



# REDUCING PAIN AND STRESS DURING ROUTINE PIGLET HUSBANDRY

ASSESSMENT AND AMELIORATION OF PAIN FOR  
IMPROVED WELFARE DURING ROUTINE HUSBANDRY  
PROCEDURES IN PIGLETS

## Project Participants

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## Problem

Consumers expect livestock to be treated humanely, especially when it comes to pain management during elective husbandry procedures. For piglets, these procedures include ear notching, tail docking, teeth clipping and castration during the first weeks of life. Research is therefore needed to establish the most effective and cost-effective methods of pain management for piglets and to confirm whether pain or pain mitigation has any effect on growth.

## Project

Studies supported by Australian Pork Limited have reviewed the practicality of several pain relief options for piglets, particularly during tail docking and castration. These assessments have considered the effectiveness of different analgesic methods, as well as the material and labour costs of their application, and any impact on weaning weight.

## Value for Producers

More humane husbandry provides a positive response to consumer demands and has the potential to position the Australian pork industry as a leader in the provision of animal welfare solutions.

## Recommendations

Cauterisation did seem to cause less severe neuroma than clippers, however this process requires more expensive equipment and operator training. Further research is intended to provide practical, affordable guidance across tail docking, teeth clipping, ear notching and castration operations on piglets.

The research also found the topical anaesthetic Tri-Solfen (Bayer Animal Health, Australia) provided pain relief for piglets during castration.

## More Information

- For a copy of the report, contact Rachael Bryant at [rachael.bryant@australianpork.com.au](mailto:rachael.bryant@australianpork.com.au)
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