



Quarterly report of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association

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Welcome to the new look Prawn Report, the quarterly newsletter of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association. The re-design is part of an re-focused look of the Association, including its website, which is due to go live by the end of March.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Happy New Year to all. Now that we are well into 2010, the time has come to reflect on highlights of 2009 as well as plan for what is yet to be achieved in 2010.

2009 - What was achieved?

CRC/APFA: Industry Development Officer Jamie O'Brien was appointed to undertake the role of research extension and key priorities for him have been gathering data for the benchmarking report. The APFA would like to congratulate Jamie on his major milestone for his life with his marriage late last year as well.

APFA/DET (Department Education and Training)/DEEDI: Wil Conn has made inroads into with the Queensland Electrical Safety Board. More information on Wil's progress to follow.

DAFF (Department Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry): The APFA successfully applied for a grant which was used to bring 33 students from around Australia to the Townsville conference.

Award Modernisation: Despite concerted effort by the NAC (National Aquaculture Council) of which APFA played a key role, the aquaculture industry was not successful in retaining award free status. A new award was introduced and it is understood that while the conditions came into force on January 1, the rates were effective from July 1 2009. Please read the terms and conditions very carefully when applying them to your farm. Please note the NAC is pushing to get government

funding to conduct workshops around Australia to explain the implications of the new award.

Conference – Townsville 2009: A successful event was staged with over 200 delegates attending and returning a profit to the Prawn and Barramundi associations.

Moratorium on New Water Access in the Wet Tropics: The APFA and Industry groups in the Wet Tropics are raising concerns over the impact of a moratorium on any new surface or groundwater access announced last week by the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM). The ban applies to licence applications to take surface and groundwater and the construction of new bores and surface water works in the catchments of the Daintree, Mossman, Russell-Mulgrave, Johnstone, Tully, Murray and Herbert rivers. The APFA is working together with the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) and other industry groups to address the concerns of their members in regard to the moratorium and the expected announcement of a water resource plan for the Wet Tropics in the coming months.

Mark Oliver: TAFE Mark Oliver has been successfully funded through the CRC to undertake a PhD for Australian prawn farmers and is looking at sustainable aquaculture development in Queensland's marine environment through effective policy based decision making processes.

Success Stories: Prawn farms cleaned up at the Sydney Royal Food show last year. It was a year of positive prawn stories and good promotion of the products that each of our farms produce.

Marketing: The APFA enlisted two students from South Australia Ehrenberg Bass Institute to undertake a marketing report for our farmed prawns. This was

sent to each member prior to Christmas – please let me know if you would like more copies or a CD of the report.

APFA Executive and R & D Committee: Throughout the year I have pleasure in working with and being guided by these two groups. The work they do on behalf of all prawn farms is voluntary and is for the benefit of the whole industry. Each member of these committees are passionate individuals who help to drive policy and agendas to build a more resilient industry.

The R & D committee: Guided by Matt West and Richard Smullen have undertaken an extensive review of the five year Research strategic plan and revised the main objectives, linked them to key performance indicators and are now in the process of finishing off a mechanism to measure the effectiveness of research and what research can and should from here on return to APFA farm members in terms of profitability. This tool has been developed by Matt West and Richard Smullen from generic information from the benchmarking data. Benchmarking has been identified by the research committee to be a key to guiding future research, so it is critical that farms that have elected to be part of this ensure that accurate responses are given to all questions.

GCMA Grand Opening: The opening of the new facilities at Gold Coast Marine Aquaculture was held on Friday January 15. Key Politicians, Senators and Ministers attended along with those who helped to shape the prawn farming in Queensland as we know it today. The event was also an occasion to celebrate with those who were instrumental in domestication research. The farm is the first in the world to be 100 per cent domesticated and was officially opened by James Poulos. Tours were conducted throughout the event and fabulous food was served to all guests. Congratulations to Noel Herbst and his family and to Nick Moore and his staff for this grand and monumental achievement.

2010 TO DO LIST – FIRST QUARTER

Marketing / Promotion – prawns: Following an extensive farm tour in the far north Queensland regions late last year feedback and priorities that I gathered from each visit was the importance of marketing and promotion and building confidence in the industry. The APFA has been having discussions with the wild caught prawn sector and a plan has been developed for our two sectors to collaborate and co-promote prawns. A decision meeting is scheduled for February.

Conference 2010: The 2010 APFA and ABFA Conference will be held the Sofitel Hotel Gold Coast from August 4 to 6. A call for papers for the Conference will be announced shortly.

Industry Development: The APFA has continued to lobby for a whole of government process such as an Aquaculture Act rather than the current ad hoc method of dealing with government and dealing with the myriad of departments who seem to frustrate or delay developments for our industry.

Executive Committee meeting: The next meeting for the Executive will be held on February 19 in Townsville. If you have any pressing issues you would like on the Executive agenda please contact the APFA.

