Ag & Vet Weekly

Monday August 31 – Friday September 4, 2020

All the news on ASX-listed agriculture and veterinary companies

*** ASX, AVW-44 DOWN: NANOLLOSE UP 4%; AVECHO DOWN 11%**

*** DR BOREHAM'S CRUCIBLE: WIDE OPEN AGRICULTURE**

*** FEDERAL $220k FOR INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE**

*** BUBS REVENUE UP 24.4% TO $54.6m, LOSS DOWN 78% TO $7.8m**

*** FOOD REVOLUTION REVENUE UP 19% TO $35m, LOSS DOWN 39% TO $10m**

*** SEAFARMS REVENUE UP 14% TO $28m, LOSS DOWN 17.5% TO $25.5m**

*** PALLA H1 REVENUE DOWN 54.9% TO $12.3m, LOSS UP 120.7% TO $9m**

*** ELIXINOL H1 REVENUE DOWN 54.2% TO $7.9m, LOSS UP TO $81.6m**

*** THC H1 REVENUE UP 63% TO $3.5m, LOSS DOWN 3.2% TO $5.6m**

*** MURRAY COD REVENUE UP 13.7% TO $4m, LOSS TO PROFIT OF $62k**

*** CRESO H1 REVENUE UP 58.3% TO $1.5m, LOSS UP 177.3% TO $17.4m**

*** OCEAN GROWN REVENUE DOWN 17.3% TO $2.5m, PROFIT TO LOSS OF $4.6m**

*** MGC REVENUE UP 210.0% TO $2.0m, LOSS UP 124.6% TO $19.4m**

*** CANN GLOBAL REVENUE UP 271% TO $1.8m, LOSS DOWN 12.8% TO $8m**

*** TERRAGEN REVENUE UP 56% TO $1.5m, LOSS UP 53.4% TO $4.9m**

*** WIDE OPEN RECORD REVENUE OF $1.45m, LOSS DOWN 11% TO $1.9m**

*** WATTLE HEALTH REVENUE UP 18% TO $1m, LOSS UP 470% TO $59m**

*** BUBS RAISES $28.3m, SHARE PLAN FOR $10m MORE**

*** FOOD REVOLUTION JUICE PRICE INCREASES**

*** NUFARM: $215m IMPAIRMENT CHARGES FOR EUROPEAN ASSETS**

*** OPYL: 'A I PREDICTS TRIAL RESULTS INCLUDING COVID-19 STUDIES'**

*** REGENEUS PAYS CEO LEO LEE $325k BONUS FOR KYOCERA DEAL**

*** PHARMAUST, OBSIDIAN PARTNER FOR WASTE TO FUELS TECH**

*** ROOTS PLEADS SCHULTZ TO ASX 42% PRICE QUERY**

*** VINVA TAKES 5% OF BEGA**

*** YARRA FUNDS TAKES 5.6% OF SELECT HARVESTS**

*** SPHERIA TAKES 6.45% OF RIDLEY**

*** SG HISCOCK TAKES 5.1% OF ALTHEA**

*** JANET CAMERON TAKES 19.98% OF TASFOODS**

*** CVC TAKES 17.4% OF TASFOODS**

*** CANNPAL LOSES DIRECTOR MAX JOHNSTON**

*** THC LOSES CEO KEN CHARTERIS, JARROD WHITE INTERIM; EXECUTIVES**

*** MGC APPOINTS EVAN HAYES DIRECTOR, 2 EXECUTIVES**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was down 3.1 percent on Friday September 4, 2020, with the ASX200 down 187.1 points to 5,925.5 points. Ten of the AVW-44 stocks were up, 23 fell, seven traded unchanged and four were untraded.

Nanollose was the best, up 0.3 cents or 4.2 percent to 7.4 cents, with 1,385,388 shares traded. Synlait climbed four percent; Althea, AP Hemp and Elixinol were up more than three percent; Clean Seas, Next Science and Pharmaust improved more than two percent; Select Harvests rose 1.3 percent; with Huon up 0.3 percent.

Avecho led the falls, down 0.1 cents or 11.1 percent to 0.8 cents, with 2,768,299 million shares traded. Seafarms lost 8.05 percent; Roots shed 6.9 percent; Palla Pharma and Wide Open were down more than five percent; Bubs, Ecofibre, Memphasys, MGC and THC fell four percent or more; Apiam, Clover, Ridley and Terragen lost three percent or more; A2 Milk, Cann Group, Elders and Regeneus shed more than two percent; Bega, Costa, Nufarm and Tassal were down more than one percent; with Fonterra down by 0.8 percent.

