

Meat Industry Engineering Network

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Project Description

The Meat Industry Engineering Network is a state based network of researchers, engineers, maintenance managers and trade assistants, trainers and regulators. It is a well-established network that is a highly effective means of distributing new information and providing extension services for AMPC RD&E activities.

Project Content

In the 2015-2016 year a total of three network meetings were conducted. This schedule comprised one network meeting in each Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales.

As in previous years there were presentations and support from AMPC and industry suppliers of automation and chilling systems. Similarly industry participation remains strong. These forums allow research agencies to promote and disseminate industry-funded innovations and research. They also enable industry to provide feedback to researchers on their programs and their validity as well as a forum to discuss issues with regulators and identify those that require research or training initiative to resolve them.

In addition, MINTRAC Project Officers are, as part of this project, available to on-plant personnel between meetings to answer incidental queries, investigate and respond to issues raised by engineering and maintenance personnel, and visit plants when requested.

Project Outcome

In this project the aim has been to provide plant-based engineering personnel, researchers and regulators with a useful forum to explain, explore and discuss new issues and innovations. The network also provided an opportunity to invite service providers or individual meat processing plants to showcase initiatives. The nominated areas included:

- Robotics
- Processing aides
- Automation
- Bandsaw technologies
- Ammonia refrigeration operation and safety
- CO² capture research.
- On plant visit to see robotics firsthand.





Benefit for Industry

This year's round of network meetings has further developed the Meat Industry Engineering Network which is evolving into a recognised industry forum for the sharing, debate and dissemination of a wide range of issues and research related to automation, robotics, and refrigeration developments. This was shown to be a benefit to plant engineers and maintenance staff in preparation of uptake in technology on plant and also identifying skill sets required to support this uptake.

This network offers industry personnel, researchers and other industry personnel an opportunity to join a community of practice that alerts them to the latest issues and potential solutions. It is beginning to enable the industry to develop a common understanding of such issues as automation, robotics and options being developed for better use of energy and cost reduction that come from this.

For research organisations such as MLA and AMPC the Network has provided a way of explaining to company engineers and maintenance personal the nature of a specific research project, what its possible outcomes are and how the industry can benefit from research outcome and future research opportunities. This collaborative approach to resolving problems and sharing knowledge is relatively unique in what is a highly competitive industry.

In a forever changing technology environment the network has provided engineers and maintenance personal with exposure to current and emerging technology for the red meat industry.

The Meat Industry Engineering Network is a highly effective means of distributing new information and providing extension services for AMPC RD&E activities.



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