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NATIONAL Poultry NEWSPAPER

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Vale John Coward

IT is with great sadness that we advise of the passing of John Coward.

John was involved in the egg industry as the chief executive officer of Queensland United Egg Producers from 2012 and as a Queensland director of Egg Farmers of Australia until his retirement in 2023.

John was integral in the early development of QUEP and was the driving force behind the organisation.

He was also involved in the initial discussions around the establishment of EFA and was contributory for eight years after

the inception of Egg Farmers of Australia.

John provided valuable input to the industry through his biosecurity and food safety knowledge and particularly with his relationships at all levels of government.

John held the EFA deputy position and was also a member of the Minister's Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Council group.

John's linkage with animal industries, food safety and biosecurity started at a very young age growing up in a butcher shop.

John then became a meat inspector, and

his knowledge of biosecurity and food safety subsequently instigated his work in the poultry and pork industries.

John also worked for the Queensland department, therefore having an understanding of departmental roles and the work of government.

John was a key supporter and advocate of digital auditing to further streamline processes, find efficiencies and reduce costs.

The work that was undertaken by John and his contribution to the industry continues into the future.

Egg Farmers of Australia



John Coward



AMN was heavily focused on ensuring research findings were translated directly into commercial practice, strongly resonating with the day-to-day reality of Australia's poultry producers and feed mills.

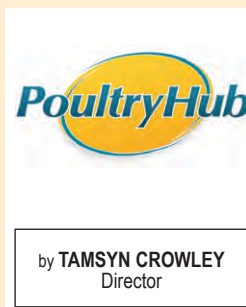
Collaboration key to poultry innovation

AUSTRALIA'S poultry industry continues to face significant challenges but also enormous opportunities, as it strives to meet growing global demand while maintaining strong standards for animal health, welfare, productivity and sustainability.

Two recent Melbourne conferences have made it clear that partnerships between research and industry will be central to tackling those challenges head-on.

Held in May, both Collaborate Innovate 2025 and the inaugural Advancing Milling and Nutrition Conference showcased how research translation and industry collaboration were helping to drive innovation across Australian agriculture, with clear relevance to poultry production systems.

At Collaborate Inno-



The conference sent a strong message that the future of Australian agriculture, including poultry, depends on partnerships that take scientific discoveries and turn them into real-world solutions.

Throughout the event, government and industry leaders emphasised that research translation was now an economic necessity.

Minister for Industry and Science Ed Husic

continued P2

vate 2025, hosted by Cooperative Research Australia at Melbourne Connect, more than 300 delegates from across industry, research, gov-

ernment and funding bodies gathered under the theme 'Bold ideas, brave ventures: collaborate to compete in a changing environment'.



Two recent Melbourne conferences made it clear that partnerships between research and industry were central to tackling industry challenges.



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Poultry Industry Calendar of Events

2025

JUL 2-4 – Avicola & Porcinis, Buenos Aires, Argentina. www.avicola.com.ar

JUL 2-4 – Indo Livestock 2025 Expo & Forum, Surabaya, Indonesia. indolivestock.com

JUL 14-17 – Poultry Science Association Annual Meeting, North Carolina, USA. www.poultryscience.org/news-and-events/conferences/annual-meeting

JUL 29-31 – American Association of Avian Pathologists Annual Meeting, Oregon, USA. www.aaap.info/future-annual-meetings

AUG 1-3 – AgriTech India Foodex, Bangalore, India. agritechindia.com

AUG 12-13 – Agro Expo, Michigan, USA. theagroexpo.com

AUG 27-29 – Livestock Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. www.livestockmalaysia.com

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

SEP 23-25 – AgXchange Australia 2025, Gold Coast, Queensland. agxchange.com.au

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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Collaboration key to poultry innovation

from P1 reinforced the Federal Government's commitment to building stronger industry research connections and supporting commercialisation pathways that deliver practical benefits to producers.

For Australia's poultry sector, these partnerships have already been playing a crucial role, from advances in biosecurity and disease management to improved genetics, welfare monitoring and sustainability outcomes.

Cooperative research centres, including Poultry Hub Australia's own ongoing collaborations, remain at the heart of this process, ensuring that scientific research stays connected to the needs of producers, processors and the broader supply chain.

As discussions at the conference made clear, long-term investment and coordinated research infrastructure will continue to be essential in maintaining Australia's competitive edge.

Earlier in the month, the inaugural AMN Conference at the Crown Promenade in Melbourne brought together specialists from the milling, feed manufacturing and animal nutrition sectors – areas that sit right

at the heart of modern poultry production.

Held alongside the Recent Advances in Animal Nutrition Australia conference and the Australasian Equine Science Symposium, the event provided a timely opportunity to focus specifically on feed formulation, ingredient innovation and nutritional strategies that directly impact poultry health, growth and performance.

Unlike many technical conferences, AMN was heavily focused on ensuring research findings were translated directly into commercial practice, something that strongly resonates with the day-to-day reality of Australia's poultry producers and feed mills.

Across two days, experts presented the latest findings on ingredient quality, nutrient availability, gut health and feed efficiency, while open discussion encouraged collaboration between researchers and industry participants to solve practical real-world challenges.

Having the opportunity to chair one of the AMN sessions provided a front-row seat to the depth of expertise being shared, highlighting the strong appetite

within the industry to engage directly with the science and adopt new knowledge on farm and in feed manufacturing facilities.

What was clear across both events was the growing alignment between research, industry priorities and customer expectations.

As poultry producers continue to navigate evolving welfare standards, biosecurity risks, climate variability and increasingly sophisticated

consumer demands, it is the strong partnerships between science and practice that will allow the industry to remain competitive, sustainable and profitable.

The take-home message from both Melbourne conferences was simple but powerful – innovation in poultry production doesn't happen in isolation.

It depends on genuine partnerships between researchers, feed suppliers, integrators, vet-

erinarians, growers and policy makers all working together to ensure that research investment delivers practical commercially viable outcomes.

With the right collaborative structures in place, the Australian poultry industry is well-positioned to meet both domestic and global demand while continuing to raise the bar on productivity, animal welfare and environmental performance.



Dr Amy Moss at AMN in May.

Big Dutchman and Stockyard Industries join forces

THE Big Dutchman Group and Stockyard Industries are delighted to announce a new partnership to better serve their growing customer base Down Under.

By coming together under a single banner – Big Dutchman Agriculture (Australia) Pty Ltd – the two family-owned companies will leverage their strengths and streamline customer experience.

Big Dutchman currently supplies farming equipment to egg, poultry and pig customers in the Australian market, and will broaden its offerings of turn-key solutions beyond the pig segment to a wider client base.

Stockyard Industries – long established by the Jones family – has been a Big Dutchman distributor for pig, poultry, dairy and feed milling products for more than 15 years, and was the leading provider for the Australian pig farming industry.

Big Dutchman Australia will manage Stockyard Industries' warehouse and facilities

in Bendigo.

This company presence in Victoria, alongside the existing sites in Queensland, will ensure Big Dutchman Australia can deliver spare parts and services across all corners of the country.

The Jones family will remain engaged in the business for the upcoming years by managing the former Stockyard Industries' operations.

Stockyard Industries' customers can expect no service interruptions during this transition phase.

