

MEDIA RELEASE

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FUTURIST CHALLENGES AUSSIE PORK PRODUCERS TO BE DISRUPTION-READY IN NEW PODCAST

Melissa Clark-Reynolds says COVID-19 and African swine fever are “practice runs” for more significant global threats in the future.

NEW ZEALAND futurist Melissa Clark-Reynolds has kicked off Australian Pork Limited’s (APL) new podcast ‘Next on the Menu’ by laying bare some of the challenges and opportunities facing Australia’s pork industry in an evolving and increasingly erratic global economy. The future-focussed podcast is hosted by APL Chair, Andrew ‘Billy’ Baxter and GM of Business and Innovation, Mitch Edwards.

Melissa compares African swine fever (ASF) to COVID-19, saying both pandemics are merely test runs for the next international economic, health or food-security emergency, which is why what we do and how we learn to live with periods of global volatility pandemics is so important.

The first episode of ‘Next on the Menu’ abounds with timely observations from Melissa, with messages of warning, wisdom, and encouragement for Australia’s livestock industries.

As a social entrepreneur and a professional director, including the first independent director of Beef + Lamb New Zealand Ltd, Melissa works with companies around the application of new technologies in the face of disruption, with most of her work involving the future of food and agriculture.

Questioned around what emerging opportunities Aussie pig producers should have their eyes on, Melissa highlighted the potential of tapping into markets for collagen and bone broth.

“In the short term, one of the things that I think is a major opportunity is collagen. There’s a real trend around using the whole animal and we need to think carefully how we can do that. I haven’t really seen pork bone broth on the market, and I don’t know why?” says Melissa.

On the topic of alternative proteins, Melissa cautioned against taking a “point and laugh” approach to meat alternatives, as other food and fibre industries have done when presented with similar disruptions in the past.

“When we see the future and we don’t agree with it, we don’t like it, or we don’t get it – our first response is to mock it. Some industries blew it because they did not take the threat seriously. Ultimately, they didn’t respect the customer enough,” says Melissa.

Co-hosts Billy and Mitch have lined up a range of guests selected to challenge the Australian pork industry, and anyone interested in the future of food and farming.

The first episode of Next on the Menu will be launched on Friday 4 September and can be found at australianpork.com.au, at anchor.fm/nextonthemenu, on [Spotify](https://open.spotify.com/) or on [Apple Podcasts](https://applepodcasts.com/), with new episodes released every fortnight on a Friday.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Melissa Clark-Reynolds

The youngest woman to attend NZ university at just 15, Melissa describes her career as an eclectic mix but officially, is known as a social entrepreneur, professional director and futurist, where she works with companies, particularly around the application of new technologies. She was awarded the Order of NZ Merit for Services to Technology in 2015 and in 2007 she was the first New Zealander to train with Al Gore as a Climate Project presenter. She's passionate about championing climate and sustainability issues and most of her work involves the future of food and agriculture.

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Andrew 'Billy' Baxter

Andrew Baxter is the chair of Australian Pork Ltd and is one of Australia's most trusted business, marketing and communications advisors. He is passionate about helping companies unlock topline growth through sharp strategy and executional excellence. Andrew has worked with many of Australia's largest companies, brands and government bodies, as the CEO of two of the country's biggest communications agencies, Publicis, and Ogilvy, and now as a Senior Advisor at both KPMG and BGH Capital, as well as the Adjunct Professor of Marketing at the University of Sydney. He has been named as one of LinkedIn's Top 40 Australian influencers, recognised by Campaign magazine as one of the Top 5 Agency Leaders in Australia and New Zealand, and the winner of Australian Marketing Institute's Sir Charles McGrath Award for his significant contribution to the field of marketing.

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Mitch Edwards

With more than 30 years' experience marketing Australia's major proteins internationally and domestically, Mitch Edwards has made his mark on how Australians think about and enjoy our produce. He's worked on marketing strategies turning struggling rural segments into market leaders. Achievements include leveraging US McDonalds to use Australian beef in their "all American hamburgers" and turning Australia into a pork loving nation increasingly abiding by "Get Some Pork on Your Fork". Currently, Mitch oversees Business and Innovation and coaches Marketing Communications for Australian Pork Limited and is the face of the prestigious PorkStar chef influencer program. In recent years, Mitch complemented his career by applying his knowledge and skills in marketing and communications to explore one of his passions. Mitch and his partner, Mark, share a love for interior design, renovation and property flipping. This business has transformed more than 20 properties with the couple sharing their journey through two TV shows, including the 2019 season of The Block, and an evolving digital presence.

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