DR BOREHAM’S CRUCIBLE: WIDE OPEN AGRICULTURE

By TIM BOREHAM

ASX code: WOA; **Börse Frankfurt:** 2WO

Share price: $1.02; **Shares on issue:** 91,695,919; **Market cap:** $93.5 million

Chief executive officer: Dr Ben Cole

Board: Anthony Maslin (chair and founder), Dr Cole, Elizabeth Brennan, Stuart McAlpine and Ronnie Duncan

Financials (Year to June 2020): revenue $2.24 million, loss $1.86 million, cash of $6.7 million*****

***** After $3m capital raising in June

Major identifiable holders: Fanja Pon and Hans Rave 18.0%, Commonland Foundation 13.4%, Anthony Maslin 8.56%, Ben Cole 8.29%

Okay - we’ve all been educated now about the evils of meat in terms of damage to both the environment and one’s body.

Then there’s the lecture from your teen kids about cruelty - which is hard to refute - and that means the sizzling T-bone on the grill doesn’t look so juicy, after all.

Behind the numbers about methane emissions and water usage in the plant-versus-meat-based protein debate, one surprise stat is that 98 percent of US consumers of plant-based 'meats' consume the real animal flesh as well.

"If you haven't spoken to someone in the last week who is either reducing or eliminating meat from their diet, I would be surprised," says Wide Open chief Ben Cole.

"Plant-based markets are huge and open for disruption."

The company notes that plant-based shoppers spend 68 percent more, which hopefully doesn't imply that (a) the products are overpriced or (b) they're predominantly well-paid inner urban trendies.

What's clearer about the meat-versus-plant debate is the level of investor interest in the latter: in the March quarter $US741 million ($A1.03 billion) of funding poured into the sector, compared with $US747 million for the whole of 2019 and $US673 million in 2018.

Local investors eyeing an equivalent to, say, the Nasdaq-listed plant protein poster child Beyond Meat aren't exactly spoiled for choice.

It's therefore not surprising they've developed an appetite for Wide Open, which plays in the plant-based protein sector as well as the ethically-produced meat game.

Based in West Australia's wheat belt, Wide Open describes itself as a regenerative food and agriculture company.

"Products are chosen based on their market potential and the positive impact they deliver to farmers," Dr Cole says.

In essence, the company partners with farmers committed to rebuilding healthy soil, establishing biodiversity and restoring waterways.

Dr Cole says the company has a "for profit and for purpose" mission: "We take the best of Western Australia's regenerative produce and offer it to global markets."

Spawned from hope and tragedy

Wide Open Agriculture listed on July 6, 2018, after raising $5 million at 20 cents apiece.

Founder Anthony Maslin had an unusually poignant motivation for the project that formed the company.

He was driven by a quest for "meaning and positive change" following the death of his three children Mo, Elvie and Otis on Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 (downed by a missile over the Ukraine in July 2014).

With a PhD in environmental engineering, Dr Cole was involved in sanitation programs for developing countries with the aid agency Unicef.

Convinced that grant-based programs tended to fail he founded a business in Vietnam, Karibon, to make anti-pollution face masks using the same carbon cloth used in chemical warfare suits.

Wow - this was an enterprise ahead of its time!

He returned home to Western Australia and was introduced to landscape regeneration by Mr Maslin, who had built a solar energy company.

Promoting healthier soil

So far, Wide Open has signed up 12 farmers growing livestock, oats and lupin.

The regenerative principles underpinning Wide Open differ to organic farming, which bans man-made chemicals and has strict third-party accreditation.

Wide Open allows its participating farmers to use artificial fertilizers, but has other non-negotiable rules such as not using antibiotics in beef and lamb production. The oat and lupin seeds must also have no chemical residues.

“Regenerative allows the farmer and consumer to get the produce they are expecting but at a price every family can afford,” Dr Cole says.

“It’s a continuous improvement process around soil health, biodiversity and water usage.”

Wide Open’s own products are sold under the banner of Dirty Clean Foods, which was dreamt up with the help of Perth’s best marketing brains.

“The name is targeted to a millennial and baby boomer market,” Dr Cole says. “The term ‘dirty’ is really about clean nutritious vibrant soil. Everyone wants to know the story that backs their food and that’s what Dirty Clean Foods is offering.”

The products are stocked by about 30 independent Western Australia supermarkets, notably IGA, Farmer Jacks and The Good Grocer.

Management intends to engage the bigger grocers over time.