About Big Dutchman
Big Dutchman is the

recognised market leader for modern pig and poultry production systems.

Across five continents and in more than 100 countries, Big Dutchman's name stands for long-lasting quality, prompt service and unsurpassed know-how.

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Big Dutchman Group and Stockyard Industries come together under a single banner, Big Dutchman Agriculture (Australia) Pty Ltd.

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Get to know the mycotoxin Zearalenone

As reported in a previous article in National Poultry Newspaper, 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 (ZEN), with aflatoxin and ergot alkaloids making regular appearances.

Looking into data for the last three years, fumonisins were the most frequently detected mycotoxin class (64% of samples had FUM). ZEN is routinely found in about 25% of samples tested and the levels are quite variable across years with an average of contamination level of 211 ppb, which is deemed to be a significant risk for poultry, especially egg laying birds. As mentioned in previous articles, the presence of two or more mycotoxins often has a much more significant impact on the animal than the level of a single mycotoxin.

Zearalenone is commonly found in grains and protein meals, especially soybean meal. Although ZEN can affect gut health and immunity in all birds, especially in the presence of other mycotoxins like DON, the main concern with ZEN is its effects on reproduction and fertility in developing pullets and egg laying birds, including breeders.

ZEN is known to negatively affect all aspects of follicle development and ovulation and can lead to reduced egg number, egg weight, shell strength and hatchability of fertile eggs. ZEN has also been shown to reduce testicle size and sperm quality in males.

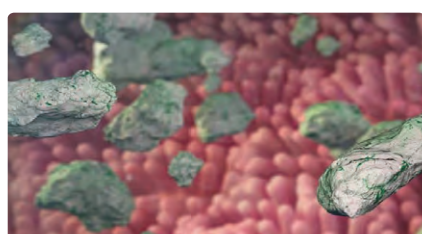
The reason that ZEN impacts reproductive performance is that, in simple terms, ZEN is chemically very similar to the female hormone oestrogen and will bind to the oestrogen binding sites in therefore inhibiting the proper action of oestrogen. As the oestrogen is not being recognised, in some cases this may cause the bird to overproduce oestrogen, leading to conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome.

Like many of the mycotoxins, ZEN has a chemical structure that does not permit it to be easily bound by simple binders. Therefore, the most effective way of reducing the impacts of ZEN in poultry is to enzymatically cleave – in the intestine before the ZEN is absorbed – the ZEN into non-oestrogenic products. Irreversible deactivation of ZEN is achieved through the use of Mycofix® Plus. The other benefits of Mycofix® Plus are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Function of the ingredients in Mycofix® Plus.

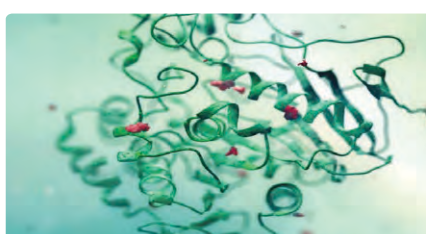
Counteracting strategy	Mycotoxins	Mycofix Plus
Bio-transformation	Zearalenone	
	Trichothecenes	
	Fumonisin	
Bio-protection	Gut integrity	
	Immune support	
	Liver protection	
Adsorption	Aflatoxins	
	Ergot alkaloids	
	Endotoxins	
	Adsorbable MTX	

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

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For more information on Mycofix Solutions, scan here:





In the 1970s, much of the egg production was centred around small family farms and backyard flocks. Photo: Rodolfo Clix



The Australian egg industry remains committed to ongoing improvement. Photo: Suzy Hazelwood



Today, egg farmers implement comprehensive biosecurity programs, testing and adhere to national food safety standards. Photo: Australian Eggs

From backyard flocks to advanced production



Egg Farmers of Australia

by MELINDA HASHIMOTO
CEO



THE egg industry has undergone significant transformation over the past five decades, evolving from small-scale operations into a modern, efficient and highly regulated sector.

Since the 1970s, advancements in animal welfare, food safety, production technology and environmental sustainability have reshaped how eggs are produced, supplied and consumed in Australia and globally.

In the 1970s, much of the egg production was centred around small family farms and backyard flocks.

Cage systems were introduced to improve hygiene and productivity, helping to reduce

diseases and protect hens from predators.

While these systems increased egg output and ensured year-round supply, views from some groups around cage systems emerged, and it is only passing through a period of egg shortages that some consumers are understanding the reliability of cage egg supplies.

Supermarkets marketing and consumer awareness of alternative farming systems such as barn-laid and free-range production has seen increased numbers of customers buying these eggs, yet there is still a need for cage eggs that are a low-cost affordable protein for many people on strict budgets.

Animal welfare improvements have been one of the most significant changes since the 1970s.

Today's egg farmers operate under stringent animal welfare codes,

ensuring the health and wellbeing of laying hens.

Free-range and barn systems have expanded to meet consumer demand for choice, with clear labelling standards introduced to help shoppers make informed decisions.

Investment in research and technology has also provided better environmental controls within layer housing, improving ventilation, lighting and nutrition, all contributing to healthier hens and better-quality eggs.

Food safety is another area where the industry has made substantial progress.

In the 1970s, there was limited understanding of the risks associated with food-borne illnesses such as salmonella.

Today, egg farmers implement comprehensive biosecurity programs, testing and adhere to national

food safety standards.

Regular testing, vaccination programs and improved hygiene practices have significantly reduced the risk of contamination.

Technologies such as egg stamping and traceability systems have further strengthened consumer confidence by ensuring that eggs can be traced back to the farm of origin quickly in the event of a food safety concern.

There are still egg stamping exemptions in some states, but Egg Farmers of Australia continues to advocate for these exemptions to be removed.

Technological advancements have also played a critical role in transforming egg production.

Automated feeding, watering and egg collection systems have increased efficiency and reduced manual labour.

These innovations not only improve farm productivity but also allow farmers to monitor the health and welfare of their flocks in real-time through data-driven management systems.

Precision farming practices are increasingly adopted, enabling farmers to make informed decisions that improve flock health,

reduce waste and optimise production outcomes.

Environmental sustainability is a growing focus for the industry.

Farmers have worked to reduce their environmental footprint by improving feed efficiency, managing manure more effectively and investing in renewable energy solutions.

Today, many farms operate with sustainability targets, including reducing carbon emissions and water usage.

Packaging has also evolved, with a shift towards recyclable and compostable materials, responding to both environmental concerns and consumer expectations.

From humble beginnings to a sophisticated modern industry, egg production has evolved to meet the demands of a growing population while maintaining a strong focus on animal welfare, food safety and environmental responsibility.

As consumer expectations continue to rise, the egg industry remains committed to ongoing improvement, ensuring that this highly nutritious and affordable food remains a trusted choice for Australian families for generations to come.

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The Australian delegation led by Dr Beth Cookson at the ninety-second WOAHA General Session.

ACMF strengthening Australian poultry industry in role at WOAHA

THE Australian Chicken Meat Federation was proud to have had its chief executive officer Dr Mary Wu represent industry as chair of the Animal Health Australia industry forum at the ninety-second World Organisation for Animal Health General Session of the World Assembly of Delegates in Paris recently.

Led by Australian chief veterinary officer Dr Beth Cookson, the Australian delegation joined over 1100 participants from more than 130 countries, including ministers, high-level representatives, scientists and observers from partner organisations.