R & D committee meeting: The next meeting for the R & D Committee will be held on Thursday February 11 in Mackay. As stated earlier, the work that Matt West and Richard Smullen have put into revising the five year research strategic plan has been tremendous and will guide future research projects. They have taken the results of the first year generic benchmarking data and have been able to ascertain the top priority areas for research that will assist farms to be more profitable and productive. This meeting will present what has been the culmination of six months analysis work and a suggested way forward for our industry to all committee members in attendance for evaluation. What Matt and Richard have been able to achieve will be a first for not only the prawn industry but the seafood sector of Australia as a whole, truly world's best practice developed by prawn farmers. Well done and thanks to Matt and Richard who need to be acknowledged for their dedication and tireless efforts.

Sunshine Coast TAFE: The APFA will be working closely with Mark Oliver and Stuart Whitney to develop a risk management workshop in relation to Floc systems on farms. Full details will be distributed once finalised.

I hope that you all have a bumper harvest, good sales, excellent prices and if you have any issue that you would like me to address please let me know.

Helen Jenkins

POSITIVE PROSPECTS FOR A NEW YEAR

From Jamie O'Brien

Project Development Officer

Firstly, I'd like to wish you all a Happy New Year. The past few months have been fairly steady for me. Having celebrated my wedding on November 8 and then a brilliant honeymoon on Green Island for two weeks, I now have the arduous task of catching up on all the data entry for the Benchmarking project. My sincere apologies for the delay.

Benchmarking Project 2008-09

Thanks to all who have participated in the 2008/09 Project and allowed me to visit their farm. I still have a couple more farms to visit due to mix-ups in time schedules, and this should be completed shortly. If your farm has not been visited, and you would like to participate, please contact me jamie@apfa.com.au.

Website

I am also in the final stages on completing the new website, in association with Alyte Creative.

QFF

On a final note, I will be leaving my role with the Queensland Farmers' Federation from February 19 to take up the position of Editor and Media Officer with the Biological Farmers of Australia, based in Chermide, Brisbane. For future reference, please email all communication to

jamie@apfa.com.au. Many thanks for your continued support.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY SKILLING UPDATE

From Wil Conn

Skills Formation Strategy Aquaculture Queensland

Happy 2010 to you all. I hope the coming year is a strong and profitable one and that the Prawn Industry continues to grow from strength to strength. I believe that 2009 will see the prawn sector contributing over 60 per cent of the gross value of Queensland aquaculture production. Another sign of the capacity, and growing maturity of this industry leading aquaculture sector.

The workforce skilling and training project is set for a dynamic 2010. The research phase is drawing to a close as we enter the phase of appointing an Industry Leadership Group. This group, comprising solely of aquaculture industry members, will be charged with developing an Industry Vision for the Queensland aquaculture sector and its workforce. Action Plans will be developed and through engagement of stakeholders, the ball will be set in motion to realise tangible, positive outcomes for Industry identified training and development needs.

An indication of some of the areas that may be addressed by the Leadership Group are contained in a recently completed research report. Copies of this report are available by emailing APFA Executive Officer, Helen Jenkins at info@apfa.com.au, or myself wil.conn@iinet.net.au.

Queensland aquaculture has an exciting story to tell. It is part of the fastest growing Primary Industry in Australia and is well placed to play a role in helping supply the reported (additional) 37 million tonnes of seafood protein required by the World's population by 2030! Under the direction of the Industry Leadership Group, the workforce should be well placed to support the demands of your dynamic industry and that of an evolving worldwide marketplace in the exciting decades ahead.

In arriving at this position, the Leadership Group will address a broad, and at times confronting, spectrum of Industry, workforce and engagement related concerns. Examples of which may include;

1. Foster an atmosphere conducive to collaboration across all industry sectors
2. Promote an attitudinal change to training and the benefits of training
3. Positioning of the aquaculture industry as a workplace of choice
4. The looming recruitment threat from the Qld mining industry (20, 000 workers by 2020)
5. Determining the impact of the current regulatory environment on Industry confidence
6. Raising industry's level of engagement with the education and training sector.

In the last newsletter, I reported on the development of an application for the Queensland aquaculture industry to access training for Restricted Electrical Licensing.

This application was duly completed and submitted in late October 2009. Industry representatives are meeting with the Electrical Safety Office on the January 18 2010. Fingers crossed for a favourable outcome, which will then be related to the wider industry by the relevant sector associations.

OTHER NEWS

FARMS FOR SALE WANTED

Marilyn Poulsen is looking to purchase a prawn farm in Queensland. For more information please contact her on 0429 622 347.

BROLGA PROJECT

The Brolga Project is a rural initiative designed to facilitate the experience of working in rural and regional Australia, for University students. The Brolga Project has a massive database of University students looking for a placement during the calendar year in particular their holidays and after graduation. These students are enthusiastic and would like to a sample of life in the "Bush" either as a life experience or as a trial run for a more permanent move in the future with reliable employment. Areas of study range from engineering, nursing and accounting through to graphic design, public relations and the agricultural sciences. Some of the projects that your community could be using Brolga Project students for include:

- designing marketing strategies including brochures, websites, filming local events for promotional DVDs and writing media releases;
- working on local landscaping and eco friendly council projects;
- installing WiFi systems which will provide wireless internet for the whole community;
- running holiday activities for local youth;
- research and compilation of data to support projects or funding applications;
- working on the event management, logistics and PR of local events to make them a success; and
- helping rewrite policy and procedures for council and local non government organisations.

