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NATIONAL Poultry NEWSPAPER

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Many networking and poultry discussions were had.



VIV Asia is a key platform to connect with professionals across the poultry value chain.

Poultry Hub Australia visits VIV Asia 2025

ATTENDING VIV Asia 2025 in Bangkok was an incredible opportunity to engage with industry leaders, researchers and Poultry Hub Australia members, while gaining insights into the latest innovations shaping the poultry sector.

I was excited to be part of one of the largest and most comprehensive international events dedicated to animal husbandry, feed and food production.

Held at the IMPACT Exhibition and Convention Centre from March 12-14, VIV Asia continues to be a key platform for connecting with professionals across the poultry value chain.

With thousands of exhibitors and attendees from across the world, the event provided an excellent setting to discuss emerging challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

A significant highlight of my visit was the opportunity to network with existing and potential partners.

Poultry Hub Australia has always prioritised collaboration, and catching up with



by TAMSYN CROWLEY
Director



our members at VIV Asia reinforced the importance of working together to advance poultry science and production.

Conversations covered a wide range of topics, from sustainability and biosecurity to feed efficiency and technological advancements.

It was inspiring to see firsthand the level of innovation being applied to improve poultry production globally.

Beyond the formal sessions and exhibits, the event provided a valuable platform to reconnect with colleagues and exchange ideas in a more informal setting.

Discussions over coffee and shared meals often led to some of the most productive conversations, sparking new ideas for research col-

laborations and industry initiatives.

These interactions are a reminder of the strength of the global poultry community and how essential it is to maintain strong relationships across countries and sectors.

VIV Asia also showcased cutting-edge developments in automation, alternative feed ingredients and disease management strategies.

As we continue to navigate a rapidly evolving industry, it was beneficial to explore how these innovations can be adapted to benefit Australian poultry production.

Bringing these insights back will help inform our work at Poultry Hub Australia, as we strive to support the sector through research,

education and outreach. Additionally, VIV Asia provided a fantastic opportunity to showcase our new master's course in poultry nutrition.

With growing global interest in advanced education and research in poultry science, it was great to highlight how this course will equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to drive innovation and sustainability in poultry nutrition.

Engaging with industry professionals and academic partners at the event helped reinforce the relevance and impact of this initiative.

Attending VIV Asia reaffirmed the importance of international engagement and staying connected with global advancements.

Poultry Hub Australia remains committed to fostering collaboration and ensuring that our sector remains at the forefront of innovation.

I look forward to continuing these conversations and applying what I've learned to strengthen our research and industry partnerships in the months ahead.



Catching up with colleagues at VIV was great.



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Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

2025

MAY 17 – Rare Poultry Breeders Association annual show, Maitland Showground NSW, showsecretary@rarepoultrybreedersassociation.com

MAY 14-16 – VIV Turkey, Istanbul, Turkey. www.vivturkey.com

JUN 14 – Hamburg Club of NSW annual show, Mudgee Showground NSW, hamburgclubnsw@gmail.com or 0408 616 805

JUN 23-26 – 24th European Symposium on Poultry Nutrition, Maastricht, Netherlands. www.espn2025.eu

JUN 24-26 – 11th International Symposium on Avian Influenza, Newfoundland, Canada. harlowagency.swoogo.com/isai2025/6355095

AUG 18-22 – 15th International Seminar on Poultry Pathology and Production, Georgia USA.

SEP 14-17 – 20th European Symposium on the Quality of Eggs and Egg Products and the 26th European Symposium on the Quality of Poultry Meat, Zadar, Croatia. eggmeat2025.com

OCT 6-10 – 23rd WVPA Congress Kuching, Malaysia. www.wvpac2025.com

How to supply event details:

Send all details to National Poultry Newspaper, PO Box 162, Wynnum Qld 4178, call 0450 672 553 or email design@collins.media

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The ABARES Outlook 2025 conference reflected the key priorities of the poultry industry. Photo: DAFF

ABARES Outlook 2025 key takeaways for Australia's chicken meat sector

FOOD security and biosecurity were the standout topics at this year's Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences Outlook conference, reflecting the key priorities of the poultry industry as we continue to address the challenges posed by avian influenza and track towards a near-record year for poultry exports.

About the conference

This year's event recognised an important milestone for ABARES, with the organisation entering its eightieth year providing valuable agricultural statistics and data.

The 2025 conference brought together policymakers, industry leaders, media and government officials to explore the latest agricultural forecasts, insights and trends.

The conference provided a valuable platform for engaging with Australia's leading policy and industry experts on the outlook of Australian agriculture, a sector that feeds 75 million people globally and contributes approximately \$187 billion to the global economy.

While there was limited direct focus on poultry, the broad themes of the conference were well aligned with our industry's goals.

The Australian Chicken Meat Federation is pleased to share with this publication's

readers some of the core statistics that will help shape our policy perspective and agenda for the year ahead.

Poultry headed for record export volume

The gross value of Australian livestock is expected to reach \$4.3 billion in 2025-26, the highest on record.

Panellists attributed this success to high demand and increased processor capacity, spearheaded by technological innovation.

A downturn in fuel and fodder prices provided significant relief to farm incomes, balancing the impact of expected rises in the costs of fertiliser, chemicals and labour.

Overall, Australia continues to be a global leader in producing 'lean and clean' protein, with the poultry industry poised for near-record export volumes in 2025-25 – the second highest on record – driven by strong international demand and competitive production practices.

ABARES Snapshot of Australian Agriculture 2025 found that nominal poultry prices were forecast to remain relatively stable in 2024-25 at a high 272 cents per kilogram, as rising demand broadly offsets expected higher production costs.

As the domestic chicken meat industry has been relatively unaffected by the recent avian influenza outbreak, production volumes are predicted to increase, particularly

as consumers swap out red meat for chicken meat – a lean and low-cost protein.

We were pleased to see chicken meat so well positioned for the year ahead and look forward to working with industry to sustainably and securely meet this rising demand.

Improving ABARES data collection

ACMF was pleased to learn of ABARES' innovative approach to gathering agricultural statistics to reduce administrative burden on farmers and improve statistical accuracy.

Deputy Australian statistician Brenton Goldsworthy of the ABS provided an in-depth discussion on these new data collection methods.

The updated methods include automated processes to amend incorrect data metric unit inputs and detect abnormalities in farm surveys, ensuring accuracy.

Satellite imagery was also being utilised to validate production area data, and partnerships are already underway with third-party farm software providers to collect administrative data, particularly from small businesses that may face obstacles in accurately inputting data in a timely manner.

Panellists noted that if we were to produce 70 percent more food by 2100, which will be required to accommodate a 40 percent increase in population,

our future planning needs to be supported by an effective and accurate data aggregator that can generate valuable new insights.

Modernising the Australian Bureau of Statistics has been a project that ACMF has proudly supported over the past two years and we are delighted with the successful outcomes in enhancing data accuracy and streamlining the processes in which this data is collected and aggregated.

Harnessing our reputation and social licence

Day two of the conference featured a series of concurrent sessions on industry hot topics, including sustainability, workforce development and climate resilience.

It was fascinating to observe how these critical topics intertwined, offering a holistic perspective on sector-wide challenges and demonstrating how addressing issues in one area can lead to solutions in others.

The session on balancing social licence, sustainability and productivity for long-term success was particularly interesting, with a focus on consumer trust and perception in contributing to social licence, and the need to balance profitability and sustainability within agricultural practices.

Interestingly, it was noted that consumer expectations often differ from community

expectations, with social and economic factors intersecting at the point of purchase.

Aligning community and consumer values with production practices can be challenging but is necessary in order to evolve production practices alongside changing needs and expectations.

Workforce focus

We were pleased to see workforce development and the sustainability of farm talent as key session topics.

One of the primary takeaways from these discussions was the vast array of opportunities within the industry, contrasted by the overarching issue of lack of brand awareness and misconceptions about industry careers.