This General Session focused on adopting 29 resolutions and 73 international standards to improve animal disease prevention, enhance animal welfare and ensure the quality of diagnostics and vaccines to strengthen our global One Health status.

Strategic topics and vaccination focus

One of the core highlights of the WOAHA event was the animal health forum on vaccines and vaccination.

This forum provided a platform for dialogue among international delegates, researchers, development actors and the private sector to discuss challenges and opportunities related to vaccination strategies.

The discussions particularly focused on the issues of overcoming bottlenecks in vaccine development and deployment, with the goal of integrating safe, effective and affordable vaccination strategies into national disease control plans, while ensuring safe international trade in animals and animal products.

This special focus session on vaccination provided fascinating revelations into the ongoing debate on whether to vaccinate or not, guided by the vaccine adoption framework 'Vaccine availability + vaccine access + vaccine demand = vaccine adoption'.

This framework offered valuable insights for the Australian del-

egation, who will continue discussions on its applicability to the Australian production context.

Following the WOAHA General Session, ACMF was invited by the AHA committee to sit on an industry and government working group to consider the highly pathogenic avian influenza vaccination policy for the Australian system.

Work in this area will commence in coming weeks.

Animal Health in Australia report 2024

The international release of the 2024 edition of Animal Health in Australia – AHA's flagship annual report – was an important highlight in communicating Australia's key achievements in disease surveillance, animal health policy updates and commitment to biosecurity and safe trade.

As part of Australia's official submission to WOAHA, the report reinforces our favourable animal health status on an international stage.

The report also included details of ACMF's Avian Influenza Summit held in August 2024, which was key development last year to support our national preparedness and response capacity in the event of an H5N1 outbreak in Australia.

We were pleased to see strong recognition of our industry's efforts to maintain our favourable biosecurity status and our continued efforts to enhance the security of our food supply chain and animal health status in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak.

Overall, ACMF was pleased to have continued its participation within the Australian delegation, a strong contributor to WOAHA processes, which is crucial to ensuring that future standards are science-based and recognise producers as key stakeholders in both animal health and ongoing food security – essential objectives for meeting global development standards.

Through the delegation, we are committed

to continuing this work alongside the Australian chief veterinary officer, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Animal Health Australia and other key

departments, agencies and industry bodies to ensure effective policy-making on animal health matters at both the global and national levels. 🐔 **ACMF**



Opening session at WOAHA ninety-second General Session. Photo: WOAHA 2025



Dr Mary Wu with Australian CVO Dr Beth Cookson and the Australian delegation launching the report on Animal Health in Australia 2024.

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Araucana rooster, Central Coast NSW.



Wartime poster encouraging self-sufficiency by the Commonwealth Food Control 1944.



Several species and breeds of poultry on Deborah Hurley's family farm Dannybrooke, Darling Downs, Queensland, circa 1894. Photo from the Hurley Family History Booklet, supplied by Gail Maree Costigan-White.

Backyard chook Australia's enduring nest egg

Cant Comment

by BRENDON CANT



MY long-standing love of backyard chickens went to another level when I recently read the 2023 article below by University of Western Australia researcher and cultural anthropologist Catie Gressier.

If you share my enthusiasm, or not, I hope you find it of interest – even if simply from a historical perspective.

Here's Catie's article, edited for this publication...

During World War II, Australia experienced a shortage of agricultural workers combined with prolonged drought, which led to food shortages.

In response, government campaigns encouraged Australians to grow victory gardens and raise chickens – *Gallus gallus domesticus*.

About 80 years later, as supply chains faltered during the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for backyard chickens once again soared in NSW.

However, council regulations increasingly restricted the keeping of backyard chooks, as they're affectionately known in the vernacular.

Along with limiting the numbers of fowl that could be kept, urban councils prevented natural reproduction through forbidding the keeping of roosters, whose crowing they deemed noise pollution.

This hasn't stopped Ernest, a 70-year-old heritage Araucana enthusiast from NSW's Central Coast – who I came to know during three years of ethnographic research into heritage-breed livestock and poultry rearing.

"I do keep a rooster," he told me conspiratorially over the phone in 2020, "he sleeps in an underground bunker of a night."

Ernest had buried a doghouse into which he sent his rooster at dusk, before releasing him the following morning around 9am.

"Now, I'm being sexist," he continued, "but the girls are much happier with a boy around." "He will sort out any squabbles..."

"So, I've found – excuse the expression – sunshine and sex produce a better egg."

Ernest much prefers his own eggs to the supermarket's.

Like many Australians of his generation, he grew up with various breeds of backyard chooks.

Eggs were the focus and, to preserve the 'golden goose', his family only consumed old hens and excess cockerels as special-occasion foods.

Over the past 8000 years of domestication, from the jungle fowl's origins in south-

east Asia, 1600 distinct breeds of chicken have resulted from natural and artificial selection.

Yet, since the middle of the twentieth century, when chicken rearing shifted from the farm to the factory, a handful of trademarked cross-breeds have come to dominate global markets, heavily selected for either egg production (layers) or meat production (broilers).

Among broilers, dizzying growth and feed conversion rates are embodied in Ross and Cobb chickens, from whom most commercial chicken meat in Australia derives.

Meanwhile, hyper-prolific Isa Brown, Hisex and Hy-Line layers produce around 300 eggs annually.

Commercial layers are deemed spent at 18 months, while broilers are slaughtered at four to six weeks.

Heritage chickens, while less profitable, can live beyond a decade.

The industrial model constructs these socially, cognitively and emotionally complex creatures as dispensable commodities.

By contrast, when chickens were first brought to Europe in the first millennium BCE, archaeological evidence suggested they were kept as valuable exotica for about 700 years before being utilised as a food source.

Fanciers have continued to foreground chickens' ornamental qualities and, since 1858, poultry clubs in NSW have hosted pop-

ular shows and breed displays.

As well as appreciating the birds' ornamental value, Australians have repeatedly turned to backyard chooks for food security.

So valued were eggs, that British colonists brought chickens to Botany Bay on the First Fleet to feed settlers.

Indeed, livestock soon became integral to advancing the colonial frontier and to Indigenous dispossession.

Today, 76 percent of Indigenous Australians consume livestock and poultry products, but this history demonstrates the ambivalence of livestock vis-à-vis food security for First Peoples.

Among non-Indigenous Australians, echoes of wartime efforts to bolster self-sufficiency via poultry rearing have reemerged during economic downturns, including in the rush to purchase hens during the 2008 global financial crisis.

In 2020, as supermarket shelves emptied during the COVID-19 pandemic, again there was a rush on backyard chickens.

Animated discussions unfolded in the poultry community, concerns abounded about chicken welfare in the hands of inexperienced keepers, as did jokes about everyone's favourite neighbour suddenly being the 'crazy chicken lady' – women historically being responsible for domestic chicken rearing, with many coming to love their chooks as quirky pets.

Some hoped renewed respect for poultry might lead to more leniency in council regulations.

Others worried that when eggs returned to supermarket shelves or chickens stopped laying while moulting, the birds would be dumped.

For Ernest, his chickens not only kept him fed but, given that he

lived alone, were his main companions during NSW lockdowns.

