Bringing HOME the Bacon

Pork accounts for more than 10 per cent of fresh meat purchased by Australians each year, and Australian Pork Limited (APL) is the peak industry body for pork producers in the country.

Any people don’t realise that the most consumed meat in the world isn’t beef or chicken, but is in fact pork. In Australia alone, each person consumes, on average, 25 kilograms of pork per year, and the industry is worth more than $1 billion at the farm gate and around three times that at a wholesale level. APL is the national industry representative body for Australian pig producers, performing marketing activities to improve the demand for Australian pork, research and development to make the industry more competitive, and industry representation ensuring government and regulators have all the necessary information for successful policy outcomes.

CEO Andrew Spencer explains that the aim of the corporation, which is funded by levies from pig farmers and the government, is to do the best by the pork industry at all times. “We are a unique farm services company. The pork industry is just one of many sectors of agriculture, which includes grain, beef, lamb, wool, and horticulture. All of the various sectors of agriculture have research and development corporations; those corporations are mandated to perform on behalf of their part of the industry to improve productivity, efficiency, and innovation.

“Australian Pork Limited is not only the research and development corporation for the pork industry. We have more responsibilities than that: we’re also the marketing arm on behalf of the pig farmers of Australia. Campaigns like ‘Get some pork on your fork’—that’s all ours. We’re also the lobby group, the peak industry body for the pig farmers, so we talk to government about policy, regulations, particular areas like animal welfare, environmental management, trade, labour, food-safety policy. They’re our three key roles: marketing, research and development, and industry advocacy.”

Andrew has worked and been closely involved in agriculture for his entire career. After graduating with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from Melbourne University, he worked for 20 years in the private sector for a multinational agribusiness organisation that was a supplier to farms worldwide. He spent 10 years in Australia before his role took him to Germany, South Africa, and France before returning to Australia and taking up his current role in 2005. One thing Andrew stresses is that he takes his role within APL very seriously, and says the entire organisation does too.

“We’re a meat industry, and an animal needs to die to produce meat. That’s a very serious responsibility, and our industry has to ensure that it happens ethically.

“That’s a very short statement to make, but there’s an enormous amount of work that goes into making sure it happens. Animal welfare is core, and the animals themselves are a very important stakeholder in our industry. The

“We’ve spent enormous amounts of money over the years improving animal welfare.”

Andrew Spencer

As featured in The CEO Magazine
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Roger Corbett AO provides insight into the political landscape, economic growth, and his involvement with the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce

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Zoetis appreciates the hard work of Andrew Spencer and his team at Australian Pork Limited to promote and progress the industry. Zoetis is also dedicated to moving the industry in the right direction. We’ve been supplying medicines, vaccines and services for over 75 years, previously as CSL Animal Health and Pfizer Animal Health. Our experience and heritage is backed by a committed Australian Research and Development program, which helps us deliver forward-thinking solutions.

With ongoing collaboration with Australian Pork Limited, Zoetis will continue to help producers and veterinarians build a healthier pork industry.

Andrew sees the Australian pork industry growing even more into the future. With a growing population and international demand, especially from economies like China, he believes that the challenge will be to continue to listen to consumer demands and attempt to meet those. “If you look at what’s happening to the world, it is becoming hungrier, the population continues to increase, and people have to eat. But also large parts of the world are becoming wealthier, and with wealth comes more demand for higher-protein foodstuffs such as meat.”

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