

Manipulating Pig Production XIV

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Preface

The importance of research and innovation for the national and international pork industry has never been so crucial. The volatility in global cereal and oilseed protein meal prices has continued, and the business environment is still stagnating from the global financial crisis. However, the latest major driver for change in pork production, and hence the demands in research and innovation, is coming from the large corporate supermarkets, animal rights groups and general consumers of pig meat. This has given a new focus on the requirement of knowledge, particularly on low environment impact systems, antibiotic-free diets, pig welfare and sow-stall-free production systems. With this in mind, the A.C. Duncan Memorial Lecture will provide an overview of the roles and functions of science in establishing animal welfare recommendations and standards while trying to balance the expectations of consumers and animal rights groups.

There is still a large amount of research and new information being generated in pig science and pork production, but reductions in funding have created a reduction in extension services to producers. In this context, the committee of the Australasian Pig Science Association (APSA) thought it important to highlight during the conference, the importance of delivering science for maximum industry benefit, outlining current problems and issues and potential solutions from an end-user and an academic point of view. The remaining invited papers and symposia present recent research and relevant information on nutrition and management of the prolific sow, monitoring herd health and immunity, gastrointestinal tract barrier function and systemic response to nutrition and management, and genomic approaches for quantifying microbial communities to the benefit of the pig industry; an environmental perspective. Additionally, the 126 refereed one-page papers in *Manipulating Pig Production XIV* guarantee that the conference program will have something for everyone associated with the pork industry.

Since its inception, the APSA conference has provided an excellent forum to present new findings, foster in-depth discussion, and hopefully provide solutions to some of the industry problems. The 14th APSA meeting upholds these aims and provides a real opportunity for researchers to present their findings to their global peers, and interact with key industry figures and organisations.

The Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for High Integrity Australian Pork and Australian Pork Limited (APL) have been integral in funding the majority of the research and development in Australia, as well as training undergraduate and postgraduate students and generating junior scientists. APSA outwardly promotes the involvement of students and early-career scientists, both privately and publically funded, at the meeting, and again the conference has a considerable number of young scientists attending and presenting their work.

It has been a great honour to preside over APSA for the last two years and to have contributed in facilitating the networking of many of those involved in pork production. Thank you for making the meeting a great success and I hope you will continue to be part of the future success of the Association.

Dr David Cadogan, President

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