These sentiments were echoed across all sectors and have been highlighted in the chicken meat industry workforce strategy, in which attraction and retention remain at the core of our workforce development efforts.

Jen Galloways of AgriFutures presented a study conducted in partnership with the University of Melbourne on best practices in people management on farms and perceptions of farm work.

Through 160 interviews and surveys with producers across Australia, common priorities emerged in the context of supporting workforce retention within the industry.

continued P4

Mycotoxin news from dsm-firmenich

Deactivate Mycotoxins Activate Performance



Powered by science to actively defend against multiple mycotoxins*

Get to know the mycotoxin DON

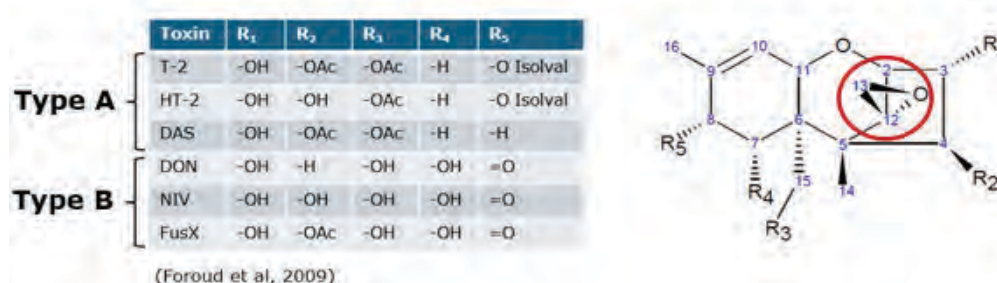
As reported in a previous article in National Poultry, results from the long running dsm-firmenich Global Mycotoxin Survey consistently identified that the three major mycotoxins of economic importance in poultry feedstuffs in Australia are deoxynivalenol (DON), fumonisins (FUM) and zearalenone, with aflatoxin and ergot alkaloids making regular appearances. Looking into data for the last three years, fumonisins were the most frequently detected mycotoxin class (71% of samples had FUM) with DON being detected in 34% of samples with an average contamination level of 554 ppb, which is deemed to be a significant risk for all poultry.

Deoxynivalenol (also known as vomitoxin) is commonly found in grains, by-products and litter materials. In simple terms, DON affects how proteins in the body are synthesised. There are many proteins in the body which have a high turnover rate (that is they are constantly been made and broken down and re-made as part of their functionality). Proteins with a high turnover rate are particularly affected by DON and these include the gut wall lining and the array of immunoglobulins and other proteins involved in immunity and health. The effects of DON are typically seen as reduced feed intake and nutrient absorption (and therefore variability in growth rate and egg production) and depressed immunity. Depressed immunity in combination with the effects of DON on the gut wall are known to make birds more susceptible to diseases and can lead to an increased risk of necrotic enteritis and coccidiosis.

Deoxynivalenol is one mycotoxin in a larger family of substances called trichothecenes.

There are over 400 different trichothecenes identified to date. Chemically speaking, the trichothecenes have a sesquiterpenoid structure and all contain an epoxy ring at the Carbon 12 position (red circle in Figure 1). Figure 1 below indicates how the attachment of different compounds at different positions in the molecule gives rise to this large number of trichothecene variants. Furthermore, in nature, to protect the plant from the effects of the mycotoxin, the plant will often conjugate (join) a sugar molecule to the mycotoxin. These new structures are called masked mycotoxins, such as DON-3-glucoside, and are not routinely detected by rapid tests such as ELIZA or HPLC. In the bird however, the glucose molecule is cleaved from the masked mycotoxin and the resulting DON is returned to its toxic form.

Figure 1: Characteristics of different trichothecenes



With so many different chemical forms of trichothecenes it is extremely difficult for simple binders to successfully adsorb all the trichothecenes. While the epoxy ring imparts the toxicity of DON to birds, the ring is also the target of the irreversible, deactivation strategy of the EFSA authorised BBSH® enzymes contained in Mycofix® Select and Plus. Consequently, one ingredient will give wide ranging protection against all the trichothecenes.

For more information on the Mycotoxin Survey results, mode of action of the ingredients in the Mycofix® range and how you can mitigate the effects of mycotoxins in your flock please see below contact details.

How does the Mycofix® product line work?



Adsorption

The mineral adsorbent selectively binds adsorbable mycotoxins and endotoxins



Biotransformation

The combination of patented enzymes and biological components converts mycotoxins into non-toxic metabolites



Bioprotection

The plant and algal extracts support the liver, immune system and gut integrity

Contact Us
casey.van-der-berg@dsm-firmenich.com or 0488 144 194
emma.bradbury@dsm-firmenich.com or 0487 268 869

dsm-firmenich

For more information on Mycofix Solutions scan here



ABARES Outlook 2025 key takeaways

from P2

Survey results highlighting the overarching importance of effective people management and engaging in key strategies include investing in training and development and maintaining a positive workplace culture to support retention.

The path to net zero

ABARES' closing session on sustainable productivity and net zero addressed the significant challenge faced by Australia's agricultural sector in achieving 'more with less'.

Panellists noted that while the focus on emissions reduction had primarily been on defining and meeting targets, current productivity measures do not necessarily incorporate meeting sustainability

goals as core success factor.

The proposal to introduce emissions-adjusted productivity, a new methodology for producers, aims to enable the industry to observe farm productivity improvements through a sustainability lens.

It was encouraging to see sustainability commitments being considered at all levels of production and through the perspective of profitability and positive growth.

Implementing a mechanism to view emissions reduction as a means to achieving productivity goals will be a crucial aspect of an operator's social license and will help guide emissions-reducing practices by linking it to economic success.

As our industry's

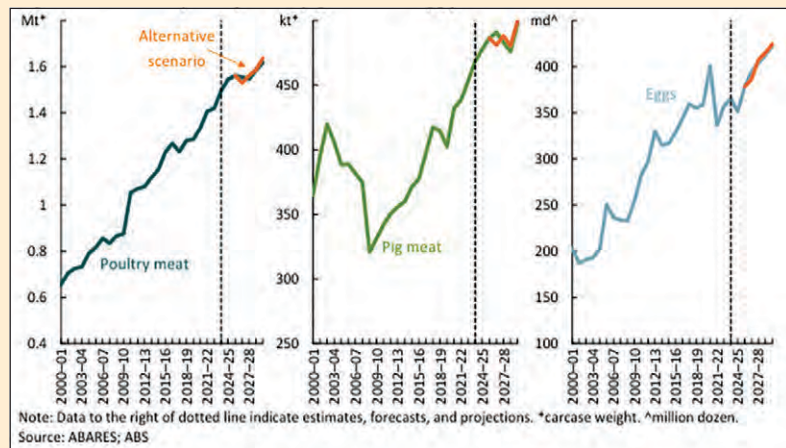
sustainability framework is a dynamic document committed to continuous improvement, we are excited to hear about new methods for measuring sustainability and productivity, in support of a low-emissions future.

Overall, we are optimistic about the outlook for our sector in the coming years.

The ABARES Outlook conference was invaluable in offering data-driven insights into the industry's future direction.

We are pleased with the value of these informed discussions among panellists, which have provided us with a series of actionable solutions to enhance our sector's resilience and capacity to meet future demand.

ACMF



Annual poultry meat, pig meat and egg production. Source: ABARES Outlook 2025



Chickens for the table come in all sorts of sizes and colours.

Dual purpose chicken choices

GROWING or producing your own food in your own backyard or hobby farm has become increasingly popular in recent years.

After living through a pandemic and struggling with high grocery prices – particularly rising costs for poultry and eggs – many people are ready to make the change from shop to home.

Despite the obvious ongoing and serious threat of bird flu, many consider poultry a great place to start when raising their own livestock.

There are many things to love about choosing poultry.

Aside from their small size – compared to pigs or sheep, for exam-

ple – they can produce both eggs and meat and are often allowed in residential areas where larger animals are not welcome.

However, starting a journey in keeping poultry can still be a little overwhelming, with plenty of choices and a lot to unpack and learn.

