Ag & Vet Weekly

Monday February 1 - Friday February 5, 2021

All the news on ASX-listed agriculture and veterinary companies

*** ASX UP, AVW-44 DOWN: MGC UP 21%; CANNPAL DOWN 5%**

*** DR BOREHAM'S CRUCIBLE: BEGA CHEESE**

*** RIC DROPS LOAN RATES TO 1.77%**

*** CANN REQUESTS 'INVESTIGATION' TRADING HALT**

*** FONTERRA INCREASES FARMGATE MILK PRICE**

*** ALTHEA H1 RECEIPTS UP 204% TO $4.7m**

*** THC RECEIPTS UP 44% TO $6.9m**

*** OCEAN GROWN ABALONE RECEIPTS DOWN 1.2% TO $1.5m**

*** HUON EXPECTS 'SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER' 2021 EARNINGS**

*** UK APPROVES PALLA NORWAY CODEINE FACILITY**

*** MGC RAISES $11.6m TO LIST ON LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE**

*** WIDE OPEN, CURTIN UNI WORK ON LUPIN PROTEIN FOOD**

*** ANATARA: ANR-PF POULTRY 'SUCCESS'; $888k FEDERAL RDTI**

*** CANNPAL: WA SUPREME COURT ORDERS AUSCANN MERGER MEETING**

*** MORGAN STANLEY BELOW 5% IN A2 MILK**

*** UBS BELOW 5% IN TASSAL**

*** YARRA FUNDS TAKES 7.7% OF SELECT HARVEST**

*** TATTARANG, ANDREW FORREST TAKE 5% OF RIDLEY**

*** PERPETUAL TAKES 7.6% OF CLOVER**

*** AP HEMP: CIA MANN 13%, JAMES HOOD 8.2%, TTOR 5.4%**

*** A2 MILK APPOINTS DAVID BORTOLUSSI CEO, M-D**

*** PALLA LOSES DIRECTOR TODD BARLOW**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market climbed 1.11 percent on Friday February 5, 2021, with the ASX200 up 75.0 points to 6,840.5 points. Fourteen of the AVW-44 stocks were up, 22 fell, five traded unchanged and three were untraded.

MGC was the best, up 0.6 cents or 21.4 percent to 3.4 cents, with 59.2 million shares traded. Murray Cod climbed 13.2 percent; Althea was up 6.1 percent; Food Revolution rose 5.9 percent; Memphasys was up 4.8 percent; Nanollose climbed 3.6 percent; Apiam and Terragen rose more than two percent; Clean Seas and Wide Open were up more than one percent; with Bega, Elders, Nufarm and Tassal up by less than one percent.

Cannpal led the falls, down one cent or 5.4 percent to 17.5 cents, with 102,257 shares traded. Palla fell five percent; Regeneus and Roots lost more than four percent; AP Hemp, Opyl and THC were down more than three percent; Anatara, Auscann, Cann Group, Elixinol and Seafarms shed more than two percent; Clover, Select Harvest and Synlait were down more than one percent; with A2 Milk, Bubs, Costa, Ecofibre, Fonterra, Huon and Next Science down by less than one percent.

DR BOREHAM'S CRUCIBLE: BEGA CHEESE

By TIM BOREHAM

ASX code: BGA

Share price: $5.80; **Shares on issue:** 302,337,115; **Market cap:** $1,753,555,267

Chief executive: Paul van Heerwaarden

Board: Barry Irvin (executive chair), Richard Cross, Patria Mann, Raelene Murphy, Terry O'Brien, Peter Margin

Financials (year to June 2020): revenue $1492.2 million (up 5.15%), reported net profit after tax $21.3m (up 80%), dividend 5.0 cents (down 9%), cash $22.9m, net debt $235.6m (down 11%)

Major shareholders: Ethical Partners Funds Management 7.74%, Perpetual Funds Management 7.6%, Fidelity 5.4%, Vinva Investment Management 4.1%, Dimensional Funds Advisors 3.5%, Spheria Asset Management 3.3%.

As with Patsy and Edina, it's all about 'names sweetie darling' around the corridors of the rapidly expanding milk processor's HQ in the southern New South Wales town of Bega.

In this case the names aren't LaCroix or Chanel, but powerhouse grocery brands that hold number one or number two positions in the market.

