



Group Demonstration Award - Pilot Stockperson Competencies Training (NSW)

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2010

Industry & Investment NSW

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There was a need identified for training courses to enable piggery stockpersons in NSW to meet the competency requirements of NSW welfare legislation and the revised Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (Pigs; MCOP). The objective of this project was to develop and pilot a 2-day stockperson training course to meet the competency requirements of the revised MCOP and NSW State Legislation.

Participants had a variety of backgrounds, including owner-operators with long-term experience on existing farms (3 participants), owner-operators new to the industry (3 participants), piggery employees (3 participants), owner-operators looking to start a piggery (3 participants), post-graduate students (2 participants) and university academics (1 participant). Course presenters of Industry & Investment NSW were Dr Trish Holyoake, Technical Specialist in Pig Health, Jayce Morgan, Livestock Office Pigs, and Tim Burfitt, Manager Intensive Livestock Industry Development. Steve Honeywood and Darren Bayley from Tocal College supported the competency assessment component of the training.

The course was conducted on 16th and 17th November 2010 at the Camden Pig Production Unit at the University of Sydney. This enabled instructors to undertake demonstrations, and participants to practice and demonstrate competencies that involved pig handling. Training consisted of a mixture of classroom theory, group exercises and practical instruction. Participants were required to successfully complete a number of tasks to be assessed as “competent”.

80-90% of participants rated the course as “excellent” and 10% “very good”. Following the course, instructors/assessors agreed that the group size was ideal; the location was good with easy access to pigs; there is a need to provide participants with a more clear outline of the course content (some participants expressed an interest in mating/reproduction, marketing pigs and pig nutrition – which was outside the scope of the course); and some minor changes to the program, including allowing more time to discuss detection/management of sick and injured pigs and environment/housing impacts on health and welfare. The extra time would come from shortening the practical session on Day 2.