Chickens don't have excessively large space requirements, making a small to medium-sized flock – perhaps up to a dozen birds – perfect for beginners.

While chickens may not come to mind when you think of animal intelligence, multiple studies show they benefit from being able to perform natural behaviours outdoors.

Having noted this, and recognising the looming threat posed by wild birds introducing bird flu, perhaps consider providing overhead protection – that is, a solid roof that will prohibit unwanted foreign faeces entering your chook pen.

If new to keeping



Cant
Comment
by BRENDON CANT

poultry, you may benefit from purchasing adult birds to start your flock because raising chicks can be complicated.

While there are many breeds to choose from, here are three hardy and easy to keep breeds suitable for newcomers to keeping chickens.

And they are breeds I've kept in the past and like.

Rhode Island Reds

Rhode Island Reds are a handsome dual-purpose breed, producing quality meat, with hens laying up to 300 eggs a year.

Originating from Rhode Island and Massachusetts in the US in the 1840s, this breed has been popular for so long for good reason – they are also Rhode Island's state bird.

They are a hardy breed with a lifespan of five to eight years.

And they will thrive even in cold environments, where other chickens won't fare well.

Orpingtons

Orpingtons are a com-

mon variety originating from Orpington, England.

They exist in full size and bantam varieties, weighing approximately 3-4.5kg (hens ~3.5kg, roosters ~4.5kg) and 0.7-1.5kg (hens ~0.8kg, roosters ~1.1kg) respectively.

They were originally bred as dual-purpose birds.

In addition to being good table birds, Orpingtons can lay 200-250 medium-large light-brown eggs.

Australorps

Australorps are an Australian breed of utility chicken.

They derive from the British Black Orpington and were selectively bred for egg-laying performance, with some hens laying more than 300 eggs a year.

They are beautiful sleek black birds with pinkish-red combs

No matter what poultry you choose, try starting with a limited flock size rather than the maximum number of birds you can house on your property.

If you choose a more complicated breed, that's not necessarily setting yourself up for failure, yet be sure you've thoughtfully factored in things such as shelter, food and care for your birds, so you're ready to enjoy them and reap the benefits of their generous production.



Eggs for the table come from chickens of all sorts of colours and varieties.

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Banning all food items at Aussie customs to protect agriculture

FOOD for thought... will there be a time when food is no longer permitted to be brought into Australia by travellers through customs?

Like me, many of you will have watched an episode of *Border Security* on television.

I always pay strict attention to the number of people who try to bring eggs in from overseas.

Years ago, century eggs were unable to be purchased in Australia, yet now you can buy them at most Asian stores.

Australia is very careful about food imports because of the risk of pests, diseases and invasive species that could harm our agriculture, wildlife and ecosystems.

The Australian Border Force and the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry inspect food at the border and undeclared items can result in heavy fines and penalties.

Is it time for our Federal Government to rethink why people should be permitted to bring food into Australia given the increasing risk of disease?

Domestically, within our own country, we have rules about the disposal of certain food products at some state borders.

- NSW prohibits the entry of banana fruit and plant material from areas affected by banana freckle disease
- Victoria is a designated phylloxera exclusion zone – transporting grapevines, cuttings or soil from vineyards into Victoria is prohibited, unless accompanied by appropriate certification
- In Western Austral-



biosecurity and customs officers.

It would also allow passengers at arrivals to move more seamlessly through the entry system.

More time could be spent by our officers focussing on the three Ds – drugs, dirt and dumping.

For the farming sector, if food and plant matter was no longer a concern, the priority would be inspecting shoes and saddles that had been on a farm overseas and may contain dirt, requiring fumigation.

Of course, there will always be those who try to smuggle food and plant matter in.

However, once the message is out that we no longer accept any food and plant material through customs, over a few years knowledge transfer will occur and people will stop packing it in their luggage.

ia, specific zones have been established to control pests such as the Queensland fruit fly, and movement of host fruits including grapes into these areas is regulated.

Surely, we should take a renewed look at the need for food being brought into Australia by travellers.

Years ago, when my parents-in-law immigrated to Australia, it was very difficult to buy particular food ingredients for cooking the dishes from their home country.

This is no longer the case, as international

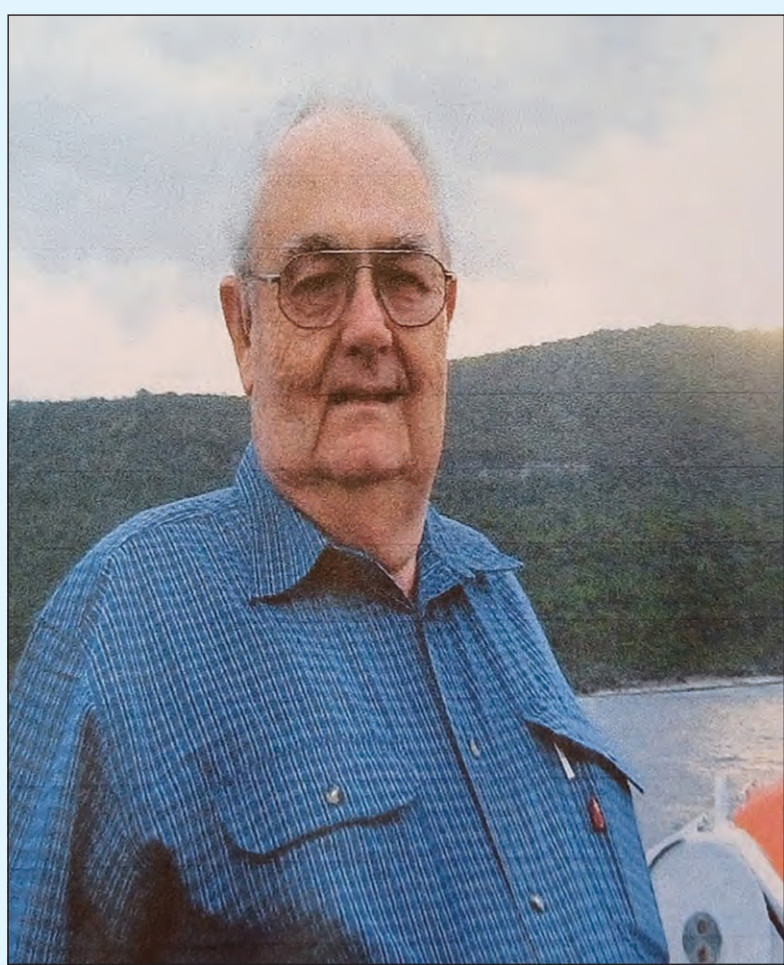
ingredients are now easily available here.

I am in a rural area and, if I cannot purchase a particular product because it is not stocked locally, I can easily buy it domestically online.

Many overseas travellers want to bring food as gifts for family or friends, but does the risk outweigh the benefit?

Our costs could be reduced if food and plant products were no longer permissible through customs.

This could save money in inspection costs and save time for busy



Queensland's poultry industry honours John Phillips of Joalma Poultry Farm.

Vale John Phillips 1936-2025

THE Phillips family are long standing members of the Cairns community.

John Phillips' parents arrived in the area in 1929, after having migrated from England via the West Indies, their first port of call on their migration route to Australia.

John's father Alan conducted a small business delivering ice and milk in the Cairns area and was approached by customers to deliver eggs.

Alan established a small flock to satisfy customer needs – this was the founding flock of what was to become known as Joalma Poultry Farm.

John was a second-generation owner/manager at Joalma. As a young man

in the early 1950s, he attended Queensland's Gatton College.

After completing his studies at Gatton, John returned to Cairns and spent a lifetime developing the poultry farm.

Joalma saw a number of developments under his management, including the establishment of a hatchery, meat chicken enterprise, poultry processing plant and layer farm.

At the peak of its hatchery operation, Joalma carried 10,000 layer breeders and 10,000 broiler breeders.

There were two layer farms, one housing about 4000 layers and the second around 30,000 birds.

