

# A newsletter for pork producers



## PigBytes

Issue 42 August 2019

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### Water supply – do you have a plan B

Jayce Morgan

The radio segment on ABC on “[Country towns close to reaching 'day zero', as water supplies dry up in the drought](#)” reminds us of the very harsh and extensive reach of this drought.

“The official climate forecast released by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) on 27 June 2019 continues to indicate a higher chance of drier than average conditions across NSW for winter and into spring.

The emerging influence of the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) reported last month remains the dominant feature of the forecast, with the IOD still predicted to move into a positive phase over coming months. A positive IOD is generally correlated with dry conditions for central and southern Australia.

The BoM also provided an updated ENSO outlook on 25 June 2019, where the El Niño status was downgraded to Inactive, a small amount of positive news despite the IOD situation likely being the dominant influence for NSW rainfall moving into spring”. [NSW DPI](#)

The Australian and NSW Governments are working together to deliver \$12 million in Federal rebates to drought affected livestock farmers for the purchase and upgrade on-farm water infrastructure.

The [On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate scheme](#) is available to eligible primary producers who can claim a rebate of 25% of the cost for; new purchases, and installation of pipes, water storages and water pumps, de-silting dams, and associated power supplies such as generators. This Rebate scheme can be applied to costs incurred from 1st July 2018.

The maximum that can be claimed is \$25,000 per farm enterprise. The availability of rebates is subject to funds being available. No rebates will be offered beyond the allocated funding of \$12 million.

Applications close 30 June 2021 or when the funding allocation is exhausted, whichever occurs first.

There is a lot of information on the [WaterNSW website](#) pertaining to the water supply in regional NSW.

### NSW Youth Summit on living with drought

Penne Fraser – Tamworth Regional Landcare

Do you know or are you a young person aged 14-24 years impacted by the NSW drought?

UNICEF Australia with the support of the NSW government invites you to apply for the first NSW Youth Summit on Living with Drought.

Who are they looking for?

This opportunity is for young people aged 14-24 years, who are impacted by drought in NSW, Australia.

They are looking for applicants from diverse backgrounds who bring personal experiences to the conversation. If you fit these two categories, you can apply!

Applications are encouraged from diverse backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, young people living with disability and young people from newly arrived or migrant backgrounds.

Applications are open until Friday 30th August.

More information and registration - [NSW Youth Drought Summit](#)

If you feel up to some sobering reading then download the drought report '[In their own words: the hidden impact of prolonged drought on children and young people](#)'

## Farm Records

*Jayne Morgan*

Sometimes I visit farms and the attention to detail around record keeping can be disappointing. Many of you may have seen the article in The Land describing how a macadamia grower was fined \$1000 for breach of requirements when spraying the trees, following a neighbour complaint. The breach was that there were no records for weather, wind speed and direction. ([The Land July 1 2019](#))

Hand written notes in a diary, emails and messages to office staff should all be recorded particularly if they pertain to farming operations, weather events or response to neighbour inquiries.

Members of APIQ<sup>✓</sup> would know that records are essential to maintain QA certification. Good business managers know that the right records can identify potential problems before they become serious.

Veterinarians know that good herd records will help identify problems in herd health and reproduction like missed vaccinations, or insufficient feed at weaning, or other unexpected problems.

There can be excellent reasons why things don't happen when they should but unless you record it, these events can be overlooked or become a financial burden into the future.

Look at your systems – are you keeping enough of the right sort of records?

## Protecting Queensland from African swine fever

*Robyn Dowdle, A/Principal Media and Communication Officer, DAF*

Biosecurity Queensland recently hosted a workshop focused on African swine fever (ASF) preparedness to ensure Queensland is well-prepared to respond to in the event of ASF.

Australia is in the favorable position of being free

Europe and Asia are a reminder it can spread

Around 50 people attended the workshop including pork producers, service industry representatives, veterinarians, abattoir operators and nutritionists.

Topics discussed at the event included the disease, the risk to Australia, the response in place under the AUSVETPLAN, surveillance, destruction and disposal and diagnostic testing.

Deb Kerr, General Manager of Policy at Australian Pork Limited delivered a presentation on the industry perspective of the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement and also talked about livestock movement arrangements.

Biosecurity Queensland veterinarian Sandy Adsett said ASF would devastate Queensland's pork industry.

"The workshop brought key people together to discuss what would actually happen in Queensland in an ASF emergency response and it was great to see this level of collaboration from government and industry.

**Figure 1: Attendees to the ASF workshop in Queensland.**



Source: Sara Willis

Dr Allison Crook, Chief Veterinary Officer and General Manager of Animal Biosecurity and Welfare attended the workshop.

"ASF is an emerging threat and it's important that Queensland is well prepared to respond to emergency animal diseases such as this," Allison said.

"Measures are in place at a federal level to protect Australia from ASF, including not importing fresh pork, but if there was an ASF incident in Australia a rapid, coordinated response would be key. That's why preparedness activities like this one are so important."

Future preparedness plans include holding an on farm emergency animal disease exercise focused on ASF. Biosecurity Queensland has also formed an ASF Working Group to ensure ASF preparedness in Queensland.

## Contingency plans for crisis – do you have one?

Jayce Morgan

I stumbled across an article on a dairy website about how having a contingency plan can guide you through a crisis.

The crisis could be due to activities by animal activists or simply due to the vagaries of business life involving breakdowns or loss of supply of a key business input.