Bega has just finalized the $534 million purchase of Lion Dairy & Drinks from Japanese owner Kirin, after the Federal Government blocked Chinese group Mengniu Dairy's proposed purchase last year. The deal bolsters Bega's annual revenue to more than $3 billion, delivering Lion brands including Dairy Farmers, Pura, Dare, Big M, Yoplait and Farmers Union.

It also elevates Bega from the country's third biggest to second biggest milk processor, ahead of Kiwi giant Fonterra but behind Canada's Saputo, which owns Murray Goulburn. Lion also delivers Australia's biggest cold chain distribution network, consisting of 136 facilities.

In 2017, Bega shelled out $460 million for the local grocery business of Mondelez, which US giant Kraft Heinz had sold to Mondelez in 2012. Most notably, the deal delivered the Vegemite brand, which despite its Aussie street cred had been owned by Kraft since the 1920s. So, all in all, a classic case of buying back the farm - literally.

The Lion purchase will double Bega's milk intake from dairy cockies to 1.75 billion litres a year.

Bega now goes by the subtitle of The Great Australian Food Company. Given the rapid shift to brands - notably non-dairy ones - we won't be surprised if the company sheds its outdated main moniker of Bega Cheese in the near future.

In the meantime, though, the company faces an ongoing legal stoush on the peanut butter front (see below).

A dairy impressive heritage

As visitors to the Bega Cheese Heritage Centre would know, the Bega Valley has a dairying heritage dating back to the mid-1800s. The company itself was founded as the Bega Co-operative Creamery Company in 1899, before demutualizing and listing on the ASX in August 2011.

Along the way, the company acquired 70 percent of Tatura Milk Industries in 2007 and the remainder in 2011. In 2009, the company picked up Kraft's cheese making facility at Strathmerton in Victoria and in 2014 commissioned a nutritional canning and blending plant in Derrimut in Melbourne's inner west, which was sold to Mead Johnson in 2017.

In 2018, the company paid $250 million to buy the Koroit plant (milk, butter and nutritional powders) from fellow processor Saputo. Koroit, in Western Victoria, also does a line in lactoferrin, a valuable milk by product.

In a move that would have done Sir Joh proud, in late 2017, Bega shelled out $12 million for the Kingaroy, Queensland based Peanut Company of Australia.

In its first big stab at expansion, in mid-2013, the company bid $350 million for the Warrnambool Cheese and Butter Factory, but missed out to Canada's Saputo in a tussle that also involved Murray Goulburn as a bidder and Kirin taking a strategic stake in Warrnambool.

Bega adviser David Williams says that the company made about $100 million on the "failed" bid when Saputo pushed the price up for Warrnambool, Bega and Murray Goulburn in a bidding war, which reset the value of dairy assets in Australia.

Since listing, Bega has been run by Barry Irvin. A notable board inclusion is Peter Margin, who ran the Lion businesses when they were known as National Foods.

Currently, Bega operates eight manufacturing sites in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. It buys 850 million litres of milk annually from 420 farmers and produces 300,000 tonnes of bulk and branded product.

In 2019, Bega closed its cheddar and mozzarella plant at Coburg North in Melbourne's northern suburbs, having acquired the site in 2009.

The company's titular product, Bega cheese, is actually licenced to Fonterra and produced under a white labelling arrangement.

In the 2018-'19 year Bega sourced 40 percent of its revenue from dairy consumer packaged goods, 35 percent from dairy and other ingredients (including bulk export lines) and 16 percent from spreads and 'other' grocery such as dips and sauces.

Peanut butter wars

The purchase of the Kraft Australian grocery business has plunged Bega into two messy and expensive legal battles, one of which has been resolved in its favor. When the assets were transferred from Mondelez to Bega, previous Kraft-Mondelez sloppy paperwork created a dispute about whether Bega was entitled to the so-called ‘trade dress’ - the distinctive yellow-lidded containers for its peanut butter.

Bega simply replaced Kraft with its name on the jars. But with its eyes on re-launching its own brand in the $100 million a year peanut butter market, Kraft took Bega to court.

In April last year, the full Federal Court ruled in Bega’s favor and then the High Court refused to hear Kraft’s appeal application. The gist of the decision was that in buying Kraft’s local business Bega was also acquiring the rights to the design of the jars - for both smooth and crunchy peanut butter, to be precise.