To learn more about the Brolga Project go to www.brolgaproject.com.au or contact Lara Wilde from Local Intelligence on 041 777 9917.

ARTEMIA SUPPLIER

Boyd King from Cognis may be contacting farms to send out free samples of artemia. Cognis is an Associate Member of the APFA. For more information contact 0428 351 052.

SEAFOOD CRC MASTER CLASS

The Australian Seafood CRC, together with the world famous Grimsby Institute is pleased to offer you a one day course on "Seafood Waste Minimisation and Maximising Profit Through Process Efficiency" as part of the Seafood CRC's Master Class Series.

Dates for this exciting and not-to-be -missed initiative are:

- Monday February 8 2010 - Perth
- Wednesday February 10 2010 - Adelaide
- Thursday February 11 2010 - Brisbane
- Friday February 12 2010 - Melbourne

The cost to attend is also a bargain - \$50 for Seafood CRC Participants and \$100 for non- Seafood CRC Participants! This includes morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and course materials! What great value! Please contact or phone emily.mantilla@seafoodcrc.com or phone toll free 1300 732 213 for more details.

MORE FROM THE CRC – CALL FOR STUDENTS

The Seafood CRC is calling for another round of students and student projects in to the CRC's education and training program. The Seafood CRC has identified a number of priority areas in which we would love to see applications address. These are:

- 1) Breeding for Profit:
 - a. quantitative genetics and its application in aquaculture breeding programs
 - b. genetics software tool development and data management
 - c. industry applications of genetic markers and genomics
 - d. control of maturation and breeding in aquaculture stocks
- 2) Finfish/Aquaculture
 - a. production interventions impacting on product quality
- 3) Future Harvest
 - a. spatial and temporal management of invertebrate fisheries
 - b. adoption of new fisheries management or fisheries business structures
 - c. fishing to market
 - d. decision support tools for fisheries

For more information, please contact Emily Mantilla at the CRC for more details or call or email me and I can send you the application forms.

PRAWN PEARLER CO

The Pearler Prawn Co have obtained a permit to collect brood stock and at the moment are able to fill orders 12 months of the year. Despite the name we are a small family business. For more information, contact Lara on 0408727323 or via email at lara2c@y7mail.com.

ECONOMY STILL THE MAJOR CHALLENGE IN 2010: FRASER

Treasurer Andrew Fraser has last week said Queensland's economic recovery was underway but warned challenges remained. The first Cabinet meeting of 2010 was last week briefed by the Treasurer on Queensland's economic prospects for the year. Unemployment, he said, is still expected to peak next financial year according to the Mid-Year Review published last month. "The enduring challenge for Queensland is to generate enough jobs to cater for a growing population. The Treasurer went on to say that the December Business Outlook had upgraded Queensland's economic outlook for 2010. "The upgrade and their analysis supports the view that the challenges

are still significant but our longer term prospects remain a sure bet." No comment was made on the rural industry.

DAYS ARE NUMBERED FOR ABBOTT'S CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Federal Climate Change Minister Penny Wong last week released a statement highlighting that Tony Abbott now has less than five days to release his climate change policy. To meet this guarantee Ms Wong said, Mr Abbott will need to release a fully costed and detailed climate change policy that is capable of delivering the full bipartisan target range. The Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, she said, is fully costed and works by putting a limit on Australia's carbon pollution and making polluters pay. It is the cheapest and most effective way to reduce carbon pollution and deliver Australia's full emissions reduction target range. That is why this policy approach has been supported by mainstream conservative leaders such as former Prime Minister John Howard, former Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull and former Treasurer Peter Costello, as well as business groups. Mr Abbott has already made clear that he refuses to make polluters pay. To fund his policy, Mr Abbott must explain what spending measures he will cut or what the impact will be on debt and deficit. "After two months of talk and spin, it is time for Mr Abbott to put forward his detailed, fully costed climate change policy," Ms Wong said.

2010 THE YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) released a statement announcing 2010 as the 'International Year of Biodiversity' recently. Biodiversity is of critical interest to farmers the statement said, since biodiversity and agriculture are inter-dependent and both are pivotal in addressing looming climate change and food security pressures. The NFF says the challenge before the Australian Government – as with world governments – is striking the right balance between biodiversity while, at the same time, ensuring that farmers are able to increase food production by the 70 per cent needed in 2050 to feed a projected world population of nine billion people. NFF President David Crombie said Australian farmers are crucial to conserving ecosystems, and this is reflected in Australia's Environmental Stewardship program which has been overwhelmingly embraced by farmers over the past two years.

ABARE 2010 CONFERENCE

The 2010 ABARE Outlook Conference will be held on March 2 and 3 in Canberra. With the recent economic challenges faced by Australia and the world, the focus of the Conference will question the outlook for Australia. Industry stakeholders from around Australia are encouraged to attend and explore the issues for Australia's agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resource sectors. Keynote sessions include an economic overview, future directions for trade, farm performance, climate change, water and irrigation and key commodities. For more information go to www.abare.gov.au/outlook.