



pigbytesnewsletter

FROM THE NSW DPI PIG INDUSTRY GROUP

ISSUE 2 JULY 2009

INFLUENZA A H1N1 2009 (SWINE FLU)

Australian pigs are naïve to the swine influenza virus and this virus is listed as an exotic disease by Animal Health Australia. Pigs are at risk of infection from infected people so good farm biosecurity is paramount.

NSW DPI now has a swine flu section on our website with information for pig owners, pig vets and a link to NSW Health for the latest on the disease in people.

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/pigs/health/swine-flu

Australian Pork Limited website also provides information on the swine flu situation for those of you not on their regular e-news updates.

www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp

IMPROVING RECRUITMENT SUCCESS

The costs of recruiting and training new staff represent a significant cost to most enterprises. Have you considered giving your staff a financial incentive to recruit new staff for you?

Having your existing staff recommending your farm business as a good place to work to their peer group and your local community, could be of great benefit in the process of recruiting and retaining good employees.

Providing a financial incentive to your staff members who identify good employees could have long term benefits to your business. Rather than paying for advertising and recruitment firms consider paying your staff a bonus based on how long the new employee stays in your employment.

A possible incentive schedule could be:

- For an existing employee who identifies a new employee who starts and remains for one month a payment of \$50.
- For an existing employee who identifies a new employee who starts and remains for six months a payment of \$250.

- For an existing employee who identifies a new employee who starts and remains for twelve months a payment of \$500.

Other benefits of such a scheme are that the existing employees are more likely to recommend new employees that they feel they could work with well; and who are dependable and good workers who would take their job responsibilities seriously.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO WORK ON YOUR FARM?

Another industry reliant on labour is the Dairy Industry. The following is an excerpt from *Dairy News Issue 6 Spring 2008* by Michael Ison.

One of the key principles of the People in Dairy Project is to develop a farm business that suits people, not the other way around.

Trying to make people "fit in" to existing practices that are difficult, unrewarding or unsatisfying will contribute to people leaving and will make it more difficult for you to attract the right people.

On a happy and productive farm employees are:

- Encouraged to learn and innovate;
- Encouraged to behave responsibly;
- Encouraged to understand the things that are important to the farm owners
- Encouraged and feel rewarded for the work and effort they put into their job. This includes those very important non financial rewards such as thanks or commendations from the boss.
- Understanding of their place in the organisation – what is their role and knowing what to do.
- Dedicated to the farm team and co-operate with others to achieve the farm goals.

Motivating work environments make a difference to our entire well-being and our work performance – all good reasons to create a farm business that suits people.



More of this article may be found at
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/276895/Dairy-news-spring-2008.pdf

The People in Dairy website may also be useful
www.thepeopleindairy.com.au

SOW HOUSING CONVERSIONS

In the Proceedings of the 2008 Banff Pork Seminar there is a paper '*Turning Loose on Sow Housing*' presented by the VIDO Swine Technical Group.

The paper discusses options for alternative sow housing. Loose housing with electronic sow feeding is the first option covered including practical experiences, training gilts, and straw versus no straw.

There is a section on group pens with floor feeding and options here to reduce the effects of bullying. There is also a section which discusses conversion of a full sow stall shed to group housing and suggestions to overcome the challenges of such a conversion.

'*Turning Loose on Sow Housing*' can be found at
www.banffpork.ca/proc/2008pdf/167-WhittingtonKainsNicol.pdf

ORGANIC PORK PRODUCTION COSTS

Niche markets in the pork industry are relatively small but are growing in importance. An example of a niche market is the organic pork market.

One issue which frequently surfaces is the limited information on production costs. The cost of organic pork production is greater than the cost of traditional pork production due mainly to the greater cost of feed and decreased swine performance.

While there is limited information available in Australia this report from Iowa State University gives some indications of the costs incurred in two production systems – seasonal versus continuous production in Iowa. There is also a comparison of costs and production across the different seasons.

'*Cost of Organic Pork Production*' is available from
www.ipic.iastate.edu/reports/01swinereports/asl-1784B.pdf

UPCOMING EVENTS

8/7/09 PigLink Seminar: – The economic impact of major pig diseases in Australia by Dr Ross Cutler. This contains valuable information on the cost of disease in your herd – contact Hughes.Paul2@saugov.sa.gov.au if you are not subscribed to PigLink.

28-29/7/09 Victorian Pig Fair – Bendigo VIC

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12/8/09 PigLink – Feeding today's growing pigs (Tony Edwards)

14/10/09 PigLink – Climate change, what will it mean for pork producers (TBA)

21/11/09 Pork CRC Annual Conference – Cairns QLD

9/12/09 PigLink – Virtual piggery visit, Myora Farm SA (Jeff Braun)

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