The trouble is, Bega’s use of its own name on a wider suite of products incensed Fonterra, which launched a legal action claiming this breached its exclusive branding agreement with Bega penned back in 2001. In part, Fonterra contends that plonking the Bega name on products such as peanut butter “damages the existing reputation of the Bega trademarks for representing natural cheese sourced from Australia”.

The Victorian Supreme Court finished hearing the case in July last year and a judgment is pending. In a counter claim filed in March 2019, Bega alleges that Fonterra breached the agreement by under-investing in the Bega brand, relative to Fonterra’s other brand such as Mainland.

In August last year, the company disclosed total costs of $41.2 million over two years, pertaining to the Heinz and Fonterra jousts and acquisitions. The Bega-Fonterra contract runs to 2026 and pencil in that as the divorce date: this couple might be sharing the same hayshed, but there’s no love lost.

Finances and performance

The $534 million Lion acquisition - or $668 million after expenses - was mainly funded by a $401 million capital raising and $267 million of debt. The retail stanza raised $115 million, with only 40 percent of holders participating (or 50 percent after applications into an over-subscription facility). But not to worry, the offer was underwritten.

Priced at $4.60, a nine percent discount, the institutional placement and rights offer raised $286 million.

The acquisition has elevated Bega’s debt to $518 million, or 3.3-times underlying earnings. Management is targeting a ratio of more like two times earnings, which is expected to be achieved by divesting non-core assets, including property. Management expects $36 million of cost benefits from the purchase, which will result in the company’s earnings per share growing in the double digits up to June 2022.

Bega's own earnings have been constrained by a drought-induced tight milk supply. But the Kraft lines have been doing well, in line with buoyant grocery conditions generally.

Lion has struggled, but generated $56 million of underlying earnings before interest, tax depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) from $1.6 billion of revenue in the 12 months to September 2020. Excluding the acquisition, Bega said it would satisfy market expectations of Ebitda of $124 million for the year to June 2021, 20 percent higher than previously.

Over the last 12 months Bega shares have traded between $3.86 (January 6, 2020) and $5.82 (now). Historically the price has ranged between $1.49 (July 2012) and $7.71 (December 2017). Bega has a 15 percent shareholder cap, which expires this August.

So, who Better Buy Bega? We'll just have to wait and see …

Dr Boreham's diagnosis:

As with the company-making Kraft acquisition, the Lion purchase can't be downplayed in terms of moving Bega from its reliance on raw milk pricing and availability. Even on Lion's subdued numbers last year, its revenue and earnings were 107 percent and 54 percent of Bega's (respectively).

During the drought, all processors faced the problem of tight supply which meant they had to pay more at the farm gate for the cow juice, thus crimping margins.

The wet 2020 on the eastern seaboard has ameliorated this issue. Still, in the long term the company is assuming that non-coastal dairying regions (notably the Goulburn Valley) will become unviable because of climate change.

In any event, branded goods mean fatter margins, don't they sweetie darling?

Broker EL&C Baillieu estimates the Lion portfolio will increase Bega's branded revenue to 80 percent of the total, from 64 percent, currently.

Bega also faces the normal risk of paying for an acquisition - or, in its case, acquisitions. Lion's earnings have been going backwards, so the company needs to tap the expected cost benefits from lowering non-manufacturing overheads.

From what we can see, Bega's purchase price was in line with other comparable transactions. The headline number is also less than the $600 million offered by China's Mengniu Dairy, before the suitor was kyboshed by the Federal Government, effectively handing Bega a $66 million discount.

And given Kirin bought the old National Foods business for $2.8 billion in 2007, it can't be accused of overpaying, especially given that Kirin National Foods bought Dairy Farmers for $910 million the following year.

Disclosure: Dr Boreham is not a qualified agronomist and does not possess a doctorate of any sort. He enjoys his Vegemite for breakfast lunch and tea … ok, breakfast only.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, REGIONAL INVESTMENT CORP