As the result of intense competition from large-scale chicken meat op-

erations in southern Australia, John took the decision to withdraw from broiler production.

He continued to hatch layer chickens for his own flock needs and for other egg producers throughout northern Queensland.

Today Joalma is managed by Peter, a third-generation member of the Phillips family.

John Phillips is survived by his wife Jan, sons Peter and Chris and daughter Debby.

John and Jan have four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Compiled in consultation with the Phillips family by Bernie Davis and Ray Byrnes, former poultry industry colleagues of John Phillips.



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The EchoStorm 80 Series pump in situ, one of the best decisions Fletcher International Exports has made.

Smart pump solution transforms abattoir wastewater management

FLETCHER International Exports stands as one of Australia's most integrated processors and exporters of lamb and sheep meat products.

This private family-owned enterprise operates two state-of-the-art facilities, one in Dubbo NSW and the other near Albany in Western Australia.

Together these plants process over 90,000 sheep and lambs each week, more than 4.5 million annually.

Guided by a philosophy of maximum resource utilisation, Fletcher International not only produces lamb and sheep meat but also a wide array of premium by-products, including wool and sheep skins.

Their commitment to efficiency extends to every facet of their operations, including wastewater management – a critical yet often overlooked aspect of abattoir operations.

A revolutionary approach to wastewater management

For Alan, a seasoned operator in the abattoir industry, finding the perfect balance of safety, reliability and efficiency in wastewater management was a priority.

His solution? Pairing Gorman-Rupp self-priming pumps with Venturi-Aerators, a transformative decision that redefined his operations.

Safety redefined
One of the stand-out features of Alan's setup is its unparalleled focus on operator safety.

The Gorman-Rupp 86B3 self-priming pump securely mounted on the lagoon bank eliminates the need for workers to enter or operate directly on the water.

This design ensures safe and straightforward access for maintenance, a critical advantage in high-risk environments such as wastewater lagoons.

Reliable performance, minimal maintenance

When discussing the maintenance the system

has required with Hydro Innovations Western Australia regional manager Heath McAvaney, Alan said the amount of time saved on maintenance since installation made the purchase of the system "one of the best decisions" the business had made.

The system has proven remarkably reliable, with only minor belt issues, and the belts were supplied by a third party.

Beyond that, the setup has required minimal upkeep, a rarity in the demanding world of wastewater management.

Enhanced aeration for better compliance

The Venturi-Aerator complements the system by injecting oxygen-rich water back into the lagoon.

This innovative process enhances the aerobic treatment of wastewater, improving its quality and ensuring compliance with stringent environmental standards.

Practicality in design

Practicality is at the heart of this system.

Positioned conveniently at the lagoon's edge, it allows for safe and efficient maintenance without unnecessary complications.

For Alan, who prioritised safety and efficiency from the outset, this design feature has been invaluable.

A smart investment in long-term success

In industries where downtime and inefficiency translate to significant costs, Alan's experience is a compelling testament to the value of smart dependable solutions.

His investment in Gorman-Rupp pumps and Venturi-Aerators has delivered exceptional performance, peace of mind and long-term savings.

For wastewater operators seeking effective solutions, Alan's story underscores a vital lesson – choosing the right equipment is more than a purchase, it's a strategic investment in safety, reliability and

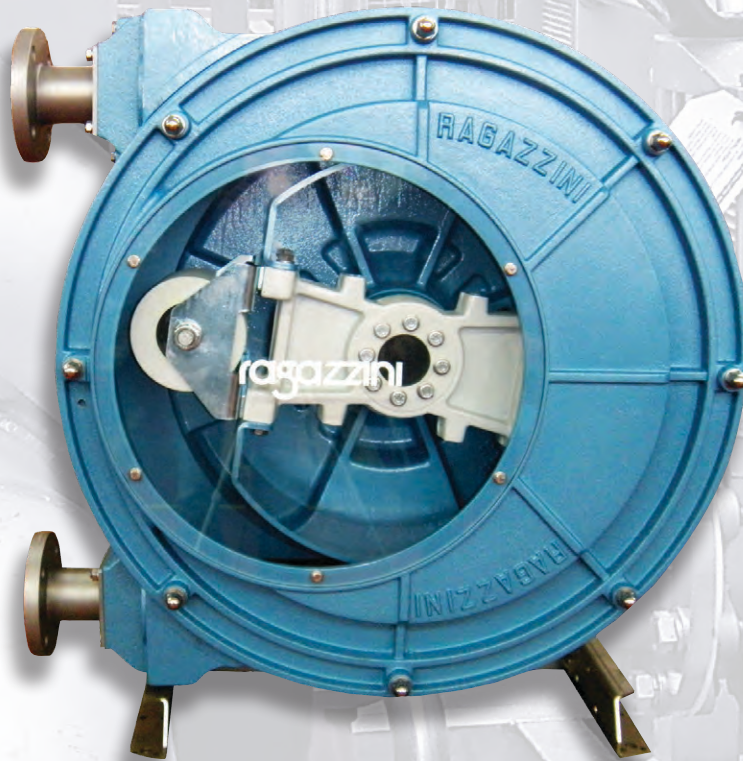
operational success.

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US pork and poultry exports to China extended

PORK and poultry facilities in the hundreds in the US have had their export licences to China extended in a last-minute update by Chinese customs, but approvals for beef exporters remain uncertain.

Export registrations for a myriad of US meat plants – granted under the 2020 Phase 1 trade deal – were set to expire on March 16, putting billions of dollars' worth of trade at risk.

The first sign of positive news emerged recently when China updated registrations for 71 US poultry operations that had previously lost their export agreements on February 19.

Then the registration status for pork and

poultry plants across the US, including major producers such as Smithfield Packaged Meats, was updated to show eligibility through to 2030.

In a statement, the National Pork Producers Council confirmed that more than 300 US pork facilities “have been renewed to export to China for five years.”

National Pork Producers Council chief executive officer Bryan Humphreys said: “US pork producers now have maintained access and increased certainty to export their products to the 1.4-billion-person Chinese market.”

However, US beef exporters are still waiting for their licences to be renewed.

Joe Schuele from the US Meat Export Federation said they were hoping for similar news soon.

“We’re pleased to see progress on the pork facilities and hoping for similar news on beef as soon as possible,” Mr Schuele said.

Global Agritrends analyst Simon Quilty suggested that approvals for beef exports could be rolled out in stages.

“China is in control of its own destiny and it could well be a staggered approach to plants over the next three or four months,” Mr Quilty said.

“I don’t think anything is a given ... and China will choose at their own time and what suits them best to have certain plants

come back in.” The US exported 170,000 tonnes of beef to China last year, and any disruption to that trade could create additional demand for Australian grain-fed beef in the Chinese market.

The US Department of Agriculture had previously raised concerns about export licences lapsing and a “lack of response” from Chinese customs.

The department has yet to comment on the latest round of extensions.

Australia’s red meat sector is monitoring the situation, particularly as US president Donald Trump considers introducing tariffs on Australian beef and lamb exports on April 2.

Registration status for pork and poultry plants across the US was updated to show eligibility through to 2030. Photo: Karolina Grabowska



US turns to Turkey and South Korea for eggs after being rejected by Poland, Finland and Denmark

THE US faces a sharp increase in egg prices due to the severe bird flu outbreak that has devastated poultry flocks.

In response, the Trump administration has decided to import millions of eggs from Turkey and South Korea in an effort to ease the financial strain on American households as egg prices remain at record highs.

Egg prices in the US surged by over 65 percent in 2024 and are expected to rise another 41 percent in 2025.

The primary cause is a disastrous outbreak of avian influenza H5N1 that began in 2022, leading to the deaths of more than 156 million birds across the country.

The significant loss of poultry, particularly egg-laying hens, has resulted in a supply shortage that continues to push prices higher.

Earlier this year, US embassies approached Poland, Finland and Denmark for egg exports.

However, these nations declined the requests due to concerns about maintaining their own domestic supply and adhering to stringent European Union regulatory standards.