He reflected on parallels with the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-19, when his grandmother, a nurse, kept chickens to feed the family.

Ernest was particularly pleased to see renewed interest in heritage breeds.

He worried about the homogenisation of genetics in commercial layers and broilers, and the potential for new avian viruses to eradicate Australia's preferred protein source.

He saw the genetic diversity embodied in heritage breeds as a safeguard of galline longevity and the nation's food security.

Research demonstrated that susceptibility to Newcastle disease, as one example, varied considerably between chicken breeds, supporting Ernest's views.

The pursuit of self-sufficiency stemming from a fear of food insecurity motivates many backyard chook keepers.

One described how his now-deceased grandfather's drive for chicken rearing was connected to his experiences as a refugee during World War II.

"It was always about being self-sufficient, not relying on the government."

"Because he'd lost everything, his entire family in World War II."

"He'd been faced with the Nazis, and he'd come out [to Australia] with that mindset that I need to supply my needs and my family's."

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, NSW was still reeling from the Black Summer bushfires, the worst on record, which had followed the devastating 2017-2020 drought.

With the ecological and economic upheaval resulting from anthropogenic climate change, history suggests that desire for self-

continued P7

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The pump was a constant, and costly, drain on maintenance hours and a production disruption, as it would block regularly with the vegetable matter in the wastewater.

The time and costs involved in removing the chokes and replacing the submersible equipment was an issue that needed to be resolved.

The solution

One Harvest's maintenance supervisor Matt Leach contacted Hydro Innovations regional manager for Victoria Graeme Spence to discuss potential solutions.

Graeme and the Hydro team share over 80 years

of pump experience and knowledge and were able to work with Matt to devise an innovative system.

By re-using most of the plant's existing civil works – wet wells and inlet valves – but replacing the problematic submersible pump with a rugged and reliable above-ground self-priming pump, the chokes would occur less often, and it would be far simpler to monitor and maintain.

A Gorman-Rupp T series pump, motor and base were selected to replace the existing unreliable submersible pump.

The existing 2" discharge line was easily retained, and a new 2" T series pump was selected.

Because Gorman-Rupp pumps are so

easy to check and adjust clearances, the pumps operate better and for longer than submersible pumps, resulting in less chokes and blockages.

The results

By placing the pump and motor at the surface and using the excellent self-priming Gorman-Rupp T Series pump, no blockages have occurred since its installation.

The pump has performed so well, the plant is instigating a policy to replace its other submersible pumps with Gorman-Rupp self-priming pumps.

Feedback from the plant was: "We couldn't be happier with this pump, it's become the standard we will use going forward."

And, "One of the best things we have done."

For further information regarding the extensive range of Gorman-Rupp self-priming pumps and the services that Hydro Innovations is able to offer to remedy your wastewater, sewerage, aeration and any pump issues, visit the very informative website at hydroinnovations.com.au or phone 02 9898 1800.



A Gorman-Rupp T series pump, motor and base were selected to replace the existing unreliable submersible pump.



By placing the pump and motor at the surface and using the excellent self-priming Gorman-Rupp T Series pump, no blockages have occurred since its installation.

Backyard chook our enduring nest egg

from P6

sufficiency will continue to grow.

To this end, backyard-poultry keeping provides not only companionship and an economical and nutritious protein source, but also a sense of existential security in uncertain times.

This research was funded by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council's Discovery Project scheme (project number DE200100595).

Citation: Gressier, Catie. 'The Backyard Chook: Australia's Enduring Nest Egg.' Environment & Society Portal, Arcadia (Summer 2023), no. 11. Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society. doi:10.5282/rcc/9621.

Catie Gressier is a cultural anthropologist with research interests spanning food

production and consumption, interspecies relations, tourism, and health and illness.

She is the author of three books – *Saving Heritage Breeds: A Love Story* (UWAP 2025), *Illness, Identity and Taboo among Australian Paleo Dieters* (Palgrave 2018) and *At Home in the Okavango: White Batswana Narratives of Emplacement and Belonging* (Berghahn 2015).

Catie is currently a European Research Council funded researcher in the Department of Anthropology and Ethnology at Uppsala University, a PhD candidate in creative writing at Curtin University and an Adjunct Research Fellow in the School of Agriculture and Environment at the University of Western Australia.



Catie Gressier

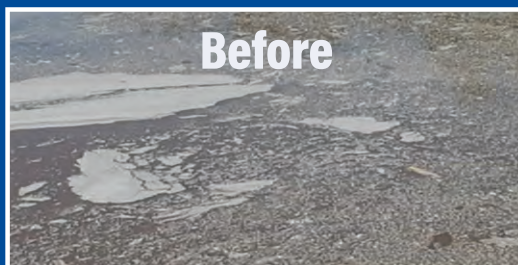
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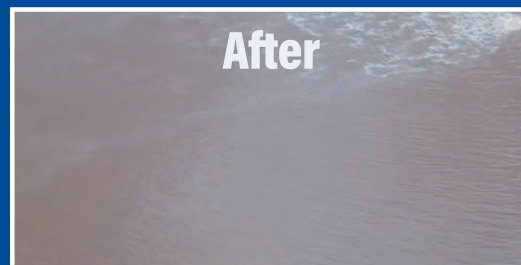
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Before



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Renewables driving down costs and emissions in agriculture

■ Farmers leading the charge in agricultural sustainability

WITH floods in Queensland and droughts in both South Australia and parts of Victoria, cutting input costs is key to building a resilient sustainable future for Australian agriculture.

On-farm renewable energy is proving to be a powerful tool to help farmers get there.

With consumers demanding lower-carbon products and farmers facing rising energy costs, the integration of solar, bioenergy, renewable diesel and electric machinery is no longer a vision of the future – it's happening now.

These innovations and more will take centre stage for the first time in Victoria with the National Renewables in Agriculture Conference 2025 taking place in Ben-

digo on July 23.

Brad Donovan will be showcasing his innovative ground-source heat pump technology once again at the conference.

His technology – well suited to poultry sheds – uses the ground as a sink for cooling and heating, rather than air as for traditional air conditioning used at farms.

Brad explained, "The ground has a constant temperature of between 15 and 18C, which we want to take advantage of to improve efficiency at poultry farms."

"We trialled the ground-source heat pumps at George's property Bargo Farm at Yanderra 2574 – about two hours south of Sydney – which has eight sheds, 15m by 140m, that he spreads his chicken flocks of 320,000 across.

"We trialled the technology at one of the sheds and used three others as controls.

"We installed four 28kW heat pumps, each with its own circulation pump and ground loop.

"We were able to reduce LPG use in the shed by 75 percent, which is significant, but our goal is zero," he said.

Among the speakers is Caleb Smith, a piggy farmer in Victoria.

Caleb has embraced the concept of a circular economy as a core part of his operations, capturing pig effluent to create power, which is helping to reduce the farm's electricity bills.

"We were spending about \$300,000 on electricity across three sites at the farm, so wanted to use the captured biogas in the effluent ponds to produce power and heat, which we'd then use to warm the piglets," he said.

As well as tasting Caleb's pork products at the conference, delegates are given the opportunity to visit

Caleb's farm the next day for a tour of the biogas generator.

"Quite often farmers would like to do something like this, but they don't," Caleb said.

