



**AMPC**

**AUSTRALIAN MEAT PROCESSOR CORPORATION**



## **MURDOCH RESEARCHER TO INVESTIGATE WHETHER CALM CATTLE PRODUCE BETTER BEEF**

Murdoch University scientist Peter McGilchrist, of Beaconsfield, has received the Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC) Award worth \$22,000 to pursue an innovative scientific theory that will deliver long term benefits to Australia's rural industries.

The AMPC award was one of 11 Science and Innovation awards for young people in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. These awards were presented by the Honourable Joe Ludwig, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry at the recent Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) Outlook conference in Canberra.

The winning projects were selected on their potential contribution to the ongoing success and sustainability of Australia's agricultural industries.

Peter is embarking on a 12-month research project to determine whether calm cows produce better beef.

A postdoctoral fellow within Murdoch University's School of Veterinary and Biomedical Science, he will spend the next year investigating the links between animal temperament, feedlot performance and muscle glycogen levels at slaughter.

The outcomes of his study are expected to help Australian beef producers understand the benefits of calm cattle and illustrate the advantages of selecting breeding stock based on temperament.

"Low muscle glycogen levels cause dark cutting syndrome, which costs the Australian beef industry in excess of \$35 million a year due to its negative impact on meat quality," explains Peter.

"My study will assess the temperament of around 1000 mixed sex beef cattle entering commercial feedlots, based upon their flight speed upon exit from a handling crush.

"The same animals will then be regularly weighed and scanned in the feedlot to assess performance and muscle samples collected at slaughter for analysis of glycogen and lactate concentration."

The outcomes of Peter's study will be outlined in a research paper and presented to industry groups like Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Lot Feeders Association and Western Australian Lot Feeders Association. He also plans to present his findings at the International Congress of Meat Science and Technology conference in Belgium.