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Pork CRC Students Making a Mark

CRC for High Integrity Australian Pork supported Animal Science Honours student, Danica Evans, who recently received First Class Honours for her work and topped her year, is now doing the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, also at Murdoch University.

Her Pork CRC Honours thesis was titled *Comparison of acetylated high amylose maize starch and zinc oxide for amelioration of post-weaning diarrhoea in weaned pigs*.

Danica's supervisor, Prof John Pluske and Pork CRC CEO, Dr Roger Campbell agreed her results confirmed the efficacy of zinc oxide for ameliorating diarrhoea in newly-weaned pigs, but the mechanism was yet to be definitively established.

After reviewing Danica's final report, Dr Campbell declared that the positive effects of the maize starch product, a form of resistant starch, on feed efficiency in the third week and overall were interesting and implicated a possible role for lower ileal/hindgut activity in performance.

"This is possibly linked to the gut bacteria/fermentation of favourable products from the resistant starch," Dr Campbell said.

He added that the potential implications for grower/finisher pigs was exciting, but the issue, as always, would be cost, given the product was geared to the human market.

Congratulating Danica, Dr Campbell said coming first in her honours year was a fantastic achievement.

"We are proud of our Pork CRC supported students as they contribute to the pork industry while studying, often with significant findings from their under and post graduate studies.

"Many then, of course, go on and take up professional positions in industry where their good work continues," he said.

Ingunn Stensland, another former Pork CRC supported Murdoch University Honours student supervised by Prof Pluske, recently commenced employment as R&D Officer with WA's Craig Mostyn Group, best known for its Linley Valley Pork.

Dr Campbell said the uptake of Pork CRC supported students by industry had been exceptional and a clear indicator of the student and supervisor quality in Pork CRC's education program.

Of 23 postgraduates and 12 Industry Placement Program people who started with Pork CRC (HIAP), 14 postgraduates (including seven of nine yet to complete their higher degrees) and 11 IPPs are now employed. The total is 23 as two post-grads are also IPPs.



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Media Release