Animal flesh: we’ll meat you in the middle

To date, the company has derived most of its revenue from Dirty Clean Foods-branded meats, but over time the company expects the flesh of the beast to contract to about 10 percent to 15 percent of its portfolio.

These numbers are not arbitrary, but align with the views of a panel of health and agriculture experts assembled by the Lancet magazine. The cognoscenti concluded that the optimum portion of meat in a diet for health and ecological reasons was …drum roll … 10 percent to 15 percent.

Philosophically, the diet debate should be all about moderation, says the “flexitarian” Dr Cole. “People will continue to eat animal protein but it should be making the world a better place, not degrading it. But when they do, our meat is the only meat they should eat.”

Soy sorry, you’ve been replaced … by Angus

Soy is the current key sources of plant-based proteins, with supporting roles played by lentils, peas, hemp and chia.

But the eco-conscious souls munching their faux burgers should be conscious that soy is usually genetically-modified and intensively produced.

Pea protein is widely used, but produces a lot of starchy by-product. Other plant protein sources have their problems, such as lack of scale.

Wide Open is eyeing Australia sweet lupin (Lupinus angustifolius or narrow-leafed lupin), a WA wheat belt speciality, as a viable and more acceptable alternative.

Currently, Western Australia cockies grow about one million tonnes of the protein-rich legume annually, accounting for 60 percent of supply in a $200 million a year market.

The trouble is, almost all of the stuff is fed to livestock. “We feed it to the sheep on our family farm and it is an amazing source of protein,” Dr Cole says. “But for the last 20 years people have been trying to understand how to get it into a human diet.”

The key problem is that lupin is insoluble and doesn’t blend well with other ingredients.

“It’s like pouring sand into a glass; it drops to the bottom and doesn’t mix with other food ingredients.”

The company has licenced a process from Curtin University that allows the proteins in the lupins to be “unfolded” into a 3-D molecule and attached to the sugars, fats and carbohydrates.

“Once we demonstrate this works, we can go to the Beyond Meats, Impossible Foods and Nestles of the world and say we have an environmentally-credentialed, plant-based protein.”

The company has supplied 200 kilograms to the CSIRO Food Innovation Centre, in view of developing a protein isolate product. Curtin University has started laboratory work to optimize the process, while food processing plant specialist Process Partners is scoping other commercialization aspects.

Sowing success in oats

Wide Open also plans an assault on the rapidly growing market for soy and almond milk using the fat oats grown by Western Australia farmers.

“We have the best oats in the world, over here,” Dr Cole says. “They’re plump and sweet, triple the size of European oats.”

Apart from the cereal’s high eco and health credentials, baristas love oat milk. “It foams so well and it has a nice neutral flavor, rather than the rich distinct flavor of soy or almond.”

Oat milk already has taken off, especially in Europe and is a $300 million a year market.

The company, by the way, is also partnered with CBH Group, the country’s biggest grain exporter, to explore the prospect of marketing and delivering carbon-neutral grain.

Finances and performance

Wide Open is in its early stages having chalked up just over half a million bucks in June quarter sales, up 49 percent over the March quarter.

Full year revenue was $2.23 million.

Derived from the Dirty Clean Foods lamb and beef brands, sales to date have been Western Australia-focused.

But June quarter online revenue grew 175 percent to $232,033 and now accounts for 40 percent of sales.

The company is also toying with an Amazon Markets style model, by which like-minded food companies can use its on-line platform (takers to date include Runnymead Farm eggs and Bannister Downs Dairy).

Wide Open has $6.7 million in the bank, having raised $3 million in June via an institutional placement at 27 cents a share, an 18 percent discount.

The company then raised a further $2.3 million as option holders exercised their paper at a well in-the-money strike price of 30 cents to 50 cents.

Management declares the company is “adequately funded to continue its current activities during these uncertain times and will continue to demonstrate appropriate fiscal restraint”.

Wide open shares have traded between 10 cents (March 19 this year) and their August 18 peak of $1.50 a share.

In short, there are plenty of happy campers on the register.

Alone in the field

Do we need to remind gentle readers that Wide Open is the only company of its ilk on the ASX? Arguably the nearest ‘regenerative’ comparison is the US-listed Vital Farms, which recently listed on the Nasdaq and is now valued at $US1.6 billion.

On the branding side, Dr Cole says Wide Open has similarities with A2 Milk, which has marketed its cow-juice concept “incredibly well”.

Now owned by Chinese interests, dairy house Bellamys has been adept at value adding for domestic and export markets.

