toured their pig facilities and was involved in discussions and presentation with their pig research group.

This tour enabled development of research connections in the area of pig behaviour and welfare, which may enable future research collaboration and opportunities for sabbatical visits between Newcastle University, Scottish Agricultural College, Rivalea Australia and APL. There may be opportunity for international collaboration with the new CRC re-bid and University of Newcastle/Scottish Agricultural College.