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AUSSIE PORK INDUSTRY DEVELOPS FIRST BIOGAS CODE OF PRACTICE

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The Australian pork industry is once again leading the way in Australian agriculture with renewable energy usage.

At today's Victorian Pig Fair, in Bendigo, Australian Pork Limited (APL) Chairman Enzo Allara will launch Australia's first ever Biogas Code of Practice. The development of the Code provides a consistent framework and direction for the safe design, construction, operation and maintenance of on farm biogas systems for Australian pig producers.

The evolution of the Code stemmed from APL management recognising the confusing and onerous information currently circulating out in the market place regarding biogas requirements and regulations across Australia.

APL Research and Innovation General Manager Dr Darryl D'Souza said "The implementation of the Code promotes a national risk based approach to safely operate on-farm biogas systems, rather than a prescriptive approach which may not address the specific risks of smaller biogas systems used on piggeries".

While only responsible for 0.4 per cent of Australia's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, the pork industry views mitigation and utilisation as a significant opportunity to reduce resource inputs and minimise its environmental footprint. About 70 per cent of all emissions from the pork supply chain come from effluent ponds on farms.

Dr D'Souza said, "The new Code provides a framework to assist producers take up the opportunity to capture and utilise these emissions for energy while reducing emissions on farms by up to 80 per cent. The biogas is produced by the anaerobic digestion of organic matter in the effluent system. Effluent is collected from pig sheds and conveyed to an anaerobic treatment system which could be a covered pond or a purpose built digester. The biogas can then be used to displace fossil fuel used for heating or for combined heat and power generation. Currently 26 per cent of Australian pig production is capturing and/or utilising biogas."

According to Dr D'Souza the development of the new Code of Practice has taken many years to develop and has involved state gas safety regulators, relevant government agencies, consultants and producers.

APL would like to acknowledge this valuable feedback which has shaped the code, along with the key authors of The Code: Dr Stephan Tait (University Queensland, Pork Co-operative Research Centre), Michael Yap (Prime Consulting) and Janine Price (APL Manager Environment).

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