"I think the reasons we often don't is because of the unknown.

"What we don't know is scarier.

"So, speaking about what we've done, plus having people come to see how simple it is and showing it can be done, will hopefully encourage others to do the same."

The 2025 conference will bring together farmers, energy experts, researchers, industry leaders and government representatives to explore the practicalities, opportunities and challenges of renewable energy in agriculture.

New Zealand farmer Mike Casey will talk through his journey to electrify his farm, having the first electric Monarch tractor in the southern hemisphere.

He also recently installed batteries on his farm and converted a ute to electric.

Mike said, "We have a six-hectare cherry orchard in Central Otago with 21 electric machines that save about \$40K a year in energy costs, which is a huge number of inputs."

"Solar and batteries are at such good prices now that rolling those out will reduce our cost of operations on farms, as well as the cost of living in general.

"I'm on a wholesale electricity contract

now, so I can use my large batteries for protection against exposure to the open power market and that means I can turn what has always been considered a risk into an opportunity for farming.

"My batteries will actually earn an income for the farm over the year.

"That's a whole new revenue stream for farming and a significant opportunity for farmers," he said.

Conference founder and farmer Karin Stark said momentum was building across the sector.

"Farmers are increasingly turning to renewables to tackle the challenge of rising diesel and electricity prices," Ms Stark said.

"But there's still work to be done in making the right technologies available and ensuring regional contractors and services are equipped to deliver."

She added that the conference would also explore agriculture's growing role in decarbonising the electricity grid.

"We'll be discussing the evolving distribution network and microgrids, and the potential for smaller distributed solar projects on farms – say 5MW systems – feeding directly into the local network.

"There are also emerging opportunities for farmers to be paid for providing energy services as new markets develop."

The event will also feature a site tour to Caleb's circular economy piggery, offering a firsthand look at how bioenergy can be used to create valuable power in a closed system.

To learn more about the National Renewables in Agriculture Conference 2025, visit renewablesinagconference.com.au



Brad Donovan will be showcasing his innovative ground-source heat pump technology – well suited to poultry sheds – at the conference.

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Caleb Smith

Autosexing exhibition birds

AT first glance, the commercial poultry world may seem to have very little in common with the world of rare breeds.

However, one group of rare breeds shares a common element with many of today's commercial layers – the ability to be sexed at a day old by down colour.

Some of the more commonly available commercial layers rely on the use of sex-linked genes to enable them to be visually sexed at hatching, thus eliminating the need for vent sexing.

These hybrids make use of the silver/gold genes that are carried on the sex chromosome, and when a gold cock is mated to a silver hen, the result is female chicks with gold (reddish) down and cockerel chicks with silver (whitish) down.

The gold/silver cross was widely used early in the twentieth century – more so in the United Kingdom than in Australia – when Rhode Island Red roosters were used over Light Sussex hens to produce red pullets, which were generally much better layers than their Light Sussex mothers, and cockerels that resembled their Sussex mothers, which were reared as table birds.

Another pair of genes to carry on the sex chro-

Rare Breeds

by GRANT ANDREWS



mosome that were often used commercially are the barring/non-barring genes.

In this case, the barred females were mated to males of non-barred breeds to produce cockerel chicks that were identified by a prominent white head spot, the female chicks lacking this characteristic.

It was while conducting research into poultry genetics at the University of Cambridge early in the twentieth century that Professor Reginald Punnett and Michael Pease realised that the barring/non-barring genes could be used to develop a breed of fowls that could be bred pure, and which would produce cockerel and pullet chicks with distinct down colours.

Their first effort, the Gold Cambar, resulted from the mating of Gold Campines with Barred Plymouth Rocks and was introduced to the public at the World Poul-

try Congress in 1930.

Using the same principles that had led to the development of the Cambar, Mr Pease later released the Gold Legbar, which was bred from Brown Leghorns and Barred Plymouth Rocks.

This breed had much better utility prospects than the Cambar, and enjoyed some popularity after its release as a layer in both the UK and Australia.

In the early to mid-twentieth century, laying tests were conducted in many parts of Australia, with Gold Legbars performing creditably in some – an example of which was a Gold Legbar hen that produced 224 eggs in 350 days at a test in New Town Tasmania in 1949.

Mr Pease went on to develop a Silver Legbar that was released in 1944 and, in collaboration with Professor Punnett, a Cream Legbar was stabilised in 1947.

The Cream Legbar differs from the other two varieties of Legbar in that, due to an infusion of Araucana blood, it lays a blue or green egg and sports a small crest.

A strain of Cream Legbar that was used for commercial egg production in the UK was imported into Australia in 2016 by AvGen Poultry, having become quite popular with smallholders and poultry exhibitors.

Some fanciers have reported that the blue egg colour was most intense in young birds, or birds that were resuming lay after a moult.

Ironically, as a breed for the backyarder, the Cream Legbar has supplanted its ancestor the Araucana as a layer of blue eggs, most likely due to it being a better layer and laying bigger eggs.

Following the release of the Legbar, several other autosexing breeds were developed and standardised in the UK.

None of these caught on in a commercial sense and most failed to make an impact on the exhibition poultry world.

Most were never imported into Australia due to the embargo placed on the importation of poultry in 1948 and though they could easily have been re-created here, the majority weren't.



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Canola planting was projected to remain virtually stable. Photo: CSIRO



RaboResearch expected cropping area for barley to increase 9.8 percent year-on-year to 4.5 million hectares. Photo: CSIRO



RaboResearch senior analyst Vitor Pistoia. Photo: Rabobank

Australia headed for record-high winter crop planting

AUSTRALIA'S farmers are heading towards a record-high winter crop planting this year, Rabobank said in its newly-released 2025-26 Australian Winter Crop Outlook.

The annual outlook, by the agribusiness banking specialist's RaboResearch division, said the nation's grain growers were expected to plant an estimated 24.5 million hectares of winter crop this year, up 0.8 percent on last season.

The forecast increase was largely driven by good soil moisture levels in northern NSW and Queensland, as well as a "positive gross margin outlook" for most crop types.

Area planted to crops was expected to be up in all states, except for South Australia, where many regions have been struggling with severe drought conditions.

Victoria, which has also been impacted by drought in many western parts of the state, was expected to see cropping area edge up only fractionally.

The overall rise in national planted area was expected to benefit most crops, except for wheat, where area was forecast to drop – especially in Western Australia – impacted by rising fertiliser prices and less optimistic market prospects.

Despite the projected overall increase in Australia's winter cropping area, RaboResearch has currently forecast total production for the 2025-26 harvest to come in below last year, at a "base case" of 53.9 million tonnes, compared with 59.7 million tonnes for last year's crop.

Report author, RaboResearch senior analyst Vitor Pistoia said Australia's 2025-26 winter cropping area may be "the largest on record" if a "seasonal break comes soon in South Australia and western Victoria."

However, the impact of weather on the season ahead had led the bank to expect there would be a slightly reduced amount of grain heading to the bins at harvest time.

"Summer rainfall in Queensland and northern NSW was above average, leading to flooding in some cropping regions, and this may delay sowing but is supportive for another season of large sowing areas," Mr Pistoia said.

"WA's southern cropping areas also received timely rainfall to have a good start to the season."

"Other cropping regions around the country though did not get the same summer luck."