The Regional Investment Corporation says that its variable interest rate will fall from 1.92 per cent to 1.77 per cent, effective from February 1, 2021.
The Federal Government-owned Corporation said that Agristarter Loan and Farm Investment Loan borrowers, as well as those who submitted their Drought and Agbiz Drought loan applications after the interest-free terms ended on September 30 2020, would have interest rates reduced from 1.92 per cent to 1.77 per cent.
RIC chief executive officer Bruce King said customers would benefit from the falling interest rate and hoped they might be able to reinvest the savings back into their businesses, particularly those still managing through or recovering from drought.
“The RIC is here to help farmers and farm-related small businesses in financial need of a concessional loan, and we’re pleased to see the RIC’s variable interest rate fall to another record low,” said Mr King.
“The five years’ interest-only terms on our loans can assist our customers to invest in their businesses to either recover more effectively from recent tough drought conditions, expand and explore new markets or establish a new farm business,” Mr King said.
The Corporation said its loans offered five years’ interest only and five years’ principal and interest payments over 10 years, with an option to refinance the remainder with the customer’s commercial lender at the end of the loan term.
A spokesperson for the Regional Investment Corporation told Ag & Vet Weekly that said for the six months to December 31, 2020, the Corporation had approved more than 830 loans valued at more than $865 million.
A separate media release from the Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud and the Minister for Finance Simon Birmingham said the reduced interest rate would provide “significant financial assistance to farmers and farm-related small businesses that are in most financial need”.

CANN GROUP

Melbourne medical marijuana company Cann Group has requested a trading halt pending an announcement “relating to an investigation that the company is undertaking”.
Trading will resume on February 8, 2021 or on an earlier announcement.
Cann Group was down 1.5 cents or 2.2 percent to 66 cents.

FONTERRA CO-OPERATIVE GROUP

Fonterra says it has increased its 2020-’21 forecast farmgate milk price range to $NZ6.90 to $NZ7.50 ($A6.54 to $A7.10) per kilogram of milk solids (kg/MS).
Last year, Fonterra said it had increased its 2020-’21 forecast farmgate milk price range to $NZ6.30 to $NZ7.30 ($A5.86 to $A6.79) per kg/MS (AVW: Oct 16, 2020).
Today, the company said the increase was a result of strong demand for dairy.
Fonterra chief executive officer Miles Hurrell said the company had “strong demand from China and South East Asia for whole milk powder and skim milk powder, which are key drivers of the milk price.”
“Now that we’re through the peak of the 2021 milking season, the impact of any changes in global market dynamics is reducing and our view of the season is firming up”, Mr Hurrell said. “However, we are continuing to keep a close eye on a number of factors … [including] New Zealand weather conditions, expected challenges from further waves of Covid-19 and increasing milk production in the Northern Hemisphere,” Mr Hurrell said.
Fonterra fell two cents or 0.5 percent to $4.29.

ALTHEA GROUP HOLDINGS

Althea says receipts from customers for the six months to December 31, 2020 was up 203.9 percent to $4,696,000, compared to the previous corresponding period.
Althea said that receipts for marijuana products for the three months to December 31, 2020 was up 191.4 percent to $2,623,000, with cash equivalents of $8,967,000 at December 31, 2020 compared to the $22,359,000 at December 31, 2019.
Althea was up three cents or 6.1 percent to 52 cents with 2.85 million shares traded.

THC GLOBAL GROUP (FORMERLY THE HYDROPONICS CO)

THC says receipts from customers for the 12 months to December 31, 2020 was up 46.3 percent to $6,916,000 compared to the corresponding prior period.
THC said its receipts for its marijuana products and hydroponics equipment for the three months to December 31, 2020 fell 12.7 percent to $1,632,000, with cash equivalents of $6,968,000 at December 31, 2020 compared to the $3,555,000 at December 31, 2019.
THC was down one cent or 3.85 percent to 25 cents with 1.5 million shares traded.

OCEAN GROWN ABALONE

Ocean Grown Abalone says receipts from customers for the six months to December 31, 2020 fell 1.2 percent to $1,487,000, compared to the corresponding prior period.
Ocean Grown said that receipts for the three months to December 31, 2020 was up 39.8 percent to $867,000, in the previous corresponding period, with cash equivalents of $3,630,000 at December 31, 2020 compared to the $4,034,000 at December 31, 2019.
Ocean Grown was untraded at 9.9 cents.