Other admired non-food regenerative brands include the Body Shop and outdoor clothing chain Patagonia.

If anything, Beyond Meat and fellow Nasdaq listee Impossible Foods are potential customers, rather than rivals.

Dr Boreham’s diagnosis:

For those who want gee-whiz statistics, the global plant-based protein market was estimated at $US18.5 billion in 2019 and is forecast to grow to $US40.6 billion by 2025 (a 14 percent per annum increase).

Dirty Clean Foods has huge potential as a switched-on brand, even in its relatively small home market. But supermarket shelves are not exactly devoid of plant-based and eco-friendly foods, so the greater potential lies with the lupins and - in the nearer term - oat milk.

“The soy protein market alone is close to $7 billion per annum, so to disrupt that market with an environmentally-credentialed new plant-based protein is very exciting to us,” Dr Cole says.

“We see lupins as having the real scale, but in terms of our own development, oat milk is the most tangible.”

Investor-wise, Wide Open is clearly benefiting from its ASX Orphan Annie status and there’s no reason why the appeal should not endure.

As for signing on farmers, the only limit is the sky beyond the vast - and hopefully healthier - pastures.

“It’s not about limited demand,” Dr Cole says. “It’s all about bringing on supply and there are some good networks working in that space to encourage new companies like ours.”

Disclosure: Dr Boreham is not an agronomist and does not possess a relevant – or irrelevant - doctorate of any sort. He only eats meat on days ending with a ‘y’.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment says "young innovators" have until October 2, 2020 to apply for 10 grants of $22,000 each.

A media release from the Department said that the 2021 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry grants were "open for young innovators and their big ideas for agriculture"

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment acting chief scientist (agriculture) Dr Robyn Cleland said that the Science Awards fund "innovative projects that will address long standing issues in the agriculture sector".

"The range of projects we receive each year from our next generation of researchers, innovators and others impress me with their creative approaches to a wide range of industry issues," Dr Cleland said.

"I'd encourage anyone committed to the future success and sustainability of Australia's agriculture sector to visit the Science Awards website and get started on their application," he said.

The Department said that the Science and Innovation Awards was a competitive grants program open to 18 to 35 year-olds "to undertake new and creative scientific-based research to benefit Australia's agricultural industries".

For further information about the awards and the procedure to apply, go to: https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/conferences-events/scienceawards or email scienceawards@awe.gov.au.

BUBS AUSTRALIA

Bubs says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 24.4 percent to $54,644,952 with net loss after tax down 78.1 percent to $7,771,138.

Bubs said revenue was from sales of its infant formula, food, adult powder and canning services for dairy products, including $36,540,584 from Australia, $12,692,522 from China and $5,411,846 from other countries.

The company said diluted loss per share was down 87.5 percent to 1.0 cent and it had cash and cash equivalents of $26,025,575 at June 30, 2020 compared to $23,291,058 at June 30, 2019.

Bubs fell 3.5 cents or four percent to 83.5 cents with 4.6 million shares traded.

FOOD REVOLUTION GROUP

Food Revolution says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 18.9 percent to $34,813,988 with net loss after tax down 39.0 percent to $9,613,161.

Food Revolution said the revenue primarily came from sales of its hand sanitizer and Original Black Label juice brand, acquired from the US-based Kraft Heinz subsidiary Golden Circle for $1.25 million last year (AVW: Sep 6, 2019).

The company said that basic loss per share was down 54.15 percent to 1.49 cents, with net tangible asset backing per share down 65.8 percent to 0.55 cents.

Food Revolution said it had cash and cash equivalents of $2,937,212 at June 30, 2020 compared to $3,045,578 at June 30, 2019.

Food Revolution was unchanged at 4.5 cents.

SEAFARMS GROUP

Seafarms says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 14.0 percent to $27,815,691 with net loss after tax down 17.5 percent to $25,542,668.
Seafarms said the revenue was primarily derived from sales of its prawn products.
The company said that construction for its northern Australia prawn aquaculture facility Project Sea Dragon continued to progress despites impacts relating to the Covid-19 pandemic, including border restrictions.
Seafarms said that diluted loss per share was down 31.9 percent to 1.24 cents, with net tangible asset backing per share down 50 percent to 1.0 cent.
The company said it had cash and cash equivalents of $6,466,055 at June 30, 2020, compared to $16,302,589 at June 30, 2019.
Seafarms fell 0.7 cents or 8.05 percent to eight cents.

