AUSTRALIAN Pork™

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FREE RANGE PORK CERTIFICATION – TAKING OUT THE GUESSWORK

Consumers can at last be confident that the pork they are buying is truly free range following the release of the Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ✓®) program Free Range standards, in conjunction with the Australian Pork Certified Free Range logo for pork products.

Australian pork producers can now attain Free Range Certification under a newly developed, on-farm, free range standard, within the APIQ✓® program. APIQ✓® is the overarching, on-farm quality assurance program used across the Australian pork industry. Currently, 86 per cent of Australia's pork production is APIQ✓® certified.

The major plus for consumers is that free range pork certified under this new standard can be labelled with the newly developed Australian Pork Certified Free Range logo. This is a guarantee that the pork in the pack has been grown under true free range conditions.

Australian Pork Limited (APL) CEO Andrew Spencer said that APIQ✓® enables producers to assure their customers that the pork produced on Australian farms is safe, wholesome and 100 per cent Australian. "Up until earlier this month the industry did not have an industry agreed definition of free range or one set of standards to verify compliance with free range. The lack of an industry agreed definition and standards made it difficult for our customers and consumers to be confident that the pork they were buying was truly free range."

Free range production systems certified under the new APIQ✓® Free Range standards means that the pigs have had access to paddocks for their entire life; that they have been provided with shelter and protection from the elements and predators; that they have been able to follow their natural instincts to root in the ground, forage, and to wallow; that they have been treated carefully following good practices for their health and wellbeing. Customers will know that the farm has been audited by an independent qualified third party auditor who has confirmed that the standards are being met and maintained on-farm. Audits are carried out annually.

Mr. Spencer said that the Free Range Standards have been long overdue. "The consultation process to reach this point was extensive and rigorous and not only included producers but also key stakeholders along the supply chain."

To find out more about the new Free Range standards or how to apply to use the Australian Pork Certified Free Range Logo go to www.apiq.com.au.

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