HUON AQUACULTURE GROUP

Huon says it expects its operating earnings for the 12 months to June 30, 2021 to be "substantially lower" than the $47.3 million from the previous corresponding period.
Huon said the expected reduction of its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (Ebitda) for the year to June 30, 2021 was due to an expected 15 percent fall in average salmon price, high freight costs and global uncertainty related to Covid-19.
The company said expected charges for impairment and write-down of assets for the six months to December 31, 2020, which would be non-cash and not impact earnings.
Huon said that since "early 2020" it had diversified into international markets and reduced its export to China to one third of the previous volume.
The company said the recent escalation in trade tensions between China and Australia had confirmed the decision to reduce its trade with the Chinese market and expected further reductions.
Huon said it incurred damage to pens of about $1.8 million in two unrelated events, a fire in a pen and a tear in a pen net, which would not impact the overall harvest for the 12 months to June 30, 2021 (AVW: Nov 27, 2020, Jan 22, 2021).
The company said the fish loss at its Ingleburn, New South Wales facility, which was the subject of a police investigation with five employees charged, would reduce the book value of inventory and gross margins by $2.1 million (AVW: Jan 22, 2021).
Huon said that following the year to June 30, 2021, it expected supply demand dynamics to reach an international supply shortage, particularly when demand from the food service sector returns to pre-Covid-19 levels, which would increase the cost of salmon.
Huon fell one cent or 0.4 percent to $2.63.

PALLA PHARMA

Palla says UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has granted marketing authorization for its Norway production facility.
In December 2020, Palla said the Agency wanted more information to approve its Norwegian codeine phosphate and paracetamol facility (AVW: Dec 4, 2020).
Palla was down three cents or five percent to 57 cents.

MGC (MEDICAL GRADE CANNABIS) PHARMACEUTICALS

MGC says it has commitments for raise GBP6.5 million ($A11.6 million) to be the first medicinal marijuana company to list on the London Stock Exchange main market.
MGC said it offered shares at 1.475 British pence (2.6 Australian cents), a 2.3 percent premium to the last closing price on February 1, 2021, due to the exchange rates.
The company said the offer would fund trials of its Artemic for Covid-19 and its marijuana Cannepil for epilepsy, as well as cover distribution expansion, registration costs and general working capital.
The company said it would begin trading on the London Stock Exchange on February 9, 2021 under the same code of MXC and maintain a dual-listing with the ASX.
MGC was up 0.6 cents or 21.4 percent to 3.4 cents with 59.2 million shares traded.

WIDE OPEN AGRICULTURE

Wide Open says it has an agreement with Curtin University to develop its plant-based lupin food-grade protein into meat, dairy and gluten food substitutes.
Last year, Wide Open said the CSIRO would produce a food-grade lupin for plant-based food, using technology from Perth's Curtin University (AVW: May 22, Dec 11, 2020).
Today, the company said it would conduct up to 10 weeks of research at Curtin University to "develop a preliminary range of plant-based food and drink products" using the lupin protein isolate, with the technology co-founder, Stuart Johnson, as a consultant.
Wide Open said the resulting food products would be vegan, gluten-free, soy-free and have no genetically-modified organisms.
The company said the research would inform how the lupin protein could be used in its Dirty Clean Food product range.
Wide Open rose 1.5 cents or 1.9 percent to 79 cents.

ANATARA LIFESCIENCES

Anatara says its randomized, placebo-controlled, poultry challenge trial of ANR-pf for necrotic enteritis has been "successful".
Anatara said the study, titled 'Efficacy of ANR-pf on the performance of broilers subject to subclinical and necrotic enteritis challenges' showed that over the experimental period of 35 days, treatment with ANR-pf in water provided benefit when compared to untreated birds in weight gain ($p = 0.007$), feed intake ($p = 0.039$), lesion scores in both the jejunum ($p = 0.040$) and ileum ($p = 0.035$) and oocyst shedding ($p < 0.05$).
Anatara chief executive officer Steve Lydeamore said that "while this was an initial study, the results we have seen are extremely encouraging and point to a potentially commercially valuable product for development".
"Further work to optimize the dose and dosing regimen will help to cement the product's value," Mr Lydeamore said.
Anatara was down half a cent or 2.4 percent to 20 cents.

ANATARA LIFESCIENCES

Anatara says it has received $888,049 from the Australian Tax Office under the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive program.
Anatara said the rebate related to research and development expenditure for the year to June 30, 2020.