"Soil-moisture levels are generally insufficient, especially in South Australia, west-

ern parts of Victoria and southern NSW."

As of mid-May, the weather outlook for the season ahead was for average rainfall for the eastern states and some chance of above average rainfall for Western Australia by springtime, he said.

Seeding – wheat makes room for barley and pulses

Area planted to wheat was expected to decrease 5.2 percent on the previous year, to 12.6 million hectares, the report said.

The most significant drop in wheat planting was anticipated in Western Australia, Mr Pistoia said.

"Overall, this decline in wheat planting is attributed to rising fertiliser prices and less enthusiasm about the outlook for wheat prices."

"Crop rotation is also a factor, as last year's late seasonal break led to wheat replacing canola and pulses at the eleventh hour and those farmers will now be looking to plant a different crop," he said.

RaboResearch expected cropping area for barley to increase 9.8 percent year-on-year to 4.5 million hectares, supported by strong demand for livestock feed from the local animal protein sector.

"Despite gross margins for barley expected to be within historical averages, it is a promising outlook for regions that can achieve higher yields with barley than wheat, as the price difference between the two commodities is comparatively small," Mr Pistoia said.

Canola planting was projected to remain "virtually stable" – with only minimal forecast area growth of 0.4 percent on last year to 3.2 million hectares, seeing increases in Western Australia and declines in the eastern states.

"There is a supportive outlook for canola, though the price direction varies between genetically modified and non-GM canola," Mr Pistoia said.

"Geopolitical turmoil is pressuring the GM-canola market, while demand from the European Union is driving non-GM fundamentals."

Pulse plantings were also expected to be up considerably – by 12.5 percent on last season – to 3.4 million hectares, with WA and Queensland likely to lead the expansion in pulse area.

This was driven by tariff announcements in key pulse markets

– including India, a country crucial to Australian pulse exports – that indicate demand will remain steady.

"Such positive overseas demand signals may lead to higher margin potential compared with cereals," Mr Pistoia said.

States

Queensland looks to be the big winner in terms of increased cropping area, with excellent soil moisture setting the stage for a promising season, the RaboResearch report said.

Area under cropping was forecast to expand 8.4 percent on last year, to a total of 1.67 million hectares.

Western Australia was expected to be the other big winner, with cropping area projected to increase 2.1 percent to 8.83 million hectares, despite the reduction in the amount of wheat planted in the state.

NSW was a "mixed bag", the report said, with positive soil moisture in the northern parts of the state after a wet summer driving expansion, while cropping areas in southern regions were impacted by low soil-moisture levels.

Though overall, cropped hectares in the state were projected to increase this season by 1.6 percent to 6.83 million hectares.

Dry weather in the western parts of the state was seeing cropping programs across Victoria being diversified this season, the report said.

"While some farmers are going for a 'high input, high return' approach, with crop rotation edging towards an evenly split ratio of canola and cereal cropping area, others are still using crop rotation as a tool for mitigating risk, with pulses and hay in the cropping mix as well," Mr Pistoia said.

Overall, Victorian cropping area was expected to increase by only 0.1 percent on the previous season, to 3.61 million hectares.

Ongoing severe dry weather conditions in South Australia were expected to see the state's cropped area decline this season, by 5.8 percent to 3.55 million hectares, the report stated.

Mr Pistoia said big planting shifts were also anticipated in the state, with increasing lentil planting.

"Given the average yields and current commodity price outlook, lentils offer a more attractive gross margin

potential than wheat or canola in many parts of South Australia for the 2025-26 season," he said.

Market outlook/ exports

In terms of market outlook, the report said, "despite the US's tariff-driven efforts to re-order global trade, Australia's key grain and oilseeds exports seem largely unscathed for now and may gain global market share."

"Asian countries rely on Australia to source imports of grains and pulses, and the European Union imports canola to balance its supply of oilseeds," Mr Pistoia said.

The bank said Australia exported most grains and oilseeds at a good pace in early 2025, though not wheat.

Wheat export volumes from October 2024 to March 2025 reached 9.9 million tonnes, the report said, falling 3.1 million short of the pace needed to avoid an increase in year-on-year carryover stock.

Mr Pistoia said a larger carryover would make local Australian Stock Exchange wheat futures prices softer compared with the global Chicago Board of Trade and Marché à Terme International de France prices.

Globally, with increased wheat supply from the EU and another robust Black Sea crop likely, there are not many reasons to be bullish on wheat prices, the report stated.

For Australia, RaboResearch forecasts Australian Premium White port prices to range between \$330-\$360 per tonne by the end of 2025, partially supported by currency headwinds.

Feed barley prices for the 2025-26 harvest were anticipated to range between \$290-\$340 per tonne, the report said, depending on new crop production.

On the malting barley front, where there was limited upside beyond Chinese demand, RaboResearch said prices were projected to be \$10-\$20 per tonne higher than feed barley. Canola prices were expected to soften by mid-year as harvests began in the northern hemisphere.

"If EU production falls below 18 million tonnes, Australian non-GM port prices for the 2025-26 season were likely to stay within the \$700-\$780 per tonne range, with an eight to 12 percent discount for GM canola," Mr Pistoia said.

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Melbourne named host city for EvokeAg 2026

AGRIFUTURES Australia has announced Asia Pacific's premier agrifood innovation event EvokeAg will take place in Melbourne on February 17-18, 2026 at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Home to a quarter of Australia's farm businesses, 14 agricultural research and development centres, world-class universities and a thriving startup ecosystem, Victoria makes the ideal backdrop for the next edition of EvokeAg.

Building on the success of last year's event, which welcomed over 2000 delegates from more than 25 countries, 134 speakers and over 50 startups, EvokeAg 2026 will once again unite the leading minds in agriculture, food production, research and investment for two days of bold conversations and future-shaping ideas.

Entering its sixth edition, EvokeAg continues to facilitate investment, nurture innovation and create impact, which is reflected in its new evergreen tagline, 'Invest Innovate Impact'.

Since its inception in 2019, the event has brought together over 8100 delegates, 391 investors, 577 speakers and 1122 primary producers to drive agriculture towards a better future.

Victorian Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence said Victoria, with its thriving agrifood innovation sector, was the ideal host destination for the event.

"Research and innovation are central to the success of Victoria's \$20.2 billion agriculture sector, which is underpinned by farmers and a broader industry that embraces new technology," Ms Spence said.

"The Allan Labor Government is proud to support the return of this landmark event to Melbourne and to invest in the growth and innovation of Australian agriculture."

AgriFutures Australia chair Cathy McGowan said Victoria's dynamic agriculture sector makes it a natural home for the event.

"As a proud Victorian and advocate for region-

al Australia, I'm delighted to see EvokeAg come to Melbourne in 2026."

"Victoria is home to a vibrant and diverse agrifood sector, world-class agricultural research institutions and some of the most innovative producers and startups in the country.

"It's the perfect place to showcase what is possible when agriculture and innovation come together," Ms McGowan said.

Gaia Project (Melbourne-based controlled environment agriculture startup) general manager Adrian Persi welcomed the announcement and said Melbourne was the ideal location for the next chapter of the event.

"EvokeAg delivers exceptional value for startups at every stage – offering a platform for networking, knowledge sharing and testing market appetite," Mr Persi said.