PALLA PHARMA (FORMERLY TASMANIAN POPPY INDUSTRIES)

Palla says revenue for the six months to June 30, 2020 was down 54.9 percent to $12,328,942 with net loss after tax up 120.7 percent to $9,014,762.
Palla said revenue was from opium poppy products and poppy seeds in Australia and Norway but did not mention its marijuana products.
The company said revenue was reduced primarily due to lower API volumes from a major contracted customer, whose manufacturing licence had been suspended.
Palla said net tangible asset backing per share was down 5.6 percent to 34 cents, diluted loss per share was up 42.1 percent to 7.16 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $1,644,223 at June 30, 2020 compared to $2,019,087 at June 30, 2019.
Palla fell four cents or 5.2 percent to 73 cents.

ELIXINOL GLOBAL

Elixinol says revenue for the six months to June 30, 2020 was down 54.2 percent to $7,850,000 with net loss after tax up 729.8 percent to $81,630,000.
Elixinol said revenue was from its hemp food additive and marijuana products, and included $4,779,000 in the Americas, $1,024,000 in Europe and the UK and $2,047,000 in Australia, following the $346,000 sale of its 50.5 percent interest in Elixinol Japan to Takeshi Sakurada (BD: Dec 3, 2019).
The company said net tangible asset backing per share fell 69.5 percent to 22.39 cents, diluted loss per share was up 606.7 percent to 54.70 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $16,769,000 at June 30, 2020 compared to $20,244,000 at June 30, 2019.
Elixinol was up 0.5 cents or 3.2 percent to 16 cents.

THC GLOBAL GROUP

THC says revenue for the six months to June 30, 2020 was up 63.0 percent to $3,483,566 with net loss after tax down 3.2 percent to $5,578,924.
THC said revenue included $3,428,003 from the manufacture and distribution of hydroponics equipment, materials and nutrients and $55,563 from its Canndeo medical marijuana products.
The company said net tangible asset backing per share was down 7.1 percent to 13 cents, diluted loss per share was down 11.3 percent to 3.94 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $9,039,348 at June 30, 2020 compared to $5,689,612 at June 30, 2019.
THC fell one cent or 4.1 percent to 23.5 cents.

MURRAY COD AUSTRALIA

Murray Cod says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 13.7 percent to $3,961,464 with last year's net loss after tax turned to a net profit after tax of $61,690.
In March, Murray Cod said it would pay $6.5 million to acquire a Murray Cod hatchery and 75-acre property in Euberta, New South Wales from Murray Darling Fisheries Pty Ltd (AVW: Mar 20, 2020).
Today, the company said revenue was from Murray Cod fish sales and the construction and sale of aquaculture equipment.
Murray Cod said net tangible asset backing per share was up 66.7 percent to 5.0 cents, diluted loss per share of 0.689 cents was turned to a diluted earnings per share of 0.01 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $6,081,964 at June 30, 2020 compared to $3,010,181 at June 30, 2019.
Murray Cod was unchanged at 12.5 cents.

CRESO PHARMA

Creso says revenue for the six months to June 30, 2020 was up 58.3 percent to $1,462,638 with net loss after tax up 177.3 percent to $17,406,878.
Creso said revenue was from sales of its food additive and marijuana products, including $1,196,891 from Europe and the Middle East, and $256,637 from North America.
The company said net tangible asset backing per share was down 86.7 percent to 1.6 cents, diluted loss per share was down 14.4 percent to 7.97 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $3,282,130 at June 30, 2020 compared to $3,578,130.
Creso was unchanged at 3.2 cents with 3.5 million shares traded.

OCEAN GROWN ABALONE

Ocean Grown says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was down 17.3 percent to $2,529,832 with net profit turned to a loss of $4,565,020.
Ocean Grown said revenue was from sales from its abalone farming, including $2,101,443 from Asia, $412,852 from Australia and $15,537 from North America, with the loss due to abalone prices and included a fair value adjustment of $2,171,409.
Ocean Grown said net tangible asset backing per share was down 23.2 percent to 7.6 cents, diluted profit per share of 0.59 cents was turned to a diluted loss per share of 2.40 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $2,778,877 at June 30, 2020 compared to $2,571,694 at June 30, 2019.
Ocean Grown was unchanged at 9.6 cents.

MGC PHARMACEUTICALS

MGC says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 210.0 percent to $2,034,649 with net loss after tax up 124.6 percent to $19,370,226.
MGC said the increased net loss was due to the restatement of comparative results, related to the reassessment of $6,270,000 performance shares as an equity-based share-based payment, with revenue including $1,119,414 in pharmaceutical marijuana sales and $915,235 in non-pharmaceutical sales.
MGC said net tangible asset backing per share was down 54.2 percent to 0.22 cents, diluted loss per share was up 97.2 percent to 1.40 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $1,873,373 at June 30, 2020 compared to $2,354,086 at June 30, 2019.
MGC fell 0.1 cents or 4.2 percent to 2.3 cents with 10.15 million shares traded.

