



National Meat Industry  
Training Advisory Council Limited  
**MINTRAC** Scholarship Program

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S M A L L P R O J E C T G R A N T

## Julie Cassar

### Small project grant

**Project title: Identifying factors that cause the rapid rate of pH decline in heavy carcasses from animals in long feeding programs.**

### *The Grant*

The MINTRAC Research Grant has helped me immensely in undertaking my Honours project. The majority of the research took place at Rockdale Abattoir, in Yanco, which is located in southern NSW. The grant allowed me to travel to Yanco and the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) at Cowra on a regular basis, in order to undertake sampling and sample measurements. The grant also eliminated the financial stress of being a student and allowed me to focus more on my studies, during my last year of university.

### *Personal benefits of the study*

The project complemented my studies by allowing me to gain further knowledge of the meat industry and complemented lectures in meat science, which I studied in second semester. Through completing this project I have also gained valuable experience working in a large beef processing abattoir. This opportunity has also allowed me to broaden my knowledge in the area of meat science and given me an opportunity to work alongside many experts in the field, which will undoubtedly benefit me in my future career.

### *Benefits to the company*

The company involved in this project will definitely benefit from the findings of this project in the future. This is because the findings of the project have the potential to assist Rockdale and other abattoirs in controlling, quality and efficiency related issues associated with rapid pH decline in order to attain the ultimate pH. The main finding was that a rapid pH decline is not the cause of the 'sloppy' meat reported by the company. Dark cutting was also unexpectedly found to be a significant problem at the abattoir, and possible solutions have been made in order to overcome this problem.

### *Benefits to the meat industry*

The project formed part of a wider industry program designed to address a significant commercial problem potentially facing the red meat industry's export markets. The results obtained from this study will contribute significantly to the understanding of "the rate of pH decline" in the meat industry. Thus, overall it will assist in providing a continuous supply of product with high eating quality for consumers, which will also benefit international trade in our meat products.

## *Suggestions*

The MINTRAC scholarship scheme has been extremely helpful and professional and I cannot think of any suggestions to improve the scheme as everything ran smoothly.



Julie Cassar



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Toll free: 1800 817 462  
Email: [mintrac@mintrac.com.au](mailto:mintrac@mintrac.com.au)  
website: [mintrac.com.au](http://mintrac.com.au)

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