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BENCHMARK: WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO

Experienced pig nutritionist Geoff Handley of Highspec Rural Services credits the recent push by Australia's Pork Cooperative Research Centre (Pork CRC) to implement a national performance benchmarking program for motivating higher production levels in most of the 10 Queensland farms he consults to.

"By comparing their performance to others in the project, on a standardised basis, they've been able to quantify in real world terms where they can still move forward," Mr Handley explained.

"By sharing information within the group, who run a total of 7500 sows, from the better producers to those who can still improve, significant impacts will be made across all participating farms.

"The Pork CRC benchmarking project and particularly the correlation between such performance parameters as weaning age and pigs weaned per sow per year, will allow the whole industry to adjust its management accordingly," Mr Handley said.

Highspec Rural Services provides nutrition and business services to the pork industry in Queensland and believes in linking farm performance output to feed and management practices, in order to achieve world's best practice and output from each of those farms.

"Pork CRC benchmarking is one of the tools I use for my clients, all of whom are family farms, to keep them striving for the best of the best performance," Mr Handley said.

The Pork CRC's benchmarking scheme for the production performance of Australia's pork industry has completed an initial pilot stage and is now open to producers across Australia to participate.

The 20 current participants recently met in Brisbane where the latest very interesting performance and financial figures were analysed and discussed in an open forum.

Potential participants with farrow-to-finish production units of 250 sows or more, are encouraged to join for the 2011/12 financial year.

If you are such a producer and interested in participating, contact Pork CRC Project Manager, Graeme Crook, email graeme.crook@porkcrc.com.au or tel 08 8303 7973 or mobile 0417 805 422.

According to Pork CRC CEO, Dr Roger Campbell, benchmarking is a way of determining who the best is at a particular task or process and, hopefully, why they are able to achieve the figures they do.

"Benchmarking sets the standard for everyone to attempt to achieve," he said.

"Once you decide what to benchmark and how you'll measure that, it's invigorating determining how someone got to be the best and what you must do to get there.

"For many pork producers, being involved in a benchmarking group can be highly rewarding, motivating and well worth the additional effort," Dr Campbell said.

www.porkcrc.com.au

Media Release



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At the Pork CRC's recent Brisbane benchmarking meeting were:
(L-R) Alison Stirling and Nathan Lister, both of Reilly Pastoral, Queensland, Roger Campbell, Pork CRC CEO, Des Bownds, Salisbury Farming Enterprises, Queensland, Paul Taylor, PD and JJ Taylor Piggery, Queensland, Geoff Handley, Highspec Rural Services, Queensland, Jenny Taylor, PD and JJ Taylor Piggery, Queensland, Rowan O'Hagan, Benchmarking Project Manager, Dave Henman, Rivalea, NSW, Laurie Brosnan, Bettafield, Queensland, Ben Jarvis, Liberty Fields, Queensland and Ian Hill, Bailey Creek Piggeries, Queensland.