

# NEWS

## Rural

### Australian pork producer starts on road towards renewable energy at piggeries

ABC Rural By [Joanna Prendergast](#)

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**One of Australia's largest pork producers plans to operate its four piggeries in Western Australia on 100 per cent renewable energy.**

Westpork has taken the first steps of a \$4 million, 2.2 megawatt wind and solar project with the installation of solar systems at three of its properties.

Westpork is working with WA-based renewable energy company Advanced Energy Resources (AER) on the renewable plan, which will eventually involve solar, wind and potentially biogas systems in piggeries at Serpentine, Mindarra, Gingin and a planned Moora facility.

AER managing director Luca Castelli said the majority of power would come from wind energy, but the initial solar systems were generating about 20 per cent of the piggeries' required power.

"Advanced Energy has developed the project. They also built it, and we've provided the finance and have a long-term power purchase agreement in place with Westpork.

"It has been a very common arrangement in overseas markets and it's now finding its way into Australia and WA as well."

Mr Castelli said it took about four months to build the solar systems, which were roof mounted and free standing.

He expected the wind projects would be completed within 18 months.

### Target is challenging

Mr Castelli conceded the target of 100 per cent renewable was somewhat ambitious, but not uncommon.

"I think there are some technical challenges to overcome to get to that point," he said.

"I think commercially, battery technology will play a big part. Commercially I think batteries aren't there yet, but anything is possible."



[Westpork has contracted Advanced Energy Resources to install a number of systems at its piggeries.](#) (Supplied: Advanced Energy Resources)

Motivated by energy prices, improving technology and a desire to reduce environmental emissions, Mr Castelli said his company had commitments for 20 megawatts of solar and wind projects in the pipeline.

"There's been quite a lot of interest from similar organisations looking to do this type of embedded generation projects," he said.

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