Crises are uncomfortable when you are in the middle. People can suffer decision paralysis and not know what to do or how to react.

In the article "[A contingency plan can guide you through a crisis](#)" by Mike Opperman there are several suggestions on how to develop action plans so people in your team are more confident about how to respond.

One of the ideas was to create your own band of internal 'assassins' – people who are part of the business but a bit separate from the day-to-day activities. Use them to use their knowledge of the company to look at ways the business could be compromised or to identify areas which need improvement.

It's the fresh eyes approach. Fresh eyes see the elephant in the room which has become part of the furniture.

Another idea was to create a disaster wheel – spin the wheel and talk about how that particular disaster could be handled and who does what in the absence of a manager or critical employee.

Planning sets the foundations for a resilient business which is able to recover from adversity.

## Managing the hidden challenges to pork production

Queensland Pig Consultancy Group

The Australian Pork Industry will face a number of economic, environmental and social challenges over the next decade with the latter playing an increasingly important role. Social concerns include those related to animal welfare, work health and safety, social responsibility and human resource management. To provide producers with

an opportunity to evaluate these challenges, the Queensland Pig Consultancy Group (QPCG) and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) with support from Australian Pork Limited (APL) invite you to this day.

When: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019, 10am to 4pm

Where: Toowoomba Golf Club, Middle Ridge, 235-323 Rowbotham Street Toowoomba, Queensland

RSVP at this link [QPCG industry day](#) by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019

Or to Sara Willis

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Program:

- 09.45 Registration and morning tea
- 10.30 Welcome by Sara Willis QPCG
- 10.35 Introducing Margo Andrae, CEO, Australian Pork Limited.
- 10.40 Playing it safe with Shane Webcke – Queensland safety Ambassador, Workcover Qld
- 11.20 Serious about farm safety with Jodie Lucas and Bill Lewis, Office of Industrial Relations and Heather Channon, Australian Pork Limited
- 12.20 Building trust – Telling the pork producer's story with Greg Mills, GoAhead Business Solutions
- 12.45 Lunch
- 1.30 Animal welfare – a producer's perspective with Paul Maguire, Glasshouse Country Farms
- 1.55 Earning the Right to Farm with John Coward, President Pork Qld Inc
- 2.20 African Swine Fever Update –with Dr Regina Fogarty, Rivalea
- 2.50 Update on training programs for the pork industry with Kylie Lee, TAFE Queensland
- 3.15 Update on anti-dumping process with Andrew Robertson APL
- 3.30 Afternoon tea and close





## Australian Pork Young Leaders (APYL)

Sara Willis

Twenty-five young people from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory representing a range of interests in the pork industry met in Toowoomba on Thursday 4 July.

The purpose of the meeting was to progress the Australian Pork Young Leaders (APYL) networking group for young people across the pork production and servicing sectors. Clark Forbes, PIC Australia was host for the day.

The key topic of the meeting was risk management presented by Cam Nicholson, Nicon Rural Services.

The areas he covered included:

1. Getting a good grasp on what risk is and what we need if we are to analyse it:
  - a. what are the key risk variables in the operation
  - b. What are the odds of these risks occurring and what is their impact if they do occur
2. Examining the risk within a business with a focus on price and input costs
3. What influences a decision
4. Developing a decision matrix for making critical decisions

The meeting was also addressed by four members of the APYL group explaining their roles in their businesses or organisations, their reasons for entering the industry, and their ambitions. The presenters were:

- Elsie Dodd, Formulating officer, BEC Feed Solutions
- Zelda Nel, Production Manager – SunPork Farms Tong Park
- Locksley Bishop, Operations Manager, Sunnynook Farms
- Chris Stevenson, General Manager, Collins Wholesale Meats QLD

A survey was sent to members a week after the meeting to get their feedback on the value of the day. Fifty nine percent indicated the day was extremely useful and 41% very useful.

When asked if they had made or planned a change as a result of the day, 14% indicated they had made a change and 68% planned to make a change. The major change both implemented and

planned was the development of a decision matrix. A decision matrix combines the elements of what makes a good decision – past experience, values, intuition, the scientific evidence and risk. It helps focus on the critical factors and also documents what you have considered in coming to a decision, making it available for others to follow. This can be particularly useful when explaining decisions to others - between generations, managers and workers or with advisors and banks.

Figure 2: Zelda Nel, Production Manager – SunPork Farms Tong Park giving her presentation



Source: Sara Willis

When asked about the value of APYL to them and their businesses, some of the responses were:

*APYL provides access to knowledge and information on topics that greatly beneficial to pig production but not always readily available to the industry.*

*APYL has given me a platform from which to draw inspiration and motivation in my professional life through networking and development activities with like-minded individuals.*

*An invaluable opportunity for professional development with the up and coming of the Australian pig industry, with young representatives from all aspects and companies surrounding pig production and agriculture.*

*The APYL group has such a great environment, all members are really open and honest which leads to some great discussions that are very relevant to my piggery business.*

*The APYL group has a strong focus on what will be important to people in the pig industry in both the short-term and long-term future. This is very valuable for those who are just beginning their career in the industry.*

*I find the APYL meetings a great opportunity to continue to develop my own skills and industry knowledge, as well as being a great way to network with industry members that are a similar age.*

*Has enabled myself to form a wider network of people involved in the industry and given me ideas and actions I can implement in our business.*

*APYL has been a great platform to network with like-minded people and learn some great topics along the way.*

For more information on the group, please contact one of the Steering Committee:

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