CANN GLOBAL

Cann Global says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 275.5 percent to $1,805,004 with net loss after tax down 12.8 percent to $8,050,808.
Cann Global said revenue was from its hemp and medical marijuana products.
The company said net tangible asset backing per share was up 34.6 percent to 0.35 cents, diluted loss per share fell 54.4 percent to 0.26 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $7,417,095 at June 30, 2020 compared to $5,183,769 at June 30, 2019.
Cann Global was unchanged at 0.5 cents with 6.0 million shares traded.

TERRAGEN HOLDINGS

Terragen says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 56.0 percent to $1,530,853 with net loss after tax up 53.4 percent to $4,925,615.
Terragen said revenue was from sales of its Mylo microbial feed supplement and Great Land products, with $1,295,149 from Australia and $235,704 from New Zealand.
The company said net tangible asset backing per share was up 234.8 percent to 8.84 cents, diluted loss per share was down 3.3 percent to 3.27 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $16,378,408 at June 30, 2020 compared to $1,837,241 at June 30, 2019.
Terragen fell one cent or 3.85 percent to 25 cents.

WIDE OPEN AGRICULTURE

Wide Open says it has record revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 of $1,446,639, with net loss after tax down 10.7 percent to $1,856,115.
Wide Open said its revenue was up from $50,664 in the 12 months to June 30, 2019 and primarily was derived from sales of its regenerative food products (see above).
The company said it expected the sales momentum to continue due to the "growing demand from customers as they incorporate ethical food into their daily diet".
Wide Open said diluted loss per share fell 13.2 percent to 2.56 cents, net tangible asset per share was up 31.8 percent to 4.97 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $4,431,385 at June 30, 2020 compared to $3,280,077 at June 30, 2019.
Wide Open fell six cents or 5.6 percent to $1.02 with 1.15 million shares traded.

WATTLE HEALTH AUSTRALIA

Wattle Health says revenue for the year to June 30, 2020 was up 18.15 percent to $1,048,000 with net loss after tax up 470.0 percent to $58,943,000.
Wattle Health said the loss was due to "one off non cash reductions", including the Corio Bay Dairy Group joint-venture following its placement into voluntary administration, as well as securities for its failed Blend and Pack sale and prepayments made by Corio Bay to Organic Dairy Farmers of Australia, with revenue primarily from sales of infant formula.
Wattle Health said that diluted loss per share rose 321.6 percent to 21.50 cents, net tangible asset per share fell 86.0 percent to 3.58 cents and it had cash and cash equivalents of $1,118,000 at June 30, 2020, compared to $18,317,000 at June 30, 2019.
Separately, Wattle Health said that Corio Bay Dairy Group had been placed into voluntary administration and it was "working with administrators to realize [the] best outcome for shareholders" (AVW: May 22, Jun 19, 2020).
The company said that the proposed transaction with Shepparton Partners Collective was not finalized in the three-month period and had been terminated (AVW: May 22, 2020).
Wattle Health was in a suspension and last traded at 53 cents.

BUBS AUSTRALIA

Bubs says it has raised $28.3 million through a placement at 80 cents a share and hopes to raise a further $10 million through a share plan at the same price.
Bubs said the offer price was a 15.8 percent discount to the five-day volume weighted average to August 28, 2020.
The company said the share plan, for shareholders on the record date of September 2, would open on September 9 and close on September 23, 2020.
The company said funds would go towards the launch of its Vita Bubs vitamin supplements, the development of new goat dairy products, extending production capability to include a production line for single-serve sachets and expansion of sales in new international markets.
Bubs said Bell Potter Securities and PAC Partners Securities were the joint lead managements of the capital raising.

FOOD REVOLUTION GROUP

Food Revolution says it has "significant price increases" from all major retailers for its Original Black Label range of juice products, effective from the end of September.
Food Revolution chief executive officer Tony Rowlinson said that "with the orange juice industry significantly impacted by drought, fires and Covid-19 that has led to short supply and extremely high costs, we are relieved as to the positive outcome".
"The strong sales volumes we have experienced [in the year to date] reflect the growing demand in the fresh juice market as consumers place a growing importance on vitamin enriched and functional beverages to help build their immune system," Mr Rowlinson said.
"The improvement in volumes and price coupled with our internal initiatives on operational efficiencies and cost reduction will deliver help deliver higher profits and positive cash in the coming years," Mr Rowlinson said.
Food Revolution did not disclose the details of the price increase.