Poland’s National

Chamber of Poultry and Feed Producers confirmed that it was approached in February but ultimately decided against exporting eggs to the US.

With Poland, Finland and Denmark opting out, Turkey has stepped in to assist.

The Egg Producers Central Union in Turkey confirmed that the country will export approximately 15,000 tonnes of eggs to the US between February and July 2025.

These exports, valued at about \$41.65 million, will be shipped in roughly 700 containers, according to YUM-BIR officials.

This supply is expected to temporarily alleviate the shortage and provide some relief to American consumers.

For the first time in history, South Korea has also begun exporting eggs to the US.

In March 2025, a South Korean farm named Gyerim Farm in Asan shipped 20 tonnes of eggs – equivalent to 335,160 eggs – to Georgia.

This initiative was part of a broader plan to secure a stable supply of eggs while the US poultry industry recovers.

South Korea’s entry into the US egg market marks a significant step in diversify-

ing America’s import sources.

To address the ongoing egg price surge, the US Department of Agriculture has launched a \$1.6 billion plan aimed at mitigating the impact of bird flu and supporting egg producers.

This plan includes:

- \$A800.9 million allocated for biosecurity measures to protect poultry farms

- \$A160.18 million dedicated to vaccine research and development

- \$A640.72 million in financial relief for farmers who have suffered losses due to the outbreak.

Additionally, the USDA is offering best practices and consulting services to commercial egg farms at no cost.

It will also cover up to 75 percent of costs associated with improving farm security to prevent future outbreaks.

While egg supplies are gradually recovering, retail prices may take a few months to reflect these changes.

According to USDA officials, consumers might see noticeable price reductions by Easter 2025, as more eggs become available and the import strategy takes full effect.

However, the lag between wholesale and

retail price adjustments means that immediate relief at the checkout may take time.

The USDA is taking proactive steps to prevent future crises by strengthening biosecurity protocols and advancing vaccine research.

These measures aim to protect US poultry flocks against future avian influenza outbreaks.

Additionally, partnerships with countries such as Turkey and South Korea could serve as long-term solutions to diversify supply sources and shield the US egg market from future disruptions.

With millions of eggs expected to arrive from Turkey and South Korea over the coming months, the US hopes to stabilise egg prices and ease the burden on consumers.

The Trump administration’s decision to secure international egg supplies, alongside ongoing domestic efforts to bolster the poultry industry, reflects a comprehensive strategy to address this unprecedented crisis.

While full price relief may take time, these actions are a crucial step toward restoring normalcy in the US egg market.



The Trump administration’s secures international egg supplies to address the unprecedented bird flu crisis.



Inghams recently launched its Marion Bay carbon neutral chicken products.

Inghams launches its first carbon neutral chicken products in Tassie

INGHAMS announced a historic achievement for the Tasmanian poultry industry recently, with the launch of its Marion Bay carbon neutral chicken products, certified to the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Products and Services.

The certification has been supported by the Federal Government through an \$11 million grant, which has enabled Inghams to upgrade its poultry facilities to improve efficiency and water management across its Tasmanian operations.

The carbon neutral cer-

tification was achieved by measuring, reducing and offsetting emissions across the entire production process – from raw materials for chicken feed, through nurturing animals, transportation and processing to delivery to retail shelves.

Inghams chief customer officer Mark Powell said, “This landmark certification represents our ongoing commitment to high quality products and positions Inghams as a leader in environmentally responsible food production.”

“Marion Bay products will now be recognised for both high animal

welfare through their RSPCA Approved certification and also for their reduced carbon footprint.”

For emissions that couldn't be eliminated, Inghams has invested in certified carbon offset projects both in Australia and internationally, including the ‘Australian forests for a cleaner climate’ project in Tasmania, which sequesters carbon by converting existing short rotation plantation forests to long rotation plantation forests.

This certification of Inghams’ Marion Bay carbon neutral chicken

products aligns with Inghams 2030 sustainability leadership roadmap goals, which are focused on climate action and planetary health, demonstrating the company’s continuing commitment to sustainability in the poultry industry.

The launch was commemorated with a tree planting ceremony at the Sorell processing facility – led by Inghams’ site operations manager Michelle Earley, in collaboration with the Sorell Landcare group – symbolising the company’s ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability.

AMIC announces Tim Ryan as CEO

THE Australian Meat Industry Council recently announced the appointment of Tim Ryan as its new chief executive officer.

Tim joined AMIC in 2022 and has played a pivotal role in advocating on behalf of members.

With an extensive background in the red meat industry, he has been instrumental in addressing some of the most critical issues facing the meat industry across all sectors, including changes to animal welfare standards, advocating for retail member interests in competition inquiries, and pushing back on scope creep of dietary guidelines.

AMIC chair Tom Maguire said, “On behalf of the board, we are proud to appoint Tim as CEO of AMIC.”

“He brings a deep understanding of our industry and a clear vision for its future.

“More importantly, he has the ability to unite the entire post-farmgate meat sector – an industry with \$41 billion in turnover and directly employing 64,000 jobs

– under the AMIC banner,” Mr Maguire said.

“His leadership will be instrumental as we continue to advocate for our members and strengthen the industry’s position both locally and globally.”

Tim’s appointment follows an extensive recruitment process to identify a leader who could steer AMIC through an evolving regulatory landscape, changing consumer expectations, technological advancements and environmental considerations.

Reflecting on his new role, Tim said, “I am honoured to take on the role of CEO at AMIC and build on the organisation’s strong foundations.”

“The Australian meat industry is globally recognised for its quality, integrity and innovation, and I look forward to working

closely with all our members, stakeholders and government partners to drive sustainable growth and ensure a thriving future for our industry.”

With AMIC representing meat processors, retailers, small-goods manufacturers, wholesalers and exporters, Tim will focus on enhancing collaboration, strengthening advocacy efforts and delivering critical services that support members’ long-term success.

Mr Maguire said, “Tim takes on this role at a pivotal time for our industry.”

“With mounting challenges and opportunities ahead, his leadership will ensure AMIC continues to deliver value for members, while securing a strong sustainable future for Australia’s red meat industry.”



AMIC CEO Tim Ryan.

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Why humans kill animals – Part 4

■ Delving into and discussing the next three reasons

KILLING animals has been a ubiquitous human behaviour throughout history, yet it is becoming increasingly controversial and criticised in some parts of contemporary human society.

Over a multi-part series, researchers from around the globe review 10 primary reasons why humans kill animals, discuss the necessity or not of these forms of killing and describe the global ecological context for human killing of animals.

The article can be viewed in its entirety at sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969723039062

Humans historically and currently kill animals either directly or indirectly for the following reasons:

- Wild harvest or food acquisition
- Human health and safety
- Agriculture and aquaculture
- Urbanisation and industrialisation
- Invasive, overabundant or nuisance wildlife control
- Threatened species conservation
- Recreation, sport or entertainment
- Mercy or compassion
- Cultural and religious practice
- Research, education and testing.

The next three of those 10 reasons are discussed here.

6. Threatened species conservation

Killing one animal to save another more threatened or less abundant animal is largely an altruistic act, though humans might derive some aesthetic benefit from retaining only native species in a given location (see reason 5 in last month's issue).

Killing animals (either native or non-native) to protect threatened species is also common across continents.

Non-native examples include killing feral cats, brushtail possums or stoats to protect small mammals and ground-nesting birds in Australia and New Zealand, killing grey squirrels to protect red squirrels in Europe, killing camels to protect the water sources used by native animals in Australia, or killing rodents to protect seabirds or

endangered endemic rodents on oceanic islands.

Native examples include killing dingoes to protect rufous hare-wallabies in Australia, or killing barred owls to protect spotted owls in North America.

Many examples of this form of killing involve killing predators to alleviate their impacts on prey.

Additional examples include killing common herbivores to alleviate competition with threatened herbivores or killing herbivores to reduce their impacts on threatened plants.

