

## **Australian Pork**

### **On-farm Biogas Production Code of Practice**

Steve Brewster (ADI) represented BAZ at recent meeting of the Australian Pork (APL) group workshop held in Sydney on Nov 14<sup>th</sup> 2013.

The workshop was the last of a series of 5 held throughout Australia in Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and NSW to work through the issues of establishing a common biogas design, safety and regulatory framework for the whole pork industry in Australia.

Australia has different state regulations for each state which makes it very difficult to work on a common design and regulatory platform throughout the country. In a far sighted move, the industry has pulled together and has worked its way through the issues and is now near completion of the task of devising a uniform standard for the whole industry using standards that should be acceptable throughout the country and which either cover local regulations or find a way to fit within each jurisdiction's requirements.

The Pork industry has recognised the value of the energy embodied in the waste material generated by pig waste, in the form of biogas and that the contribution the pork industry makes to the Greenhouse Gas emissions can be greatly reduced simply by capturing the off-gasses from the waste treatment ponds which are presently used to treat the farm waste. Not only are the GHGs reduced by about 70% across the pork supply chain and up to 80% on-farm, but odours are also greatly reduced and the captured biogas can be used as a source of energy for both electric power and heat, in turn reducing the farm costs and dependence on externally supplied energy from the electric utility or oil companies.

Existing biogas related codes and regulations from around the world have been combed for the best, most applicable and sensible ones to use in the industry. These have largely come from German, New Zealand and Canadian regulations and standards.

The resulting regulations and risks have been formed into a comprehensive matrix which has been steadily worked through by industry representatives at workshops held in each of the 5 largest states to form the body of a Code of Practice for the industry's use and control of biogas.

In all but NSW, the workshop was welcomed, attended and assisted by each states gas regulatory authorities who in turn gained a greater insight into the industry difficulties with regard to the regulations applicable to the control and use of biogas. Many states currently either have no regulations for biogas use, or use oil and gas industry regulations which are usually excessive and unnecessarily expensive for biogas use.

Following the last workshop session in Sydney the industry's input will be used to shape the Code Of Practice into a guide document that can be confidently used across the whole pork industry. This should greatly increase the rate of uptake of this technology throughout the pork industry, with not only an improvement in the competitive economic edge of this meat sector, but a huge reduction in GHG and odour emissions from pig farming as well.

This example of a large GHG reduction and an economic step forward which should result from cooperation and team work within the pork industry should be envied, and hopefully, emulated, by other primary industry sectors.