NUFARM

Nufarm says it expects to recognize non-cash impairment charges of $215 million for its European assets for the year to July 31, 2020, subject to audit.
Nufarm said the impairment included a $190 million pre-tax impairment of intangible assets and a $25 million derecognition of tax assets.
The company said it expected underlying earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) for the year to September 30, 2020 of between $290 million and $300 million.
In April, Nufarm said it had sold its crop protection and seed treatment businesses in Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Chile to the Tokyo-based Sumitomo Chemical Company for $1.188 billion (AVW: Mar 6, Apr 3, 2020).
Today, the company said that following the sale, it expected underlying Ebitda from continuing operations of between $230 and $240 million.
Nufarm said it also expected foreign exchange losses of $33 million, including $9 million from discontinued operations.
Nufarm fell seven cents or 1.8 percent to $3.89 with 1.9 million shares traded.

OPYL

Opyl says a study of its artificial intelligence clinical trial prediction software has analyzed the probability of Covid-19 vaccine and antibody therapy trial success.

In February, the company said it had completed an initial proof-of-concept stage for artificial intelligence software to predict the probability of a clinical trial completing each phase, using information from more than 300,000 published trials and more than 60 trial variables to develop the algorithm (AVW: Feb 21, 2020).

This week, Opyl said its forecasting model included 475 Covid-19 trials and its software could be applied to any indication or any drug, diagnostic, vaccine or medical device.

The company said its Covid-19 proof-of-concept study found: that therapies showed "a much higher probability of success … than vaccines"; the software "identified the two vaccines most likely to succeed their current stage of development"; and at least one antibody therapy had the best probability of phase III trial success.

Opyl chief executive officer Michelle Gallaher told Biotech Daily that the identities of the two vaccines and the antibody therapy were "confidential".

In the media release to the ASX, Ms Gallaher said the company could "see significant value in using the tool to inform clinical and treatment strategies, early procurement decision making and investments".

"The early outcome of this software trial, investigating the 475 registered Covid-19 clinical trials related to vaccines or treatments, has delivered results that give us an indication of the power of the predictive platform in identifying the Covid-19 trials, or any drug or device trial, with the greatest chance of success," Ms Gallaher said.

Opyl said that the uncertainty and delays around trials was a significant risk and knowing the predicted probability score and having an opportunity to improve the trial design before beginning the trial would "save hundreds of millions of dollars".

The company said the next stage of development would involve increasing the data pool from additional data sources and expanding the variables to further train the algorithm and refine the specificity and reliability "to improve the efficiency, improve the application of research funding and ultimately the return on investment".

Opyl was in a trading halt "pending a response to ASX queries" last trading at 23 cents.

REGENEUS

Regeneus says it will pay chief executive officer Leo Lee a cash bonus of $325,000 following the signing of an agreement with the Toyko-based Kyocera Corp.

Last month, Regeneus said it had signed a $26.4 million licence and collaboration agreement with Kyocera for its stem cell platform Progenza OA for knee osteoarthritis, and received an upfront payment of $1.3 million (BD: Aug 14, 2020).

Regeneus fell 0.5 cents or 2.7 percent to 18 cents with 1.4 million shares traded.

PHARMAUST

Pharmaust says wholly owned subsidiary Epichem and Western Australia's Obsidian Minerals have established Perren Pty Ltd to develop a waste to fuels technology.

Pharmaust said Perren would use a benchtop flow reactor to use oxygen and water at high temperatures and high pressure to break down input materials and turn them into fuels, chemicals, agricultural growth stimulants and ethanol.

The company said both companies would own 50 percent of Perren, with Epichem chief executive officer Colin La Galia appointed as the chief executive officer.

Pharmaust was up 0.5 cents or 2.7 percent to 19 cents with 2.15 million shares traded.

ROOTS SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES

Roots has told the ASX that it is not aware of any information it has not announced which, if known, could explain recent trading in its securities
The ASX said the company's share price rose 42.3 percent from a low of 2.6 cents to a high of 3.7 cents on August 31, 2020 and noted a "significant increase" in trading volume.
Roots fell 0.2 cents or 6.9 percent to 2.7 cents with 39.2 million shares traded.