Population control (that is, killing) of various carnivore and herbivore species is also required in smaller protected areas to ensure that overutilisation of resources (either plants or animals) by one or more species does not cause the death and decline of others.

This type of animal killing may be a necessary temporary solution when abundant vertebrates pose an immediate threat to the survival of a rare species, given that killing relatively few animals in the short term can reduce the overall numbers of animals killed in the long term.

However, the repeated killing of common animals to save endangered ones may produce several adverse outcomes, including the high cost of population control, ecosystem changes that favour increases of other harmful species, or increases of diseases harmful to the endangered species.

Habitat rehabilitation and restoration programs may be better solutions to problems caused by abundant native animal species because community and ecosystem degradation are the ultimate causal factors responsible for some species becoming rare and others becoming abundant.

These solutions are long-term, biologically sound and involve little direct human intervention into ecosystem processes.

Thus, humans do not need to kill animals to save other animals, but abstaining would knowingly magnify the number of individual animals killed and condemn entire

species to extinction in some cases.

7. Recreation, sport, entertainment

Recreational hunting and fishing, or killing animals for sport or entertainment, is a particularly contentious form of animal killing by humans.

This practice is also distinguished from other types of animal killing by its motivation.

For example, recreational hunting and fishing do not always result in consuming the animal, but when it does, this behaviour might be better classified as wild harvest (see reason 1).

Here, we define recreational killing as being purely for entertainment, sport or pleasure, including collecting trophies, achieving personal goals (for example, catching a large fish), facilitating gambling or keeping pet animals.

This type of animal killing by humans evolved out of necessity to acquire food and protect life or property (see reasons 1-4), and the behaviour further developed as a rite of passage, or a demonstration of personal skill or work ethic also associated with mate acquisition.

However, continued cultural evolution in many human societies has meant that recreational hunting is now undertaken as a largely symbolic gesture or pleasurable use of time.

Alternatively, recreational hunting might be interpreted as a righteously defiant – that is, defiant of moral arguments that discourage recreational hunting – ritual resembling animal sacrifice in the religious sphere (see also reason 9).

There are countless examples of recreational killing by humans – virtually any animal with horns, large teeth or tusks, attractive fur or feathers has been or is still hunted for sport.

High-profile examples include red fox hunting in England and lion hunting in southern Africa.

Lesser-known examples include live-baiting with rabbits to train greyhound dogs.

Many wild animals are also killed to feed the billions of pet animals (that is, cats and

dogs) kept by humans for pleasure.

For example, 13.5 percent of the total 39 million tonnes of wild-caught fish is used to support the pet food industry.

Cock, dog and bull fighting are other forms of recreational animal killing and, in the case of bull fighting, is also a legally protected cultural heritage activity (see reason 9).

Death of the animal is the intended goal or at least an unavoidable outcome of recreational killing in many cases (as an example, to acquire a trophy).

Yet some forms of such recreation do not require killing, including the catch-and-release practices common to anglers or the type of no-kill trophy hunting proposed by Cove.

These practices may cause some harm to animals, which might inadvertently die on occasion, but they do not necessarily demand animal killing.

Such non-consumptive activities still require skills used in recreational hunting, such as wildlife photography, bird watching or snow tracking, and might therefore be as personally rewarding as killing the animal in some cases.

Many forms of recreational killing may be avoidable.

However, without alternative revenue streams, cessation of these practices will indirectly result in the death of many animals, given that wildlife conservation efforts in many parts of the world are directly funded through recreational killing activities.

Recreational hunting may also contribute to wildlife conservation through the suppression of overabundant game species.

8. Mercy or compassion

Humans frequently kill animals out of mercy or for compassionate reasons.

For example, humans will often have a beloved pet dog or cat killed by a veterinarian (that is, euthanised) to avoid continued suffering when the pet becomes old or ill.

Various wildlife species injured in predation attempts, road collisions or other

● continued P11



The rufous hare-wallaby was pushed to the brink of extinction. Photo: Australian Wildlife Conservancy



Recreational hunting and fishing, or killing animals for sport or entertainment, is distinguished from other types of animal killing by its motivation. Photo: Aaron James



Humans frequently kill animals out of mercy or for compassionate reasons. Photo: Alexandre Debieve

Dr Mary Cole wins Victorian AgriFutures Rural Women's Award

THE winner of the 2025 Victorian AgriFutures Rural Women's Award was Dr Mary Cole recognising her pioneering work in biological farming and soil microbiology, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices for future generations.

Dr Cole accepted the award recently at a ceremony presented by Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and Agriculture Victoria Michaela Settle.

The AgriFutures Rural Women's Award, supported by platinum sponsor Westpac, is Australia's leading award in acknowledging and supporting the critical role women play in rural and regional businesses, industries and communities.

It is an opportunity to celebrate forward-thinking courageous leaders who represent some of the most vast and remote areas of Victoria.

Dr Cole received a \$15,000 grant from Westpac to further support her project as

well as the opportunity to undertake a professional development course of her choosing.

She will go on to represent Victoria at the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award gala dinner and national announcement in Canberra later in the year, where the national winner will be awarded an additional \$20,000 Westpac grant and the national runner up, an additional \$15,000.

An internationally recognised expert in mycology, plant pathology and soil microbiology, Dr Cole has dedicated her career to advocating for biological farming practices that regenerate soil health, reduce synthetic chemical use and improve the long-term sustainability of Australian agriculture.

"For more than 45 years, I have been working to promote biological farming methods that not only sustain the land but also ensure farmers remain financially viable for generations to come," Dr Cole said.

"Through education, research and on-farm

application, I have seen firsthand how prioritising soil health can transform agricultural productivity, reduce farmer input costs and protect the environment.

"This award will allow me to expand my work, reaching more farmers and communities with solutions that are cost-effective and regenerative."

AgriFutures Australia managing director John Harvey said Dr Cole's work exemplified the powerful contributions women were making in rural, regional and remote communities.

"The AgriFutures Rural Women's Award is a platform for women who are driving meaningful change and shaping the future of regional industries," Mr Harvey said.

"This award not only recognises their impact but also equips them with the support and leadership skills to continue building a stronger, more resilient regional Australia."

Westpac regional general manager central VIC/Gippsland regional and agribusi-

ness Mandy Hehir said, "Congratulations to Dr Mary Cole on being named the Victorian state winner of the 2025 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award."

"Dr Cole's commitment to sustainable agricultural practices through her work in biological farming and soil microbiology is outstanding and we are delighted to award her the Victorian title.

"Westpac is proud to be a long-term platinum sponsor of the award and champion women who are driving positive change in rural Australia.

"It is an honour to support these remarkable women who are helping to build a better future for our regions, and we look forward to celebrating them at the national award ceremony in September."



Michaela Settle with award winner Dr Mary Cole.

Why humans kill animals - Part 4

from P10

accidents are also euthanised to prevent the inevitable suffering and likely death that will occur if the animal is left, in the vain hope it will later recover.

Euthanasia may also be appropriate for wildlife casualties that are a danger to other animals or humans.

In some circumstances involving a flock, herd or group problem (that is, a disease outbreak), euthanasia of a small number of ill animals may also be required to provide a diagnosis, allowing appropriate treatment of the remainder of the flock, herd or group.

Healthy animals in zoos or fenced reserves might also be killed because they are surplus to requirements (for example, genetically similar individuals might lead to inbreeding and compromise breeding programs), or to prevent them from being killed by other animals or ecologi-

cal processes, given a lack of space to accommodate them (see also reason 6).

A variety of other, more nuanced reasons might further necessitate mercy killing, especially in veterinary care settings.

Unlike wild harvest (reason 1), agriculture (reason 3) or urbanisation (reason 4), where killing is unavoidable, compassionate killing or mercy killing is easily avoidable by 'doing nothing'.

Debilitated animals might even be kept intentionally alive with palliative care to facilitate the generation of induced pluripotent stem cells, which are useful for developing therapeutic applications for captive animals that suffer from degenerative diseases or for preserving the genomes of individuals for later use in genetic rescue efforts (see also reason 6).