Adding that Victoria was primed to be a thriving startup ecosystem, supported by players such as LaunchVic, Breakthrough Victoria and the Eagle Fund, and it's well-positioned to become a global agtech hub.

"The state is also the food bowl of Australia and the heart of horticulture, which is especially relevant to our work," he said.

"Hosting EvokeAg in Melbourne offers a direct connection to the growers we aim to serve as we commercialise from 2025 – it's a valuable opportunity to understand on-the-ground challenges and share innovation."

Building on the success of previous events, EvokeAg 2026 will deliver a program for the entire agrifood tech ecosystem, following its three principles:

- Inspire and provoke – ignite inspiration and spark meaningful action by challenging perspectives and encouraging bold ideas

- Showcase and educate – exclusive access to world-leading technologies and practical insights into successful implementation

- Connect and collaborate – opportunities for genuine connection and

seamless collaboration, fostering relationships through both organic interactions and curated experiences.

Signature elements such as Startup Alley, Scaleup Station, the Demo Stage, Culinary Capital and XFactor Breakfast will also

return, alongside refreshed plenary and interactive sessions designed to inspire, inform and drive collaboration.

Tickets will be on sale from Monday July 7, 2025.

For more information or to register your interest, visit evokeag.com

Food with Purpose 2026

POULTRY Information Exchange, Australasian Milling Conference and Australian Pork Limited welcome your attendance at the Food with Purpose Conference and Trade Show to be held at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre May 12-14, 2026.

Whether you're a seasoned farmer or miller with years of experience or just starting out, the Food with Purpose event is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable insights and connect with other professionals in the industry.

We invite you to this three-day experience as it will be an excit-

ing way to learn more about what's new in these industries, see the latest equipment and products at the trade displays, connect with others who share your passion and take away new ideas for your operation.

For exhibitors and partners, take advantage of the first round of partnership and exhibition options.

Note that these have changed slightly fol-

lowing feedback from 2024 for the second PIX, AMC and APL combined event – to be first in best dressed.

For information on the Partnership and Exhibition Prospectus, contact event@pix.au or go to pix.au, where you can follow any further updates.

Program and registration information will be released later in 2025.



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About natural capital

YOU have likely heard the term 'natural capital', but what is it?

What does it mean for you and your property?

To define natural capital, we need to understand the natural resources present in our landscape.

On your farm this includes soil, trees and other plants, water and all living things – from livestock to native animals to the microbes and fungi living in our soils.

These natural assets provide free services, known as ecosystem services, which underpin our food and fibre production.

Ecosystem services we rely on include:

- Water filtration and storage
- Trees providing shade and shelter
- Soil health and fertility
- Animals and insects controlling pest levels
- Pollination
- Dust and noise minimisation.

Natural capital involves valuing our natural assets and the services they provide, much like we value other forms of capital, such as financial or built infrastructure.

Creating value

Investing in and en-

hancing the natural capital on your farm can create value for your business by improving productivity, saving on input costs and protecting market access.

Recently, environmental markets have created an opportunity for land managers to more directly monetise their natural capital through carbon and biodiversity markets.

These markets are relatively new but quickly maturing.

It's not one size fits all, and the risks and opportunities need to be considered when deciding whether to participate.

Local Land Services NSW has recently launched the Natural Capital Profile Service.

This provides a personalised profile report that outlines your farm's natural assets and different environmental market options that might

be available to you.

The profile can help you understand your property's natural capital, what opportunities exist to build on this and how you can maximise the benefits to you and your business.

This is a pilot service running until October 2025 and places are limited.

Scan the QR code below if you are interested in receiving a natural capital profile.

For further information contact Emily, your local natural capital advisor via email at emily.b.wilson@lls.nsw.gov.au or call 0484 117 155.



Scan for form to receive a natural capital profile.



Natural capital involves valuing our natural assets and the services they provide. Photo: David Jia



The Gary Sansom Scholarship provided Rebel with valuable industry connections and mentorship that have proven just as valuable as the financial support.

Rebel Northey's quest for sustainable poultry nutrition

AS the 2024 Gary Sansom Scholarship draws to a close, recipient Rebel Northey reflects on a year of productive research, industry connections and personal growth that has positioned him at the forefront of sustainable poultry nutrition innovation.

The University of New England master of science student has been investigating the feasibility of using food waste-based diets for meat chickens – research that could simultaneously reduce strain on conventional feed resources such as grains and legumes, while addressing the growing global challenge of food waste management.

"My research is really about sustainability, both globally and on a scale that's applicable to the Australian poultry industry – comparing the differences between a food-waste diet and a commercial diet and their impacts on chicken growth," Rebel said.

Promising results point to industry application

Though Rebel's research is ongoing, initial findings have shown promising results that align with and build upon existing literature in the field.

"So far we have received very promising results surrounding the use of food waste in meat chicken diets," Rebel said.

"Currently, we are preparing two manuscripts for publication, with more to follow, and my primary supervisor and I will be presenting some of our research at industry conferences."

The project builds

on earlier research by Rebel's supervisor Dr Amy Moss, which found that feeding a waste-based diet to laying hens resulted in a better food conversion ratio compared to commercial diets.

Rebel's work focuses on understanding these differences more thoroughly, particularly investigating the different fat-to-carbohydrate ratios between conventional and waste-based feeds.

"In the long term, our goal is for this research to contribute to the solutions for several large issues, including the amount of food in landfill and its associated environmental impacts, the cost of feed for producers and subsequently consumers, the strain on relevant grain and legume production systems, the competition between humans and animals for food, and food insecurity," Rebel said.

Building industry connections and career pathways

Beyond the research itself, the Gary Sansom Scholarship provided Rebel with valuable industry connections and mentorship that have proven just as valuable as the financial support.

"The Gary Sansom Scholarship has allowed me to focus on my research while also gradually integrating into the industry," Rebel said.

"The support from AgriFutures has made this integration far less intimidating than it would have been otherwise."

The scholarship, which provides up to \$30,000 in funding, pairs recipients with industry mentors and provides opportunities to attend key poultry

industry conferences and events – creating invaluable networking opportunities for early career researchers.

"They've introduced me to many different people who work in various roles throughout the industry, allowing me to kick-start my industry networking at a very early stage of my research," he said.

"Additionally, the industry exposure provided by the scholarship has allowed me to see how my current and possibly future research could be applied in real-life situations, which is very exciting."

For Rebel, whose passion for poultry research was sparked during a hands-on broiler chicken project in his undergraduate studies, the scholarship has transformed his understanding of the industry as a whole.

"I entered my degree with little to no understanding of the chicken meat industry," he said.

"Through my time in the scholarship, I've been exposed to several industry events that allowed me to gain significant insight into the opportunities within both the industry and academic sides of chicken meat."

Perhaps most valuable has been the community he's discovered.

"I've learned about different companies and the roles within them, and notably I got to experience the camaraderie between these companies firsthand," he said.

"All of the people that I've met at these events have been incredibly friendly and welcoming to new people."

Legacy of leadership continues

The Gary Sansom Scholarship – estab-

lished in honour of the late Gary Sansom, former AgriFutures Chicken Meat Advisory Panel chair and Australian Chicken Meat Federation president – has a distinguished history of supporting future industry leaders.

