



Research in both experimental and commercial settings demonstrate that stockperson characteristics, such as attitudes and handling behaviour, affect fear responses in farm animals, which through acute and chronic stress, can seriously limit farm animal welfare.

In recognition of the vital role that stockpeople play in the welfare, health and productivity of livestock under their care, the research team, including psychologist Professor Grahame Coleman, developed **ProHand**[®], a computer-based training program. It uses a cognitive-behavioural technique to target and change the attitudes of stockpeople towards their animals.

ProHand[®] is an on-line training program which is offered by Australian Pork Limited to farm and abattoir stockpeople working in the Australian and New Zealand pork industries.

The on-line program was developed by the AWSC in collaboration with the Temple Grandin with funding from Australian Pork Limited and the Australian Meat Processor Corporation.

ProHand[®] is a proven training program, tested on stockpeople in dairy and pig farms and at pork and red meat abattoirs in Australia and around the world.

ProHand[®]:

- Improves the quality of human-animal interactions (minimises handling stress)
- Improves animal performance and welfare
- Improves stockperson work motivation, performance and job satisfaction.

Objectives and benefits of **ProHand**[®]:

- Develop an understanding of the impact of interactions between stockpeople and farm animals on the animal's behaviour, welfare and productivity
- Outline why farm animals become fearful of humans and how it can markedly affect animal productivity and welfare
- Identify appropriate and inappropriate behaviours of stockpeople towards farm animals and how to recognise fear responses in farm animals
- The Stockperson Handling Questionnaire allows stockpeople to compare their attitudes with industry others and provides tailored feedback for improvement
- Provide Professional Handling Guidelines to maximise animal productivity and welfare and ensure animals are easy to handle and move
- Aid retention of the **ProHand**[®] message by delivering posters and newsletters following training
- Potential for 5% increase in milk yield without additional capital investment
- Potential for an extra pig born alive per sow per year
- Potential for 5% improvement in pig growth rate
- Potential for improvements in meat quality.

ProHand[®] is an original concept developed by Australian Pork Limited and AWSC in 1996



Structure of **ProHand**[®]:

- Section 1 INTRODUCTION
 - Section 2 ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE
 - Section 3 FEAR OF HUMANS IN PIGS
 - Section 4 THE EFFECT OF FEAR OF HUMANS ON EASE OF HANDLING OF PIGS
 - Section 5 THE EFFECT OF FEAR OF HUMANS ON THE PRODUCTIVITY AND WELFARE OF PIGS
 - Section 6 HOW TO AVOID THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEAR IN YOUR PIGS
 - Section 7 WHAT DETERMINES OUR BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS PIGS? (including questionnaire feedback)
 - Section 8 PROFESSIONAL HANDLING GUIDELINES FOR STOCKPEOPLE MANAGING PIGS
 - Section 9 HOW TO MAINTAIN CHANGES IN YOUR BEHAVIOUR
 - Section 10 CONCLUSION
- Delivery is on-line with facilitated discussion during, or following the course.
 - The program takes c. 90min to complete, is designed for all levels of literacy and does not require computer skills. Stockpeople do the program at their own pace and are given summaries and reviews throughout.
 - Supported by materials designed to assist in maintaining behavioural change (mugs, caps, posters).
 - Certificate of completion is generated.

For more information on **ProHand**[®] programs, please contact:

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