However, suffering animals with a poor prognosis for survival are typically euthanised rather

than left to die more slowly because inaction causes preventable harm to animals, and failure to kill the animal can be a punishable breach of animal welfare law in some countries.

This interplay between animal ethics and animal welfare means that in cases of mercy killing, humans must choose to shorten suffering and kill the animal or avoid killing the animal and prolong suffering.

The moral acceptability of mercy or compassionate killing is grounded in the understanding that killing the animal results in less harm than allowing the animal to live – a 'good death' is seen as a more desirable alternative to a 'bad life' when a 'good life' is not possible.

Next month, Part 5 will cover the final two reasons as to why humans kill animals and why we can't avoid it.

Ben Allen
University of Southern Queensland

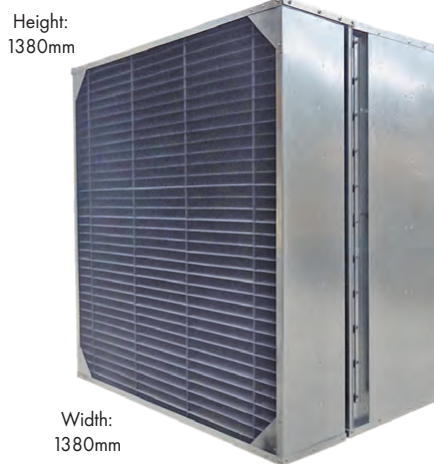


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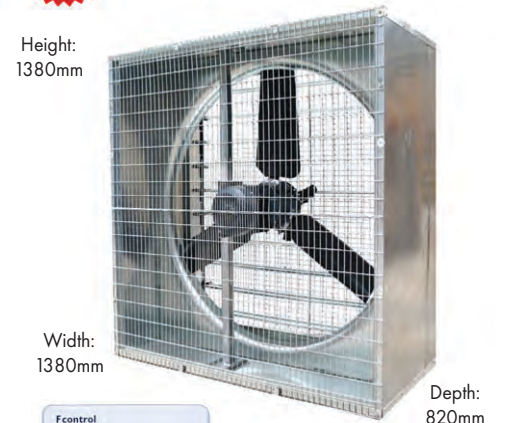
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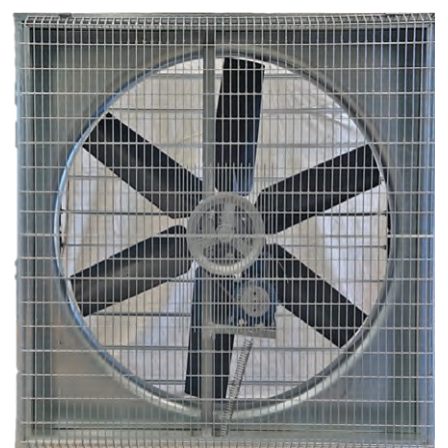
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For those who like to spice up their sausages with a bit of fancy flair, Perry's Quality Meats in Smithton, Tasmania is the spot, with its venison, jalapeno and feta creation winning gold.



The traditional beef sausage honour went to the team at The Corner Butcher in Morley, Perth for their juicy high-quality offering.



Marsh Butcheries in Stratford, Cairns won over the judges with its butter chicken and cashew snags.



South Nowra Premium Meats won the best continental sausage category for its pork, fennel, chili and garlic range.



For those after a traditional Australian pork sausage, the Butchers of Noosa on the Sunshine Coast is the place to go.



The best snags in the country have been named, with Australia's most talented butchers battling it out for the chance to be crowned the Sausage King.

Australia's best sausages named

THE best snags in Australia have been crowned, with the nation's top butchers battling it out for the prestigious 'Sausage King' title.

Hundreds of independent butchers from across the country competed in state competitions throughout 2024, submitting thousands of entries before the finalists met in Launceston in Tasmania for the ultimate showdown.

Entries were judged on raw and cooked presentation, texture, flavour and overall appeal across six categories – lamb, beef, poultry, pork, gourmet and continental.

Run by the Australian Meat Industry Council, the national competition weekend is the culmination of months of state-level events, including the Sausage King, Best Butchers Burger and Apprentice of the Year program.

The Sausage King competition in particular is a highlight on the butcher industry calendar, with passionate snag lovers eager to see if their local favourite has claimed a top spot.

AMIC general manager retail business Stuart Fuller said, "To have butchers from right across Australia, be it metro or regional, is great to see," describing the award as "most prestigious."

"This year's flavour combination varieties are again a testament to our members, who continue to serve customers across the country day in day out with an exceptional range, quality customer service and point of difference.

"We encourage all Australians to love their local butcher," Mr Fuller said.

Best traditional Australian beef sausage

Recognising the classic Aussie beef snag, this category honours simple but expertly crafted sausages.

The title went to The Corner Butcher in Morley in Perth, known for

its juicy high-quality offerings.

The store has built strong relationships with retail and wholesale customers across Western Australia and is renowned for offering fresh premium meat products.

"As an award-winning butcher, we take pride in delivering exceptional quality and service," a representative of The Corner Butcher said.

"We present an impressive selection of the finest meats, including stand-out gourmet offerings, alongside classic continental cuts and handcrafted smallgoods."

The butcher was also inducted into the AMIC Hall of Fame in 2020.

Best traditional Australian pork sausage

For those chasing a top-notch pork sausage, the Butchers of Noosa on the Sunshine Coast took home the title.

Famous for their preservative-free filler-free sausages, the team sources high-quality grass-fed and pasture-raised meat from sustainable farming partners Bangalow Sweet Pork and Vadals butcher supplies.

"We are so thrilled to receive first place," the team said.

"What a spectacular weekend – making new friends and connecting with the best.

"Tasmania, you are unreal."

Best poultry sausage

Introduced 20 years ago to reflect the growing demand for chicken sausages, this category featured a unique winner.

Marsh Butcheries in Stratford in Cairns impressed judges with their butter chicken and cashew sausages.

"We are so blessed and humbled to be crowned in national finals three times in five years," a spokesperson for Marsh Butcheries said.

"We believe our shop is up there with the best in the country and our business model is second to none – a tradi-

tional butchery with a modern twist.

"Thank you to all our wonderful customers who support us weekly and help us to grow continually."

Best lamb sausage

This category, introduced in 2009, celebrates the diversity of lamb sausages and their bold flavour variations.

The top honour went to Rollbusch Quality Meats in Waikerie, South Australia, for their Mexican lamb, jalapeno and cheddar sausage.

The team also secured third place in the continental category for their Italian sausage.

"Wow, what an incredible night with having only two entries in the competition and winning trophies for both," the team said.

"Thank you to everyone who continues to support us."

Best gourmet sausage

Encouraging creativity, this category allows butchers to experiment with new flavours.

Perry's Quality Meats in Smithton in Tasmania claimed victory with its venison, jalapeno and feta sausage.

"Well, what a night," the team wrote on its social media page.

"We have had the

AMIC national sausage competition in our home state of Tasmania and we finally got first place in Australia.

"Just made a fresh batch of our Australian award-winning sausages... come in and give them a try."

Best continental sausage

For lovers of dense flavour-packed sausages such as bratwurst and chorizo, the best continental sausage award went to South Nowra Premium Meats for their pork, fennel, chilli and garlic variety.

"We travelled to Tasmania for the national Sausage King awards, taking with us our NSW-winning pork, fennel, chilli and garlic sausage," the team said.

"We're blown away with the result, taking out first place in Australia in the continental category.

"This is our fourth national title in 10 years, since taking over the business."

South Nowra Premium Meats has previously been recognised for their innovative creations, including Peking duck sausages, chicken curry coconut burgers and thick Aussie beef sausages.



Best lamb sausage was awarded to Rollbusch Quality Meats in Waikerie, South Australia for its Mexican lamb, jalapeno and cheddar creation.

Aussie Pumps poultry package

AS Brendon Cant has pointed out, bird welfare is the preoccupation of all poultry operators.