Mr Sansom's vision was to ensure the chicken meat industry was valued and respected by the Australian community.

The scholarship that bears his name continues his legacy of encouraging new entrants into the chicken meat industry and developing leadership capabilities among the research community.

Embodying this vision of long-term industry contribution, Rebel plans to upgrade his degree to a PhD, extending his research completion date to March 2027.

This will allow him to conduct two additional experiments in 2025 and dedicate at least a year to manuscript preparation, ultimately aiming to produce five publications from his research.

As he prepares to take the next steps in his research career, his guidance to future applicants reflects the collaborative spirit he's encountered throughout his scholarship year.

"Probably the most important advice I would give is advice that I've been given myself by various members of the community, which is to not be afraid to reach out and ask questions," Rebel said.

"The people in this industry are very invested in the education of newer members and are usually very happy to lend a helping hand."

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Aussie's shed washdown solution

AUSSIE Pumps plays a major role in fighting bacteria and keeping birds healthy in the poultry industry.

Aussie Pumps chief engineer John Hales said: "We know the war against bacteria is one that is endless, with Australia's major poultry producers fighting a constant battle to prevent the possibilities of bird flu or other infections."

The company's new range of stainless-steel framed heavy-duty high-flow high-pressure shed washdown kits are proving successful for a wide range of applications.

The machines, based on heavy-duty multiple-diaphragm high-pressure pumps, matched to Honda engines, are easy to service, reliable and simple in their configuration.

"The biggest job we do is a Delta 151 that has an amazing 143LPM flow," Mr Hales said.

"That flow, matched to a 50 bar (710psi) performance, provides real grunt and gets the job done fast and efficiently."

It runs off a 26hp Honda GX690 petrol electric-start engine.

That big twin cylinder provides cool run-

Aussie Pumps

ning and reliability.

The beauty of the kit is its multipurpose use.

And the Delta 151 is one of a family of Delta series wash kits that are perfect for a wide range of duties.

The series includes a 75LPM unit with 40 bar (568psi), powered by a Honda GX390, either recoil or electric-start engine.

That gives the machine lots of grunt.

Its big brother, the Delta 125 is a similar configuration, with 125LPM and 40 bar (568psi) performance and a Honda GX390 13hp engine.

"We use Udon multi-diaphragm designed pumps because of their reliability and performance," Mr Hales said.

"They deliver consistent flow right through the pressure range and have versatility not found in other washdown kits."

The same pumps are widely used for broadcast spraying, including fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides.

Additionally, in washdown configuration, they can be operated

with Aussie's 'turbine gun'.

This provides a significant range, with a valve that enables adjustable spray pressure.

"The guns and pumps come from northern Italy, where this type of technology has been more widely explored than any other part of the world," Mr Hales said.

They are all fitted with a large capacity oil bath in its crankcase and have the advantage of being able

to double as washdown units.

"We can fit the Delta in a stainless-steel trolley suitable for shed washdown and combine it with a hose reel that gives up to 50m of reach," Mr Hales said.

"That seems to be favoured by most for everything... from cleaning out stock crates, chicken sheds and even dairy washdown applications."

"It's not new, but it sure is effective."

"Yes, you can even wash big plant such as sprayers and tractors."

Further information on these multipurpose machines is readily available from aussie pumps.com.au



Aussie's versatile 'Muck Off' units are ideal for wash and flush applications such as effluent cleanup or plant washdown. Also available in Yanmar diesel drive.

Queensland farmers welcome changes to definition of 'primary producer' status

THE Queensland Farmers' Federation alongside its peak industry body members, Cotton Australia, Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers and Cane-growers, have welcomed the recent announcement by Minister for Primary Industries Tony Perrett regarding changes to the definition of a 'primary producer' in Queensland.

The changes will see the definition of a primary producer amended, allowing greater access to support under the joint Commonwealth-State disaster recovery funding arrangements, thus allowing disaster-affected farmers – who may have been previously ineligible for assistance in Queensland – to apply for support measures such as disaster recovery grants, disaster loans and freight subsidies.

The previous definition of primary producer caused confusion for farmers and farm busi-



during natural disasters and droughts," Ms Sheppard said.

"Good agricultural policy is never a set and forget."

"It is critical that policy relating to the definition of a primary producer keeps up with the evolving face of Queensland farmers and their farming operations."

"Not only was the old definition causing administrative headaches, but it was actually locking genuine farming enterprises out of access to this support when they needed it the most."

"It is positive to see that farmers who are strengthening their farm business resilience by diversifying on-farm income streams will no longer be penalised and risk their primary producer status."

QFF and its peak body members will continue to advocate for outcomes that support farmers' access to timely disaster and drought relief.

nesses applying for disaster and drought assistance.

It also limited a farmer's ability to generate 'off-farm' income – through agritourism, contract harvesting or other farming-related activities – without risking the loss of their primary producer status.

QFF chief executive officer Jo Sheppard said that QFF and its peak body members – Cane-growers, Cotton Australia and QFVG – have advocated for these changes for more than a decade.

"The previous definition of 'primary producer' has been a barrier to farmers across the state receiving the timely support they need

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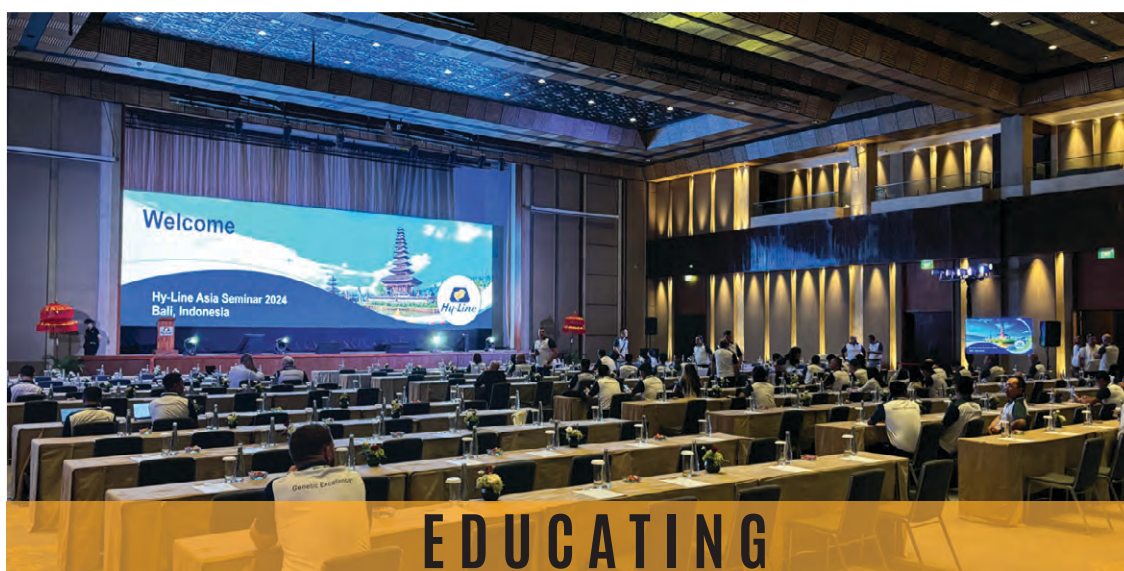
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