



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture



SA Future Pork Network

Final Report APL Project 2011/2312

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1. Acknowledgements

This project is supported by funding from Australian Pork Limited and the Department of Agriculture.

2. Executive Summary

The SA Future Pork Network was formed in 2010 by Graeme Pope (Graeme Pope Consulting) as an APL pilot project to provide opportunities for younger SA pork industry participants to interact with others in activities organised off-farm and likely to expand their knowledge of their industry.

The Network consists of piggery stock people, agribusiness representatives and post-graduate tertiary pig science students. Network activities are typically planned around workshops and/or site visits, facilitated by Graeme Pope following suggested titles or venues by Network members and concluded with a catered social session.

Three (3) Network activities were completed during 2012/13, being a farm visit and two (2) training workshops conducted at Adelaide University's Roseworthy Campus. The farm visit focused on grouped sow housing and selection of breeding stock. Workshops focused on Pig Post Mortems and Ultrasonography.

APL funding for this project was concluded in July, 2013 with continuation of Network activities into 2013/14 now made possible through state-based funding provided by the SA Pig Industry Advisory Group.

3. Background to Research

The Network was developed to specifically cater to the professional and personal development needs of the younger sector of industry, to encourage interaction between young farm staff members often localised to a single production site, and to foster long term interest amongst post-graduate students to consider entering industry career pathways.

The benefits of the Network to participants remains with its members recommending activities of interest, leaving Graeme Pope Consulting to plan and facilitate these activities in a manner likely to engage with its younger membership.

4. Objectives of the Research Project

This project sets out to expand the knowledge base of younger industry members and expand their industry networks through participating in activities outside their usual work environment.

5. Introductory Technical Information

2012/13 project funding represents the 2nd year of APL support for this project.

6. Research Methodology

A Network email database has been developed and maintained by Graeme Pope Consulting. New post-graduate students are added to the Network database at the start of the academic year. Topics for Network activities are suggested by Network members and activities are planned and facilitated by Graeme Pope.

The project required three (3) activities to be completed during 2012/13. These were:

1. August 15, 2012 – a farm visit to Aroora Enterprises, Murray Bridge (500 sows) to inspect a newly commissioned loose-housed bedded sow shelter (featured 180 mated sow group, ESF fed) and participate in a training session on physical conformation of selected replacement breeding stock, presented by Aroora stud principals Jim and Greg Davis (14 attendees).
2. November 21, 2012 – a Pig Post-Mortem Workshop, held at Roseworthy Campus and delivered by Graeme Pope and pig vet Dr Colin Cargill. Included clinical identification of pig ill-health (a power point presentation) followed by practical post-mortem demonstration and discussion around cause of death of two (2) weaner pigs (11 attendees).
3. May 8, 2013 – a Pig Ultrasonography Workshop, held at Roseworthy Campus and delivered by Graeme Pope and SARDI researchers Dr Pieter and Emmy Langendijk. Included role of ultrasonography in commercial breeding programs and early pregnancy development (a power point presentation) followed by practical demonstration and discussion in Roseworthy piggery using mated sows (12 attendees).

Network activities are reported in articles drafted by Graeme Pope and included in industry publications to promote project outcomes (Stock Journal, PORK Newspaper, Pork Journal).

7. Discussion of Results

Attendance by members at Network activities averaged 12 during the year.

Emailed feedback from Network members at end of 2012/13 year included:

“I have enjoyed being involved in the SA Future Pork Network so far and would like it to continue. From the different activities we have been involved in this year I have learnt different things, not only from the speakers but from members of the group. The group also allows me to socialise with other people in the pig industry of my own age and experience”. (A.S. 160 sows).

“I would like to Network meetings we have as I quite enjoy getting out and meeting other people in the industry. I believe you get more out of speaking to other people talking about how they do things as well as telling them how we run our own farms”. (S.E. 1,200 sows).

“The benefits I have gained is that it’s great to be able to see firsthand what is actually going on outside the farm gate. It’s easier to apply and understand what the industry wants and needs our farms to do when we have the opportunity to see and hear it from others.” (A.F. 600 sows).

8. Implications and Recommendations

This project has been funded by the SA Pig Industry Group to continue through 2013/14 in its current format. Funding for 2014/15 will be submitted to PIAG by Graeme Pope Consulting in May, 2014.