Aussie Pumps has produced a package of equipment that helps keep birds healthy, reduces the risk of bird flu and other diseases and is simultaneously safe and easy to use.

All part of Aussie Pumps' great product range of pressure cleaners, the machines consist of a series developed for this and similar applications in animal husbandry.

Unblock those drains
Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said, "Every major poultry operation should have a high pressure drain cleaner."

"Being able to clear blocked drains from chokes promptly reduces the danger of disease from fetid water going off, often with dire results in terms of mosquitos spreading disease.

The recommended model is Aussie's Cobra A jetter, with a powerful 4000psi pressure and 20LPM flow.

That makes it a Class A machine, so operators are not required to be licenced by a registered training organisation.

Operators can get a free safety training program from Aussie Pumps.

"The safety training for jetters comes as part of the package," Mr Hales said.

"The machines are simple to use and our training program and handover movie makes it easy to operate and maintain the equipment."

The Aussie Cobra drain cleaner is designed for pipes up to 6" (150 mm).

They come in solidly sculpted stainless-steel frames with Bertolini pumps.

The pumps are gearbox drive, not belt and pulley, so the whole drive train is completely dust free, an essential for poultry farm activity.

The machines come with an integrated stainless-steel hose reel with 60m of high-pressure drain cleaning hose and four wheels with pneumatic tyres to make it easy to move around.

The fuel tank holds 12 litres.

The unit comes fully equipped with nozzle box and optional nozzles for various types of chokes.

"We also throw in a free safety plate, free safety eyewear and

each machine comes with a washdown gun, so it can be a multi-purpose machine at the farm," Mr Hales said.

Aussie said eels are out

Aussie Pumps did a survey of drain cleaning equipment in live-stock farms of various types.

"What we found was blocked drains were a problem and a health hazard," Mr Hales said.

"The Aussie machines will clean blocked drains fast using 4000psi pressure to drive the jet up the drain, clearing it as it goes.

"It's the end of the eels."

A mini reel for hard-to-reach jobs

One of the standard options available with the Cobra is a stainless-steel mini reel with 60m of hose.

That hose can be connected to the jetter 'mothership' so the operator can operate 60m away from the jetter but still has 60m of hose on the portable Aussie mini reel.

Aussie Pumps has made a major effort to develop what it believes to be the world's best portable drain cleaner.

These are used by piggeries, with some trailer-mounted units.

For bigger drains, big

flows up to 31LPM and pressures to 5000psi are doing a great job.

Sanitise and sterilise

The poultry package also includes Aussie's Heatwave steam cleaner.

It has a 4000psi pump with a capacity to produce up to 130C steam.

The machine is driven by a Honda petrol engine with electric start, which provides the ignition for the burner.

The whole machine is wrapped in an elegant stainless-steel frame, with four wheels for ease of movement.

The wheels can be removed and the unit trailer mounted or even static mounted, depending on the application.

"We've gone out of our way to really understand the market, understand the requirement, and are super motivated to keep working on these developments when we see the effects of bird flu being repeated not only in Australia, but around the world," Mr Hales said.

For further information on Aussie's poultry package, call 02 8865 3500 or check aussie pumps.com.au

The free safety training program is also accessible on the website.



Aussie's Heatwave is a great candidate for the need to 'steam and clean'.



Aussie Pumps is the Southern Hemisphere's leader in design and production of drain-cleaning jetters. The state-of-the-art test room.



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Letter to the Editor - Letter to the Editor

It is the responsibility of those making submissions to ensure the correctness of their claims and statements. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the publisher.

AUSTRALIA is well on the way to prohibiting barren battery cage systems, a long overdue move that will finally reflect the overwhelming scientific evidence and community sentiment against cages and draw a line under this cruel system.

All agriculture ministers endorsed the Australian Animal Welfare Standards for Poultry in July 2023.

Most producers have already transitioned to cage-free indoor or free-range systems.

Consumer demand for cage-free eggs continues to increase, and margins for cage-free eggs are more lucrative.

Community support for the phase out is consistent and strong.

And leading retailers are on track to meet their cage-free commitments.

This strong progress has dramatically reduced the use of cage housing systems, and the number of layer hens confined in cages.

Today, less than 30 percent of Australia's 22-million layer-hen flock remain in battery cages.

But that still means

about 6 million caged hens are prevented from expressing essential behaviours every single day.

The prescribed 2032-2036 phase-out period is extremely generous, given most remaining cage systems are near the end of their commercial life.

States are pressing forward - Western Australia has already implemented the standards into regulation, Victoria is on its way, the ACT phased out caged systems in 2014.

Other jurisdictions are actively planning to implement the standards into their regulations.

However, the pursuit of better standards for farmed animals is never straightforward, especially when it comes to layer hens.

Recently, a new line of attack was launched against the phase-out - linking it to the ongoing threat of avian influenza.

The impact of avian influenza virus is truly devastating.

In Victoria, four farms are currently implicated in an outbreak of highly pathogenic strain H7N8, resulting in the mass killing of tens of thousands of hens in an

effort to prevent the further spread of the virus.

This follows outbreaks in Victoria, NSW and the ACT in 2024, where an estimated 2 million birds were killed.

Much worse is to come if the deadliest strain of the virus - highly pathogenic H5N1 - makes it to our shores.

In the US, so far this year a staggering 35 million birds have been killed due to H5N1 outbreaks, with many other animals also seriously affected.

Most experts say it is only a matter of time before H5N1 reaches Australia, with dreadful consequences for both farmed animals and wildlife.

Those egg producers who oppose the end of battery cages have their villain marked out.

They blame free range farming.

In their minds, allowing hens the chance to explore and forage outdoors in fresh air and daylight is putting the industry at risk.

But it's not the type of housing system that makes a bird flu outbreak so deadly, it's the scale of production.

For decades now, while the number of eggs pro-

duced has increased, the number of farms has gone down.

Highly intensive egg farming means tens of thousands of hens housed in the same shed, and multiple sheds on the same farm.

For avian influenza, high stocking densities and the proximity of birds to each other increase the risk of mutation from low pathogenic AIV to a highly pathogenic strain of the virus.

Disease management protocols mean that when a single hen contracts AIV, it is a death sentence for every bird.

It's true that free range birds can be at higher risk of AIV contamination from wild birds.

But the new standards don't require cage systems to convert to free range.

This is a red herring, evoked by the cage egg lobby to falsely draw a connection between the phase out of battery cages and increased incidences of AIV.

The reality is, if cage egg producers wish to continue farming their hens using completely indoor systems, they can.

The new standards

permit indoor systems, they just can't involve confining hens to barren cages.

In any event, Australian research has shown that even with free range systems, AIV risk can be compensated for by moderate improvements in biosecurity practices, including keeping hens inside during periods of high risk - where they already spend two-thirds of their time.

And AIV outbreaks occur in all types of housing system - cage, barn and free-range.

Scientific studies, including modelling disease transmission and surveying on-farm practices, have also found the most likely pathway for the spread of the virus is from sharing equipment between sheds, and sharing egg trays, pallets and vehicles between farms.

Of all production types, it was cage layer farms that were found to have the most room for improvement when it comes to biosecurity practices.

Another myth that the cage egg lobby is promoting is that egg shortages will result in cheap imports from countries where battery cage pro-

duction still dominates the market.

But there's absolutely no evidence for this.

Australia's strict biosecurity laws have prevented shell egg imports for decades - it seems absurd that anyone would think that the right time to lift this ban is in the midst of an avian flu pandemic.

Getting hens out of cages will be a milestone Australia can be proud of, and there is

nothing but the self-interest of its detractors left to stand in the way of this change.

The Australian public decided a long time ago that hens were not egg-laying machines, but sentient intelligent animals who deserve a decent life.

It's time cage egg producers caught up.

Dr Bidda Jones AM
Director of Strategy
Australian Alliance
for Animals



Former RSPCA Australia chief scientist and co-founder of the Australian Alliance for Animals Dr Bidda Jones.

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