AUSCANN, CANNPAL

Cannpal says the Supreme Court of Western Australia has ordered a scheme meeting to vote on the Auscann merger and approved the despatch of a scheme booklet.
Cannpal said the meeting of Cannpal shareholders to consider the scheme at BDO, Level 11, 1 Margaret Street, Sydney, on March 8, 2021 at 12pm (AEDT).
The company said that following Australian Securities and Investments Commission registration, the scheme booklet would be available on its website and via the ASX.
Last year, Auscann and Cannpal said they had entered into a scheme of arrangement for Auscann to acquire Cannpal and form a combined entity, with shareholders to be offered 1.3 Auscann shares for every Cannpal share, valuing each Cannpal share at 18.4 cents a share or $17.5 million for the company (AVW: Nov 20, 2020).
Auscann was down 0.5 cents or 2.7 percent to 18 cents with two million shares traded.
Cannpal fell one cent or 5.4 percent to 17.5 cents.

THE A2 MILK COMPANY

New York's Morgan Stanley says it has ceased its substantial shareholding in A2 Milk, retaining 37,104,051 shares or 4.996 percent of the company.
Last week, Morgan Stanley said it had become substantial in A2 Milk with 37,173,201 shares or 5.006 percent of the company (AVW: Jan 29, 2021).
Today, Morgan Stanley said that between January 21 and February 2, 2021 it bought, sold and swapped shares in more than 2,800 transactions.
A2 Milk fell four cents or 0.4 percent to $10.36 with 4.6 million shares traded.

TASSAL GROUP

The Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) Group AG says it has ceased its substantial shareholding in Tassal.
UBS said that between December 21, 2020 and February 2, 2021 it bought, sold, borrowed and returned shares, with the single largest sale 254,532 shares for $907,534 or $3.57 a share.
Tassal was up three cents or 0.9 percent to $3.43 with 699,056 shares traded.

SELECT HARVESTS

Yarra Funds Management says it has increased its substantial shareholding in Select Harvests from 6,460,285 shares (6.6851%) to 9,234,049 shares (7.7050%).
Melbourne's Yarra Funds says that between October 7, 2020 and January 29, 2021 it acquired 2,885,509 shares for $15,742,384 or $5.46 a share and disposed of 111,745 shares for $666,962 or $5.97 a share.
Select Harvests was down eight cents or 1.5 percent to $5.30 with 204,013 shares traded.

RIDLEY CORP

Perth's Tattarang Pty Ltd and Andrew Forrest say they have become substantial in Ridley with 16,365,156 shares or 5.12 percent of the company.
Tattarang is a private investment group owned by the Forrest family.
Fortescue Metals Group chairman and Tattarang co-chair Mr Forrest said that between August 26, 2020 and February 3, 2021 he bought 16,365,156 shares for $12,075,408 or an average of 73.8 cents a share.
Ridley was unchanged at 94 cents.

CLOVER CORPORATION

Perpetual says it has increased its substantial shareholding in Clover Corp from 11,022,174 shares (6.63%) to 12,708,968 shares (7.64%).
The Sydney-based Perpetual said that between December 9, 2020 and February 1, 2021, it bought and sold shares at prices ranging from $1.44 to $1.78, with the single largest purchase 277,635 shares at $1.78 a share on December 16.
Clover fell two cents or 1.35 percent to $1.46.

AUSTRALIAN PRIMARY HEMP

CIA Mann Family Pty Ltd says it has increased and been diluted in AP Hemp from 11,550,000 shares (15.14%) to 11,810,682 shares (12.77%).
The Camperdown, Victoria-based CIA Mann Family said it acquired 260,682 shares in the recent $5.2 million placement at 32 cents a share (AVW: Jan 22, 2021)
James Robert Hood says his 7,600,000 share-holding in AP Hemp has been diluted from 9.96 percent to 8.22 percent, in the recent placement (see above).
The Melbourne-based TTOR Pty Ltd says its 4,999,999 share-holding in AP Hemp has been diluted from 7.19 percent to 5.41 percent, in the recent placement (see above).
AP Hemp was down 1.5 cents or 3.3 percent to 43.5 cents.

A2 MILK COMPANY

A2 Milk says it has appointed David Bortolussi as chief executive officer and managing director, effective from February 8, 2021.

PALLA PHARMA

Palla says six-year director Todd Barlow has resigned from the board, effective from February 4, 2021.
Palla said that following the appointment of Iain Ross as a director, Mr Barlow would focus on his other commitments with Washington Soul Pattinson (BD: Jan 17, 2020).
In December, the company said that founder and chief executive officer Jarrod Ritchie has resigned from the company (BD: Jan 17, 2020).