BEGA CHEESE

The Sydney-based Vinva Investment Management says it has become a substantial shareholder in Bega with 10,770,417 shares or 5.02 percent of the company.
Vinva said between May 1 and September 1, 2020 it bought, disposed and transferred shares, with the largest purchase 5,254,462 shares for $26,743,947 or $5.09 a share.
Bega was up nine cents or 1.6 percent to $5.45 with 839,091 shares traded.

SELECT HARVESTS

Yarra Funds Management says it has become a substantial shareholder in Select Harvests with 5,391,290 shares or 5.5789 percent of the company.
The Melbourne-based Yarra Funds said that between April 27 and August 25, 2020 it acquired 5,897,638 shares for $36,607,476 or $6.21 a share.
Select Harvests was up seven cents or 1.3 percent to $5.57 with 320,525 shares traded.

RIDLEY CORP

Spheria Asset Management Pty Ltd says it has become a substantial shareholder in Ridley with 20,460,127 shares or 6.45 percent of the company.
The Brisbane-based Spheria said that between August 14 and 31, 2020 it bought and sold shares, with the largest purchase 9,050,167 shares for $6,425,619 or 71 cents a share.
Ridley was up three cents or 3.85 percent to 75 cents.

ALTHEA GROUP HOLDINGS

SG Hiscock & Company says it has become a substantial shareholder in Althea with 11,813,182 shares or 5.06 percent of the company.
The Melbourne-based SG Hiscock failed to supply the cost of the shares as required under Section 671B of the Corporations Act 2001.
Althea was up 1.5 cents or 3.5 percent to 44.5 cents with 1.5 million shares traded.

TASFOODS

Janet Heather Cameron says she has increased her substantial shareholding in Tasfoods from 48,215,532 shares (17.64%) to 59,347,784 shares (19.98%).
The Hobart-based Ms Cameron said that between May 7 and August 31, 2020 she acquired 10,349,712 shares for $879,725 or 8.5 cents a share.
Last week, Tasfoods said it had raised $650,000 through a placement and hoped to raise $3.4 million through a three-for-20, partly underwritten rights offer at 8.5 cents a share, supported by Ms Cameron and CVC Limited (AVW: Aug 28, 2020).
Tasfoods was untraded at 9.3 cents.

TASFOODS

CVC Limited says it has increased its substantial shareholding in Tasfoods from 38,367,078 shares (14.04%) to 51,769,199 shares (17.43%).
The Sydney-based CVC said that on August 31, 2020 it acquired 13,402,121 shares for $1,139,180 or 8.5 cents a share in an entitlement offer and placement.
Last week, Tasfoods said it had raised $650,000 through a placement and hoped to raise $3.4 million through a three-for-20, partly underwritten rights offer at 8.5 cents a share, supported by Jan Cameron and CVC Limited (AVW: Aug 28, 2020).

CANNPAL ANIMAL THERAPEUTICS

Cannpal says non-executive director Max Johnston has resigned, effective from September 3, 2020.
Cannpal said Mr Johnston had been a director since 2017 but resigned due to an increased workload as a director and chairman for several other ASX-listed companies and due to the Covid-19 lockdown.
The company said it did not currently intend to appoint a replacement.
Cannpal was unchanged at 10.5 cents.

THC (THE HYDROPONICS CO) GLOBAL GROUP

THC says it has stood down chief executive officer Ken Charteris, replaced by chief financial officer Jarrod White on an interim basis.
THC said it had appointed former head of corporate strategy Sonny Didugu as chief operating officer, Lou Cattelan would join its board management committee and Philip Leighfield had been appointed as joint company secretary.
The company said Mr White had been with the company since 2017, including as chief financial officer since 2019, and Mr Didugu had held senior executive management roles with the company since 2018.
THC said both Mr White and Mr Didugu would receive no further remuneration for their additional responsibilities and it would begin a search for a time chief executive officer.

MGC (MEDICAL GRADE CANNABIS) PHARMACEUTICALS

MGC says it has appointed Evan Hayes as a non-executive director and advisor and Amir Polak as chief technology officer and head of pharmaceutical production.
MGC said it had appointed Sabina Suljaković as head of quality assurance in Slovenia.
The company said Mr Hayes was currently the Asia-Pacific managing director of Factors Group and an executive director, chairman of the scientific advisory board and chief scientific officer of Bioceuticals.
MGC said Mr Polak was previously the co-founder of Green City, the head of chemical production at Nano-Dimension, and previously consulted with MGC.
The company said Ms Suljaković was a registered pharmacist and registered qualified and responsible person at the Slovenian Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices.