

# MICHIGAN PORK

The source for information affecting Michigan's Pork Producers

3515 West Road, Suite B, East Lansing, Michigan 48823

2011, VOL. 36, NO. 1

## **MPPA Board Member Pete Blauwiekel Testifies on Behalf of Pork Industry at Senate Agriculture Committee Field Hearing in East Lansing**



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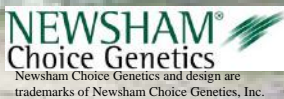
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*Michigan Pork* is published quarterly by the:

Michigan Pork Producers Association  
3515 West Road, Suite B  
East Lansing, Michigan 48823  
(517) 853-3782 FAX: (517) 853-3785,  
EMAIL KELPINSKI@MIPORK.ORG.  
website: mipork.org

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## MPPA STAFF

**Sam Hines**  
Executive Vice President  
and Editor, MPPA News  
Hines@mipork.org

**Mary Kelpinski**  
Executive Director  
and Managing Editor, MPPA News  
Kelpinski@mipork.org

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News has a circulation of more than 2,500.



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## **Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Roberts Hold First Field Hearing in East Lansing, Discuss Opportunities for Economic Growth, Job Creation**

*Farmers, Ranchers, Foresters, Academics and Community Leaders from Across Michigan Share Ideas on How to Strengthen Michigan's Economy*

Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, and Kansas Senator Pat Roberts, the Committee's Ranking Member, *pictured below*, on May 31 held the first Farm Bill field hearing at Michigan State University in East Lansing, meeting with 15 witnesses from across Michigan to discuss how the Committee can bolster the 2012 Farm Bill to boost Michigan's economy and create jobs.

"This hearing is officially the first field hearing of the Agriculture Committee on the 2012 Farm Bill. And in Michigan, where one in four

jobs relies on agriculture, and where agriculture contributes over \$71 billion to our economy, when we talk about the Farm Bill, we are really talking about a jobs bill," Chairwoman Stabenow said. "Agriculture in Michigan continues to be one of the bright spots in our economy. Our agriculture sector has grown at a faster rate than the rest of our economy, and as Chair of this Committee, I am committed to keeping that momentum going. I'm focused on continuing supporting the great men and women of our state who work so hard, day in and day out, to produce a safe and abundant food and fiber supply that

powers our nation's economy."

"I am pleased to join Chairwoman Stabenow in Michigan for our first field hearing," Roberts said. "I look forward to learning, firsthand, the Michigan perspective on agriculture programs and the direction of the next Farm Bill. It will be critical to the committee's work in drafting policies that provide producers and rural America with the tools necessary for success."

Chairwoman Stabenow and Senator Roberts met with farmers, ranchers, foresters, academics and community leaders from across Michigan to discuss how a new streamlined approach to the Farm Bill can benefit Michigan's economy. The fifteen witnesses, from all corners of the state representing nearly every area of the agriculture sector, offered insights into how the policies could be strengthened to better serve the people.

Chairwoman Stabenow noted the role the Farm Bill plays in Michigan, emphasizing the reach it has into virtually all sectors of the economy and all communities – rural and urban.

"We write farm bills to help producers in the face of real challenges and to conserve natural resources, to help real people and to help rural communities improve their economies and offer good jobs to their residents, and to help our nation take important steps towards a better energy future," Chairwoman Stabenow said.

*(continued on page 8)*





## MI Agricultural Leaders: Challenges, Opportunities Demand Quick Action on Farm Bill Update

Stabenow's Michigan hearing spotlights ways to strengthen agriculture's future

Agricultural Leaders of Michigan (ALM) said they are ready to work with Sen. Debbie Stabenow, Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, on updating the Farm Bill and called for the quick implementation of steps that can secure a strong future for Michigan agriculture. The committee held its first hearing on the Farm Bill update at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing on May 31.

ALM said key areas that must be addressed in the 2012 Farm Bill revisions include:

- Protecting the agricultural safety net and crop insurance;
- Allowing landowners to take their land out of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) early without penalty, which is essential to increase production amid growing global demand and shrinking stocks of grain;
- Updating the dairy program so it reflects conditions and realities of today's market;
- Supporting federal food assistance programs, which are critical for helping America's needy families and supporting local farmers;
- Maintaining a robust sugar policy; and
- Continuing the Energy Title programs, which are important in helping America's farmers transition to a broader energy portfolio and increase their energy efficiency.

"Sen. Stabenow's hearing brings an important spotlight to Michigan and an opportunity to show the nation the strength and diversity of Michigan agriculture," said Ken Nobis, president of the Michigan Milk Producers Association. "By updating the Farm Bill now, we can seize opportunities for strengthening agriculture well into the future. We look forward to working with Sen. Stabenow so we can take action quickly on issues that are essential to Michigan agriculture's ability to compete in a global economy."

"Michigan agriculture is driven by family businesses, and Sen. Stabenow's leadership on our nation's agricultural policy will be followed with close interest," said Ben Kudwa, legislative director of the Potato Growers of Michigan Inc., whose members include potato growers that are helping to make Michigan a top producer of potatoes in the eastern United States. "We are ready to roll up our sleeves and provide the support and resources Sen. Stabenow needs to further strengthen agriculture."

"The world faces new challenges and new opportunities when it comes to agriculture today, and Sen. Stabenow is in a unique position to guide the future of agriculture," said Dave Armstrong, CEO of GreenStone Farm Credit Services, the nation's sixth largest association in the Farm Credit System. "The 2012 Farm Bill will provide the game-changer that can help agriculture compete in a global economy."

"Michigan agriculture has been one of the few bright spots in today's

economy, and the 2012 Farm Bill is the key to our continued success," said Sam Hines, executive vice president of the Michigan Pork Producers Association. "We look forward to working with Sen. Stabenow to develop policies that can help us continue to create jobs and strengthen agricultural businesses for years to come."

"In today's fast-changing world, and increasing global demand, agriculture needs the most up-to-date tools to compete and create jobs, and that's what we will be looking for in the 2012 Farm Bill," said George House, executive director of Michigan Allied Poultry Industries Inc., which represents turkey, chicken and egg producers in Michigan. "Sen. Stabenow has been a solid leader in agriculture, she understands the issues and we are ready to work with her in identifying what agriculture needs to move forward."

"We are excited that Sen. Stabenow is taking a pro-active role in updating the Farm Bill and looking to Michigan farmers and agri-businesses to help her set priorities for the next Farm Bill," said Jim Byrum, president of the Michigan Agri-Business Association, which represents more than 400 agricultural businesses. "At a time of budget cuts, we look forward to working with her to focus on the core issues now that can turn a good Farm Bill into a great one. Michigan agriculture is pleased and excited that Sen. Stabenow continues to shine a light on our industry and the many jobs and opportunities we provide." 



By: Dennis DeYoung  
MPPA President

*“According to folklore, a swan song is something a swan does just before it DIES!!!”*

## Swan Song

My term as president of MPPA is complete. Ed Reed has taken over that job, and those of you who know Ed also know that he will do a great job as president. So, naturally I thought that since my term was over, the writing of this column would go to Ed starting with this edition of our magazine. However, when I expressed that thought to Sam and Mary they said Noooooo! You have to write your “swan song” they said.

Now that took me back a little. I haven’t heard that expression used a lot, but I thought I knew what it meant. But, to give them the benefit of the doubt I Googled it, and yes I was right. According to folklore, a swan song is something a swan does just before it DIES!!!

We have dealt with some tough issues in the last two years (animal care, H1N1, GIPSA, antibiotic ban threat, Michigan Meat-Out Day, and feral pigs to mention a few). Occasionally it’s been joked that the president should “take one for the team,” or be “the scapegoat.” But, expecting me to literally “fall on the sword” is going too far. I’ve always spoken kindly of our staff so I just didn’t understand their comment. Then I read a second usage for “swan song” which refers to someone who is retiring. I hope that is the definition to which they were referring.

Seriously though, it’s been a pleasure to work with all of you. Amazingly, even through all the difficult and contentious issues that we worked on during the last two years, I do not remember receiving even one negative comment regarding an action of the board from an MPPA member.

In previous articles, we have discussed the need for being involved in the political process to make our position and needs known or, as NPPC’s mission states, “to protect our livelihood.” And, since some of the same issues keep coming up, or in some cases never go away, it may seem that our efforts are in vain. So let’s briefly review our progress.

- The H1N1 fiasco was debunked and while it drastically affected the export market, domestic consumption rebounded quickly.
- The proposed antibiotic ban has been held off so far.
- The non-ambulatory slaughter bill has not been extended to pork yet.
- Proposed Free Trade Agreements with Panama, Columbia, and South Korea, which could add significantly to market hog value, have slowly moved forward, although the timing on this is becoming critical.
- The new GIPSA Rule proposed by USDA has been delayed for further study and funds to implement the rule were not provided in the recent House-passed version of the USDA funding bill. It’s been very difficult to understand Secretary Vilsack’s position on this.

*(continued on page 9)*

## “Our absence was not without reason!”



By: Sam Hines  
MPPA Executive Vice President  
Hines@mipork.org

*“And, although it may not be evident on the surface, a publication of this type requires a tremendous amount of work.”*

So, where have we been for so long? Some of you may have wondered what happened to this magazine, since it's been several months since we published an issue. No, the magazine hasn't been discontinued and MPPA is still here working on your behalf, but the magazine's lengthy absence from your mailbox does deserve an explanation. It has been my contention from day-one that we would either put out a quality publication or we wouldn't put one out at all. And, although it may not be evident on the surface, a publication of this type requires a tremendous amount of work. Unfortunately, the demands of the past few months were greater than a two-person staff could meet and still have the luxury of enough time to put a quality publication together. So, in keeping with my contention, we didn't publish anything. At this point, you're probably wondering what was so important that we didn't have time to keep you adequately informed about what was happening in this

industry. Two things were primarily responsible; relocating the office and the feral hog issue. Oh, there were a few other things that contributed too, including a bout with pneumonia and brief hospital stint for me, and a car accident for Mary, but the office relocation and feral hog controversy were the primary reasons.

Our lease expired at our previous location earlier this spring and, for some time, it had become evident that we needed to relocate. We had been at our former location for 17 years and, as a result of the economic downturn, the building had been in foreclosure for the past few years. This resulted in the neglect of even routine maintenance and deterioration of the building to the extent that all the tenants were leaving as their leases expired. One company was left in the facility following our departure and they were relocating in May also. As luck would have it, Green Stone Farm Credit

*(continued on page 8)*



*MPPA Relocated to the GreenStone Farm Credit Services building in East Lansing in April*



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## As I See It

*(continued from page 7)*

Services had some space available in their new office building in East Lansing and was willing to design it to meet our needs. It's a fantastic facility in a great location and it's also nice to be in a building with others whose mission is to serve those involved in agriculture and with whom we work on a regular basis on a number of programs and issues. It was a great move for us, but moving an office is not unlike moving to a new home. Like moving one's residence, it demands a great deal of time and effort to relocate an office; especially after being at a location for 17 years.

However, even more demanding than the move has been the feral swine issue. This is a critically important issue to our industry and one the board agreed should be a top priority for MPPA. Last summer, the board determined we would support an effort by the Department of Natural Resources to declare wild hogs an invasive species. Declaring wild hogs an invasive species would make it illegal to maintain swine in Michigan for sport shooting purposes and put a stop to the animals escaping from the shooting ranches which they have been doing ever since they were brought into the state for sport shooting. This appeared to be the only fail-safe way to remove the threat of them spreading diseases to domestic hogs, destroying crops and wreaking environmental havoc. Unfortunately, the shooting ranches found some champions in the legislature willing to introduce legislation that would attempt to regulate the shooting ranches rather than prohibiting them from offering swine as just one of the many options they provide for sport shooting. The reality is that these ranches have been unable to contain hogs in their facilities and they have escaped to the extent that experts now estimate there are some-

where between 2,000 and 5,000 of them roaming around the state. Wild hogs have been sighted or killed in 72 of Michigan's 83 counties and many more have been trapped through the trapping program being conducted by the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy and USDA Wildlife Services. MPPA and the Michigan Corn Growers Association have joined forces to finance the trapping program to help bring the free-roaming population under control.

Why is this issue of so much concern to Michigan's pork producers? The main reason is that an outbreak of pseudorabies in a commercial herd could result in Michigan being quarantined and producers being unable to move hogs out of the state. And unfortunately, past experience indicates many of these escaped wild hogs carry the pseudorabies virus. The risk of transmitting pseudorabies, and a multitude of other viral and bacterial diseases, to a commercial herd is high as long as these animals continue to escape from the game ranches and proliferate in the wild. The only sane way to mitigate this risk and prevent

the devastation wild hogs cause is by banning them from the shooting facilities. Despite what the game ranch owners are saying, this will not put them out of business as wild hogs are only one of numerous animals, including deer, elk, moose, etc., that they offer at their facilities. Please read the article in this issue entitled The Wild Hog Problem in Michigan that summarizes the seriousness of this issue and lists the groups that have come together to form The Coalition to Protect Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Coalition, of which MPPA is a member, is opposed to attempts by legislators to regulate the hunting ranches and supports allowing the Invasive Species Order to take effect. MPPA owes a debt of gratitude to the other agricultural, conservation, wildlife and natural resources organizations that have joined us in this battle. If you haven't weighed-in on this issue with your state representative or senator, please contact them and tell them you support the Invasive Species Order on wild hogs and oppose attempts to regulate the game ranches. Nothing short of banning

*(continued on page 9)*

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## Chairwoman Stabenow

*(continued from page 4)*

The fifteen witnesses included:

- **Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon**, President, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
- **Dr. J. Ian Gray**, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
- **Dr. Thomas G. Coon**, Director of Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, MI
- **Mr. Clark Gerstacker**, Corn and Soybean Production; Member, Michigan Corn Growers Association, Midland, MI
- **Mr. Ben LaCross**, Cherry Production; Chair, American Farm Bureau, Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee, Cedar, MI
- **Mr. Ray VanDriessche**, Sugar Beet Production and Conservation; Director of Community and Government Relations, Michigan Sugar Company, Bay City, MI
- **Ms. Julia Rothwell**, Apple Production; Chair, U.S. Apple Association,

*(continued on page 31)*





## Swan Song

(continued from page 6)

- The Michigan Meat-Out Day declaration by Governor Granholm became more of an embarrassment to the Governor than having an impact on pork, beef or poultry consumption.
- MPPA and a coalition of other agriculture, conservation, wildlife, and environmental groups have so far been successful in preventing the passage of legislation that would attempt to regulate the swine sport shooting facilities. The Coalition has worked diligently for months to support allowing the Department of Natural Resources Invasive Species Order to take effect which would make it illegal to have these animals in Michigan for sport shooting purposes. Most experts agree with MPPA's position that legislation would be ineffectual in preventing animals escaping from the shooting ranches and removing the huge threat wild hogs pose to our industry and, for that matter, all of agriculture. You can read more about this issue in other sections of this magazine.

As independent business owners, we can make decisions and changes quickly in our operations and this can make it very frustrating to work in the political system, which moves very slowly and can have big swings in direction following an election. So, you can be sure that Ed Reed will still have these and other problems with which to deal.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for your support. Together, with God's blessing on our efforts, we can continue to provide quality protein for ourselves and others. 



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## As I See It

(continued from page 8)

these critters will adequately protect the pork industry, other segments of Michigan agriculture, and the state's natural resources. At press time, the Coalition has been successful in preventing legislation from being passed, but the battle is not over. Hopefully, Michigan will join the other 35 states that have declared wild hogs an invasive species. The livelihood of

everyone in agriculture and protection of the state's natural resources should be a top priority rather than trying to placate a handful of hunting ranch owners that have many other options to maintain their businesses. Unfortunately, reason and logic doesn't always prevail in the legislative arena, but let's hope it does this time. 

# New National Pork Board Campaign Evolves To Celebrate Proud New Brand Identity: Pork® Be inspired<sup>sm</sup>

## Updated Positioning Creates New Role for The Other White Meat®

With a new focus on reaching creative, flavor-seeking home cooks who already prepare, eat and love pork, the National Pork Board launched a new branding position celebrating pork's ability to offer a wide range of options in the kitchen. With PORK® now as the brand, the new campaign of: Pork® Be inspired<sup>sm</sup> shows pork's place in almost any menu, day part, cuisine and lifestyle, based on pork's unique combination of flavor and versatility as the source of kitchen inspiration.

The new, fully integrated campaign features an updated look and feel, along with a new consumer target: the more than 82 million Americans who already cook, eat and love pork. Moving from a functional to a more emotional positioning, the campaign voice is proud, energetic, approachable and unapologetically optimistic about the unique attributes of the world's most popular protein.

Evoking the taste of backyard barbeques, new and attainable flavor combinations or mid-week meals on the go, the bold product imagery celebrates one juicy, tender, flavorful pork meal after another.

"Our research shows that pork's top consumers are looking for more than basic education; they're looking for inspiration. With its great taste and versatility, pork is the ideal catalyst to inspire great meals," said Ceci Snyder, vice president of domestic marketing for the National Pork Board. "While our new target represents our biggest fans, we believe they have the potential and desire to enjoy pork more often - and to inspire others to do the same."

"We produce pork and are proud of it," said Dianne Bettin, chair of the Domestic Marketing Committee and a producer from Truman, Minn.

"Pork Be inspired will celebrate the wide range of meals that pork offers, give new ideas to our new consumer target and influencers and move the needle on pork sales both at retail and foodservice."

The new campaign rolled out in March and April, and includes national advertising, public relations, social media, retail and foodservice marketing, as well as activation by state pork associations. Enthusiastic about this renewed approach, 2011 advertising media spending has more than doubled that of recent years. All elements will showcase inspiring new ways to enjoy pork more frequently, with a range of meal and menu options, Snyder said.

### Rallying "Pork Champions"

Recent consumer segmentation research from the National Pork Board found that 82 million Americans are "Pork Champions" - men and women who are predominantly medium to heavy fresh pork eaters with a strong passion for pork that they are eager to share. This group of "flavor-seeking creatives:"

- Represents approximately 28 percent of U.S. households but accounts for roughly 68 percent of all in-home fresh pork consumption and 50 percent of all away-from-home fresh pork consumption.
- Enjoys cooking and experimenting with new flavors in the kitchen, understands how to cook pork, and in general looks at life with a positive outlook.

### A New Role for The Other White Meat® Campaign

Nearly 25 years ago, the Pork®

The Other White Meat® campaign was conceived to reposition pork as a healthful protein source. Today, Pork Be inspired goes beyond basic cooking education and health to promote a deeper, more personal level of engagement with existing pork consumers, Snyder said. However, *The Other White Meat* campaign will play a role as a heritage brand, with use on the consumer web site and in nutrition communications. *The Other White Meat* campaign will not be featured in advertising.

"Our new campaign communicates to the legion of pork fans that pork is delicious, versatile and can stand on its own," added Snyder. "Pork is what consumers write on their shopping list or order in a restaurant. To those that love pork, it requires no comparison to the other meats. The range of meals drives new ideas - and appetites - for pork."

Digital advertising started March 7 with paid search and web sites that reach the National Pork Board's new target, with creative directing to a new website URL, [www.PorkBeInspired.com](http://www.PorkBeInspired.com). Starting April 11, national television advertising included both network and cable. Print advertising also began in April in food and lifestyle publications, using a unique three-page, consecutive right-hand pages to communicate pork's ability to inspire numerous meal ideas. 



## New USDA Guidelines Lower Pork Cooking Temperature

New cooking guidelines from the nation's food-safety agency confirm Pork Checkoff research that shows pork can be consumed safely when cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit, followed by a three-minute rest time. The guidelines were announced today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS).

The new recommended temperature is a significant 15 degrees less than what was previously recommended and typically will yield a finished product that is pinker in color than most home cooks are accustomed to.

"Our consumer research has consistently shown that Americans have a tendency to overcook common cuts of pork, resulting in a less-than-optimal eating experience," said Dianne Bettin, a pork producer from Truman, Minn., and chair of the Checkoff's Domestic Marketing Committee. "The new guidelines will help consumers enjoy pork at its most flavorful, juicy - and safe - temperature."

The revised recommendation applies to pork whole-muscle cuts, such as loin, chops and roasts. Ground pork, like all ground meat, should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Regardless of cut or cooking method, both the USDA and National Pork Board recommend using a digital cooking thermometer to ensure an accurate final temperature.

The new recommendation evolved from a 2007 Pork Checkoff-funded research project conducted by Ohio State University to measure consumer eating preferences. As part of that project the university researchers tested how various end-cooking temperatures affected eating preferences. But the researchers needed to know if temperatures below 160 degrees would be safe if that turned out to be consumers' preference.

That question resulted in a Checkoff-funded research project with Exponent Inc., an engineering and scientific consulting firm, to conduct a risk assessment to evaluate any food-safety implications of cooking temperatures within a range of 145-160 degrees Fahrenheit.

The risk assessment found that cooking pork to an internal temperature of 145 degrees was equivalent to cooking pork to 160 degrees. Checkoff-funded research conducted by Texas A&M supports the fact that meat temperature continues to rise after being removed from the heat and the reality that «resting time» between cooking and eating is at least that long. Therefore, FSIS agreed that the cooking temperature for pork could be lowered.

The USDA guidelines for pork now mirror doneness advice for other meats.

It's great news that home cooks can now feel confident to enjoy medium-rare pork, like they do with other meats," said Guy Fieri, a chef, restaurateur and host of several food-focused television programs. "Pork cooked to this temperature will be juicy and tender. The foodservice industry has been following this pork cooking standard for nearly 10 years."


The new recommendation reflects advances in both food safety and nutritional content of pork in recent years. On average, most common cuts of pork are 16 percent leaner than 20 years ago, and saturated fat has dropped 27 percent. In fact, pork tenderloin is now as lean as the leanest type of chicken - a skinless chicken



breast.

In addition to the new recommendation to cook pork to 145 degrees Fahrenheit, followed by a three-minute rest time, the USDA food preparation guidelines advise the following:

- Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often
- Separate: Don't cross-contaminate
- Cook: To proper cooking temperatures
- Chill: Refrigerate promptly

Additional information about cooking pork, including recipes, is available at [PorkBeInspired.com](http://PorkBeInspired.com), or [Facebook.com/PorkBeInspired](https://www.facebook.com/PorkBeInspired). 

**A Guide to Healthy Eating and Portion Size**





# Michigan Wildlife Conservancy Supports Ban On Wild Hogs

The Michigan Wildlife Conservancy is urging citizens to rally against proposed legislation that would negate the state's newly-issued ban on possession of wild hogs. The Conservancy, based in Bath, near Lansing, is part of the Coalition To Preserve Michigan Agriculture and the Environment (CPMAE), a group of non-profit organizations concerned about the growing threat to Michigan's natural and agricultural resources posed by wild hogs. The Coalition supports programs and projects aimed at reducing wild hog numbers in our state and is opposed to any attempts by the legislature to merely regulate rather than ban the destructive animals.

In December 2010 the Michigan Department of Natural Resources classified the wild hog as an invasive, exotic and prohibited species under Public Act 451, Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. The DNR was required by the Act to prohibit possession of any invasive species that met certain criteria. The wild hog, which does more than \$1.5 billion worth of damage annually to crops, forests and livestock nationwide, met all criteria. The long-awaited action was seen as critical to "shutting off the faucet" of wild hogs escaping from game ranches and breeding facilities across the state over the past ten years. But according to the Conservancy, the game ranch industry has pushed legislators to replace the ban with a regulatory approach that would allow game ranches to continue to import and keep wild hogs.

"An attempt to regulate rather than ban this destructive invasive species, an animal with an incredible track record of escaping fenced enclosures, is a huge threat to Michigan's natural resources" said Conservancy President Bill Taylor, of Duck Lake. "Wild hogs destroy habitat and prey on a wide variety of animals – from deer

fawns to birds' eggs. We need to rid Michigan of wild hogs."

The Conservancy says that because of escapes from game ranches we now have thousands of wild hogs that are reproducing in the wild and destroying habitat in many areas. To date, most of this damage has been on private lands, but the fast-reproducing menace is spreading onto public lands as well. The Conservancy spearheads the Michigan Wild Hog Removal Program, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and several private-sector groups. The Program trains volunteers to trap and eliminate wild hogs.

"Our volunteers are trapping wild

hogs and collecting information that strongly suggests some game ranches are still leaking the exotic animals," said Dr. Patrick Rusz, the Conservancy's Director of Wildlife Programs. "It would be extremely short-sighted for the legislature to let this continue through a risky, cumbersome, and costly regulatory effort. We need the ban to go into effect on July 8 as scheduled."

The Michigan Wildlife Conservancy is a non-profit conservation organization founded in 1982 to help people help wildlife through habitat restoration and citizen action. For more information or to support MWC programs, visit: [www.miwildlife.org](http://www.miwildlife.org)



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## Michigan Operation Mainstreet presenter, Joel Sparks receives 2010-11 Pork Industry Scholarship

The Pork Checkoff, Pioneer Hi-Bred and PIC have awarded 19 scholarships to college students around the United States as part of their strategy to develop the pork industry's human capital for the future.

"Helping to develop the next generation of pork professionals is one of the issues the Pork Checkoff identified as critical for the industry to address," said Gene Nemechek, past-president of the National Pork Board and a swine veterinarian from Springdale, Ark. "Our service and obligation to producers includes ensuring that there is a sustainable source of capable people ready to take on the industry's charge of producing a safe, wholesome food product in a socially responsible way."

The 19 student recipients hail from 13 universities and eight swine-related fields of study. The top candidate, Joel Sparks (photo above), will receive a \$5,000 scholarship, and the runner-up candidate, Emily Arkfeld, will receive



a \$3,500 scholarship sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business. The other 17 students selected will receive \$2,000 each.

Joel grew up on his family's farm, Sparks Cedaree Farm in Cassopolis, Mich., where his family produces

*(continued from page 41)*

# Don't Let Them Hog Our Resources

*Guest Editorial by Dr. Patrick Rusz  
Director of Wildlife Services  
Michigan Wildlife Conservancy*

The continuing saga about wild hog control (or lack thereof) got more confusing this past December when outgoing DNR Director Rebecca Humphries signed an order classifying wild hogs as an invasive, exotic and prohibited species. She took the long-awaited action under Public Act 451, Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act which was amended in 2009 to require such listing of any species that meet certain criteria. This wild hog, as invasive and destructive as an animal can be, meets all criteria. So, Director Humphries had to sign the order to comply with state law and to help Michigan prevent more accidental escapes of wild hogs from game ranches and hog-raising facilities. Because of those escapes, which have occurred over the past ten years, we now have thousands of hogs that are reproducing in the wild and destroying crops, lawns, and natural resources in many areas.

The order's effective date is July 8, 2011. The delay is reasonable so as to give the private enterprises time to sell or otherwise use-up the hogs in their inventories. But surprisingly, the order also contains a detailed description of possible legislation that could be passed before July and negate the order. This highly unusual language was added to appease certain legislators, the game ranch industry, and members of the state's Agriculture and Natural Resource Commissions who have supported a regulatory approach rather than the ban required by Act 451.

What impact the order's language will have is questionable. Some analysts believe the part about legislation



*Dr. Patrick Rusz, Director of Wildlife Services, Michigan Wildlife Conservancy with the head of a wild boar killed in Saginaw County.*

is largely a meaningless, politically-inspired offering to keep those opposing a ban from attacking the 2009 amendments to Act 451. Others think the language is an intentional and inappropriate attempt to assist legislators in gathering support for a regulatory approach that is contrary to the intent of the 2009 amendments. The current law (Act 451) is based on the notion that invasive exotic species that meet certain criteria should be kept out of Michigan entirely. The regulatory approach described in the order would let anyone import and/or keep Russian wild boars and other wild hog strains in our state if their facilities meet legislature-approved standards for fencing and disease controls and they pay regulatory fees.

Previous attempts to work out those standards and fees have failed. The game ranch/game farm owners and the state regulatory agencies—principally the Department of Agriculture and the DNR—have not been able to agree on a system. The state is rightly insisting that no more tax dollars be spent trying to control diseases and other problems at the facilities. Michigan's citizens have been footing huge bills for monitoring and eradicating disease-carrying wild hogs, and even reimbursing some game ranches for captive wild hogs the state had to come in and kill.

Michigan taxpayers, and especially conservationists, should carefully watch and respond as this all unfolds in the coming months. Our new governor has called for transparency in decision-making, but unfortunately many citizens are being misled to think that legislation to “toughen up” the standards at game ranches is what's needed. No, what is needed is for the ban on wild hogs signed by Director Humphries to simply go into effect as recommended by the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, the Michigan Pork Producers Association and other organizations. A regulatory approach would be costly, cumbersome, and risky. For more information or updates on related issues contact the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy (517-641-7677, email [wildlife@miwildlife.org](mailto:wildlife@miwildlife.org)).



# The Wild Hog Problem in Michigan

## Summary

Michigan has seen an explosion of wild hogs, also known as feral swine, with an estimated 5,000 feral swine roaming wild in about 70 of Michigan's 83 counties in both the Upper and Lower peninsulas. Feral swine are wild pigs that are omnivorous, eating plants and animals. They carry numerous diseases, are highly destructive to farms and property, travel in packs, and can endanger people. Feral swine are not domesticated pigs on farms, but descendants of imported wild pigs. USDA experts say Michigan's feral swine problems stem from escaped Eurasian hogs imported into Michigan from other states and countries for small hunting clubs.

## Background

Michigan's commercial agriculture community has been alarmed by the escalating numbers of feral swine identified in Michigan and the threat these animals pose to commercial agriculture, especially the domestic pork industry. To date, feral swine have been killed or sighted in 72 counties in Michigan and reports of significant crop damage have also escalated in recent years. In fact, it has been estimated by USDA that wild hogs are responsible for more than \$1.6 billion in crop damage annually nationwide.

Animals that have escaped from the sport shooting facilities have been a factor in increasing the feral swine population and these animals are excellent vectors for transmitting diseases. Research studies (Hutton et al, 2006) confirm that feral swine can carry as many as 30 viral and bacterial diseases, including tuberculosis, and at least 37 parasites that affect people, livestock, wildlife and pets. In fact, in recent years, some animals from these facilities in Michigan have been found to be infected with the pseudorabies virus.

Although humans are not susceptible to this virus, it is a devastating disease to swine and also to some other species of livestock. In 2000, Michigan was successful in eradicating pseudorabies from its commercial swine herds and in 2004 the disease was eradicated from all of the commercial swine herds in the United States.

Prior to being eradicated nationwide, pseudorabies was an economically devastating disease that was estimated to cost U.S. producers more than \$30 million dollars annually in death losses, impaired performance and vaccination costs. The re-appearance of this disease in commercial swine herds in Michigan could cost the state its *pseudorabies-free* status which would lead to other states closing their borders to Michigan's commercial swine industry.

Many of Michigan's commercial producers have contractual arrangements with producers in surrounding states to feed hogs to marketable weights and, if they were no longer allowed to send animals to these states, the economic consequences would be significant. In fact, it is likely that these animals would have to be euthanized since housing space for them would not be available in Michigan. Recent estimates indicate that between 20,000 and 30,000 hogs weekly are being transported from Michigan to be raised for market in surrounding states.

In addition to commercial agriculture, wild hogs imperil wildlife, destroy natural resources and the environment and pose a major threat to human health and safety. Recognizing these concerns and realizing that wild hogs meet the criteria of an invasive species under Public Act 451, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, former Department of Natural Resources and Environment Director Rebecca Humphries signed an order on December 9, 2010, declaring wild hogs an invasive species. The order is scheduled to take effect on July 8, 2011, and the delay was reasonable in that it gives the shooting facilities adequate time to sell and dispose of the animals in their inventories.

The Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA) and a number of other agriculture, wildlife and conservation organizations are concerned that the delay will also allow efforts to be pursued to pass legislation to regulate the sport shooting industry. These groups have recently come together to form the *Coalition to Preserve Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources*. Coalition members believe a regulatory approach to addressing the problems wild hogs pose is ill-



advised and would be counterproductive.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources estimates that appropriate regulation of the sport shooting industry would cost in excess of \$750,000 annually. However, the sport-shooting facility owners have vigorously opposed containment and other management requirements that would be necessary if the industry were to be adequately regulated to prevent these animals from escaping and proliferating in the wild as they have for the past decade.

Because of the risk wild hogs pose to all segments of agriculture, as well as to the environment, wildlife and humans, the *Coalition to Preserve Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources* is united in opposing regulation of the swine sport shooting industry. The Coalition is working collectively to convey to legislators and the public that a regulatory approach will be costly and ineffectual, and that the order declaring wild hogs an invasive species should be allowed to take effect on July 8, 2011, making it illegal to possess these animals for sport shooting purposes.

### **The Coalition to Preserve Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources**

The Coalition to protect Michigan Agriculture and Natural Resources (CPMANR) is a coalition of agricultural, conservation and natural resources organizations concerned about the growing threat to Michigan's natural and agricultural resources posed by feral swine. Feral swine are free-ranging populations of wild pigs that are carriers of numerous diseases which can infect livestock, wildlife and humans. These animals are also destructive to agriculture, natural resources and private property. The USDA has estimated the damage caused by these invasive animals at more than \$1.5 billion nationally.

The Coalition members, top right, strongly support the Invasive Species Order Amendment No. 1 of 2010 issued by the Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in December 2010 which classifies the destructive animals an invasive species effective July 8, 2011.

### **Coalition Members:**

GreenStone Farm Credit Services  
Michigan Agri-Business Association  
MI Allied Poultry Industries, Inc.  
Michigan Audubon  
Michigan Corn Growers Association  
Michigan Milk Producers Association  
Michigan Nature Association  
Michigan Pork Producers Association  
Michigan Soybean Association  
Michigan United Conservation Clubs  
Michigan Wildlife Conservancy  
Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc.  
Saginaw Field & Stream Club  
Wine Producers of Michigan

### **Other Organizations Opposed to the Bills:**

Chelsea Rod & Gun Club  
Michigan Environmental Council  
MI State Council of Pheasants Forever  
Michigan Trout Unlimited  
The Nature Conservancy  
Northern Macomb Sportsmen Alliance





## MPPA JOINS AGRICULTURAL LEADERS OF MICHIGAN

**Agricultural Leaders of Michigan** is a coalition of agricultural, commodity and agri-business leaders committed to bolstering the profile of the industry and educating policymakers about core issues affecting Michigan agriculture and agri-businesses.

### About Michigan agriculture

Agriculture is and will continue to be a significant part of Michigan’s economic engine. Michigan agriculture is a \$71.3-billion-a-year industry today, up from \$60 billion just 5 years ago and second only to manufacturing<sup>1</sup>. Employing more than 1 million people, Michigan agriculture produces more than 200 products and commodities, from crops, dairy and potatoes to livestock, eggs and beans. As food demand increases with growing world population, Michigan is becoming a leading exporter to major markets in North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America – and could grow even more.

### Core issues

ALM is committed to supporting issues important to Michigan agriculture, including:

**Building a new publicly owned international Detroit-Canada crossing:** Michigan agricultural exports generate more than \$1.7 billion a year and are responsible for more than 20,000 local jobs. At the same time, Canada is expanding its eastern port network, and U.S. border states are rushing to become a key trade conduit to Canada. If Michigan doesn’t build a new bridge, we will be left behind. ALM urges the Legislature to approve a new Detroit-Canada bridge as soon as possible.

**Eradicating feral swine:** This invasive species carries diseases, is highly destructive to farms and property, travels in packs and can endanger people. Feral swine pose a serious threat to Michigan agriculture, including the important dairy and pork industries, which together employ more than 32,500 people and generate more than \$6.5 billion a year. ALM supports allowing a state order declaring feral swine an invasive species to stand, without delays, regulations or obstructions.

Other issues ALM is focused on include: trade; infrastructure; business activities; protecting the Great Lakes, land and air; disease management; and the Farm Bill 2012 update.

### Mission statement

The purpose of Agricultural Leaders of Michigan is to proactively promote and influence state and federal business policies while enhancing the image and economic well-being of Michigan’s agricultural industry to maximize the economic opportunities agriculture presents for diversifying and contributing to the renewal of a vibrant Michigan economy.

### Contact information

- ◆ Dave Armstrong, President and CEO of **GreenStone Farm Credit Services**: (517) 318-2290
- ◆ Ken Nobis, President of the **Michigan Milk Producers Association**: (248) 474-6672
- ◆ George House, Executive Director of **Michigan Allied Poultry Industries Inc.**: (616) 676-5593
- ◆ Ben Kudwa, Legislative Director of the **Potato Growers of Michigan**: (517) 669-8377
- ◆ Sam Hines, Executive Vice President, **Michigan Pork Producers Association**: (517) 699-2145
- ◆ Jim Byrum, President of the **Michigan Agri-Business Association**: (517) 336-0223

# Michigan Pork Producers Association Calls on Legislators

*Editor's Note: The following letter was sent to all members of the Michigan Legislature asking that they uphold the order declaring wild hogs an invasive species.*

To the Honorable Legislators:

The Michigan Pork Producers Association urges you to fully support and let stand a state order declaring feral swine an invasive species. The MPPA also calls on you to reject any attempts to weaken the order, such as those contained in Senate Bills 307-310 and House Bills 4503-4507.

Your support on these steps – rejecting “regulations” and upholding Michigan’s state ban – are essential toward keeping out one of the most destructive and dangerous invasive species in Michigan.

The pork industry is a major contributor to Michigan’s agricultural economy, generating more than \$250 million annually in sales and supporting more than \$500 million of gross state product in activities created by the industry. Michigan’s 2,100 pork producers market over 2 million hogs per year and, according to an Iowa State University Study, create 5,300 pork-related jobs for the state, many the result of pork exports. About 25 percent of the hogs raised in Michigan and the United States are currently being exported in the form of fresh and processed pork products. According to the ISU study, an additional 700 jobs and \$30 million of personal income are generated from exports of Michigan-grown pork.

A pseudorabies outbreak could potentially block Michigan pork from the export market, which would devastate Michigan’s economy and endanger thousands of local jobs.

As wildlife experts point out, imported animals such as Russian and Eurasian boars and razorbacks that escaped from sport shooting facilities are the culprits behind the explosion of Michigan’s feral swine population. Feral swine are vectors for transmitting diseases and are notoriously destructive to private property, farms and crops. Experts estimate up to 5,000 may now inhabit Michigan.

Feral swine also carry a massive financial cost to taxpayers.

According to an independent House Fiscal Agency analysis, regulatory monitoring of deer and elk hunting facilities in Michigan cost more than \$1.3 million in 2009, while fees for such facilities only generated \$106,640. The HFA analysis links cervid operations with the importation of non-native animals such as Russian boars, razorbacks, Eurasian boars and others into Michigan hunt clubs. The analysis also says taxpayers pay for the destruction of diseased captive animals. In 2008, so-called “game swine” were forced to be destroyed at five ranches in Michigan after the discovery of pseudorabies infections, at a cost of \$415,000 to Michigan taxpayers, according to a House Fiscal Agency document dated June 25, 2008.

We urge you to put Michigan’s agriculture industry, many family businesses, countless rural landowners and tens of thousands of local jobs ahead of an invasive species and the few so-called “hunt” club owners who stand to profit at the expense of Michigan’s entire agricultural economy.

All it takes is just a few disease-carrying feral swine to cause untold and widespread damage to Michigan agriculture. And all it takes is for Michigan to drop its guard against this invasive species for the feral swine epidemic to spiral out of control, as is happening in Texas, with more than 3 million feral swine running wild and causing more than \$400 million in damage every year.

We cannot afford to let what is happening in Texas happen here in Michigan.

Just as Asian carp cannot be regulated to remain only in certain streams, neither can feral swine be regulated to keep out of the wild.

The best way to fight feral swine is not by regulating them, but by supporting and upholding Michigan’s ban on feral swine – something that eight states currently do.

Michigan pork producers and Michigan’s agricultural industry as a whole ask for your support on this important issue that affects our livelihoods and our economy.

Dennis De Young  
President

Michigan Pork Producers Association

Sam Hines

Executive Vice President

Michigan Pork Producers Association



# Senate, House Ag Committee lauded for advancing MAEAP bills

A broad cross section of Michigan's diverse agriculture industry is appreciative of the Michigan Senate and House Agriculture Committee's swift and decisive actions in approving legislation that would strengthen the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and encourage more farms of all sizes and types to participate in voluntary and proactive environmental practices that help protect the state's natural resources.

In February, the Senate voted overwhelmingly in favor of Senate Bills 122 and 123 as introduced by Sen. Joe Hune (R-Hamburg). The House Agriculture Committee reported House Bills 4212 and 4213, as introduced by Reps. Kevin Daley (R-Lum) and Rick Outman (R-Six Lakes), respectively, out of committee. The House bills mirror the Senate legislation with only minor amendments, and were passed by the House and signed into law by Governor Snyder.

The Senate and House bills would add value to MAEAP by, among other things, raising MAEAP's prestige

and cementing the program in state statute so that MAEAP moves from its current designation as a discretionary state program to a permanent one with dedicated state funding. Under the proposed legislation, MAEAP participation would continue to be voluntary, and all applicable environmental permitting for farms would remain unchanged.

"These bills represent an important step toward increasing the number of MAEAP verified farms by 500 percent by 2015 as they create program certainty and recognize the value of a farm's investment in MAEAP," wrote nearly 30 agricultural organizations and agribusinesses in a joint letter delivered to the Senate prior to the vote in that chamber. "More MAEAP-verified farms are a good thing for the environment, for farms, and for communities."

"On behalf of the fellow MAEAP supporters, we thank the Senate and the House Agriculture Committee for supporting and advancing legislation which will benefit Michigan in a variety of ways from helping to safeguard

the environment and promote conservation to making Michigan farms more environmentally and economically sustainable," said Matt Smego, Michigan Farm Bureau legislative counsel. "We're also grateful for the support from Representative Daley and Senator Hune and their leadership in moving these bills as chairmen of their respective chamber's Agriculture Committee."

Supporters of the MAEAP legislation include the following organizations and agribusinesses:

- Cherry Marketing Institute
- Dairy Farmers of America
- GreenStone Farm Credit Services
- Julian Vail, LLC
- Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association
- Michigan Allied Poultry Industries
- Michigan Apple Association
- Michigan Asparagus Growers, Inc.
- Michigan Blueberry Advisory Committee

(Continued on page 19)



# Creagh Appoints Members to Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program Advisory Council

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Director Keith Creagh on March 31 announced the appointments to the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) Advisory Council. The Council, created as part of Public Acts 1 and 2 signed by Governor Rick Snyder on March 8, 2011, will advise the Director on the implementation of MAEAP including recommendations on MAEAP standards and protocols for farm verification.

“These individuals bring tremendous skill and knowledge to the Council and I look forward to working with them as we provide assistance to Michigan farm operations as they maintain their economic viability while being environmentally responsible,” Creagh said.

The Council will be comprised of Creagh; Dan Wyant, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Director; Thomas Coon, Ph.D., Michigan State University Extension Director; and the following appointees who will each serve three-year terms expiring on March 31, 2014.

- Max Benne, St. Joseph & Chippewa counties farmer
- Ken Blight, Calhoun County farmer
- Elaine Brown, Michigan Food & Farming Systems
- Jim Byrum, Michigan Agri-Business Association
- James Clift, Michigan Environmental Council
- Lauri Elbing, The Nature Conservancy
- Shelly Hartmann, Van Buren County farmer
- Melissa Higbee, Shiawassee Conservation District
- Sam Hines, Michigan Pork Producers Association
- Allen Krizek, Ph.D., Michigan State University Extension
- Phil Korson, Michigan Cherry Marketing Institute
- Lori Phalen, Michigan Conservation Districts
- Scott Piggott, Michigan Farm Bureau
- Jody Pollok-Newsom, Michigan Corn Growers Association
- Dale Rozeboom, Ph.D., Michigan State University
- Jim Scott, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Services
- Gary Trimmer, Michigan Milk Producer’s Association
- Bruce Weir, Jackson County farmer
- Paul Zugger, Michigan United Conservation Clubs

The first meeting of the Council was held on Friday, April 1.



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## MAEAP bills

(continued from page 18)

- Michigan Cattlemen’s Association
- Michigan Christmas Tree Association
- Michigan Corn Growers Association
- Michigan Equine Partnership
- Michigan Farm Bureau
- Michigan Farm Marketing and Agri-Tourism Association
- Michigan Floriculture Growers Council
- Michigan Food and Farming Systems
- Michigan Food Processors Association
- Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council
- Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association
- Michigan Pork Producers Association
- Michigan Sheep Breeders Association
- Michigan Soybean Association
- Michigan State Horticultural Society
- Michigan Sugar Company
- Michigan Vegetable Council
- National Grape Cooperative
- Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc.

**MAEAP background** MAEAP is a comprehensive program designed to assist all farmers in implementing cost-effective pollution prevention practices on farms and in meeting federal and state environmental

goals and requirements. Learn more about MAEAP and the program’s accomplishments to date online at [www.maeap.org](http://www.maeap.org).





# Chefs face off in tasty pork competition

By Beth Stuever

What do you get when seven rival chefs try out their original pork recipes for a hungry crowd at the Lansing Center? One sweet smelling competition that blows away the taste buds of judges who oversee the Michigan Pork Producers Association's annual Taste of Elegance.

The competition, now in its 21st year, pits chef against chef in a race for the best tasting original entrée in hopes that competitors will be encouraged to serve pork on their menus.

Steve Grostick, winner of the 2011 competition, didn't need any encouragement.

"I love pork," said Grostick shortly after being named Superior Chef. "I cook with it as often as possible. It's my favorite protein. We're always looking for new ways to include pork on our menu."

Grostick, owner of Toasted Oak Grill and Market in Novi, wowed the judges with the dish he dubbed "Porchetta"—pork tenderloin wrapped in house-made kielbasa and homemade bacon and then slow roasted. He will take his entrée, and his \$1,000 prize, to the national Pork Summit at the Culinary Institute of America in Graystone, Calif., hosted by the National Pork Board.

Eric Batten, executive chef at The Gallery at Michigan State University, placed second with his Trio of Pork, chilaquiles with poached egg and pork butt medallions, pressed pork belly with a soup of beans and ham stock and a tenderloin stuffed with Michigan dried fruit braised in radicchio and maple glaze.

Third place went to Jeffery Langer, (right) head chef at the Lansing Center. His creatively named "A Piggy Called Strawberry" entrée also won the coveted People's Choice Award.

Other competitors were Troy




Steve Grostick, above, owner of Toasted Oak Grill and Market in Novi, wowed the judges with the dish he dubbed "Porchetta"—pork tenderloin wrapped in house-made kielbasa and homemade bacon and then slow roasted (left).



Johnson from the Okemos Health and Rehabilitation Center in Okemos; Paul Adams of Boatwerks Waterfront Restaurant in Holland; Renee Builes of Sodexo Catering in Traverse City; and Alex Park-May with Burcham Hills Retirement Community in East Lansing.

According to Ann Rehnstrom, marketing assistant with the National Pork Board, the Taste of Elegance was designed to heighten pork's position within fine dining and elevate pork's image in food service and with consumers who dine out.

"If we look at the current cache that pork is enjoying within fine dining and food service at large, I would suggest that the program has definitely helped to achieve that goal," she said. 





## Pork producers honor industry's finest

by Beth Stuever

The Michigan Pork Producers Association honored the industry's dedicated movers and shakers during their annual banquet luncheon on Feb. 24 at the Lansing Center in Lansing.

Tom Schroeder, Reading, received the coveted 2011 Master Pork Producer Award. The honor is given annually to producers who have demonstrated skills in proficient pork production and taken an active leadership role in the pork industry.

Schroeder and his wife Margaret began Pork Chop Hill Farm near Reading with 160 acres and 10 sows shortly after they married in 1976. They ran a farrow-to-finish operation until 1999 when he sold the sows and began growing hogs on a contract basis. They now finish hogs for two other producers, raise 1,500 acres of field crops and run a grinding facility that supplies feed to 15 other contract finishers.

Keith Blonde, a fellow pork producer from neighboring Litchfield, Mich., nominated Schroeder for the award.

"Tom just always does things right," Blonde said. "He is the kind of pork producer we should all strive to be."

Gretchen Hill, a professor at Michigan State University, was given the organization's Distinguished Service Award (DSA). Hill's long career in swine nutrition includes research that led to the addition of zinc oxide in hog feed to improve weight gain and reduce scours.

Hill accepted the award from her son Brandon Hill, finishing production manager for Dykhuis Farms in Holland.


"I love my life and appreciate my students," Gretchen Hill said. "I truly have enjoyed being a part of this industry."

Leysha Davis took home the Swine Herd Manager Award for her stellar work at Circle K Family Farms in Gratiot County. She was nominated by

Circle K owner Kris Duflo, and Jeff Taylor, Circle K production manager, presented her with the award.

"Leysha has worked in various areas of the sow unit since 2005," Taylor said. "It doesn't matter what she's doing, she always goes above and beyond."

Andy Thorlund of Greenville went home with the Grower of the Year Award. He has been raising weaner pigs for Circle K farms since 2006.

"Andy is the guy we set our standards by," said Taylor. "Nobody does it better." 



Tom Schroeder, Reading, (left) received the 2011 Master Pork Producer Award. Schroeder was nominated by MPPA Board member Keith Blonde, Litchfield, right..



Leysha Davis received the Swine Herd Manager Award for her work at Circle K Family Farms in Gratiot County. She is pictured with MPPA Past President Dennis DeYoung, Plainwell.

## Producers to learn options for mortality management at Ag Expo

Death is a part of life on all farms, and dealing with death is an important part of farm management for livestock producers. During the 2011 Michigan Ag Expo, producers and others who work with animals will have the chance to learn about the tools and techniques available to make the right management decisions for their farms as well as how to carry them out appropriately.

Throughout the duration of the Michigan Ag Expo, which takes place July 19 to 21, visitors will have the opportunity to learn about mortality management policies and practices through a series of presentations, tours and demonstrations. According to Dale Rozeboom, professor in the Department of Animal Science and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension specialist, all sessions will be based on the Michigan Bodies of Dead Animals Act (BODA), which governs mortality management in the state.

“We’re going to have presentations about all methods of mortality management, including updates about the traditional burial, incineration, rendering and composting methods,” Rozeboom said. “Additionally, we’ll cover the new anaerobic digestion rules slated for approval and addition to BODA this year. These rules will provide farmers and animal businesses with a new way to recycle nutrients and capture energy.”

Open pile composting will be demonstrated on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon with sheep, bovine and equine mortalities, respectively. Included with each demonstration will be a tour of the MSU composting site. Attendees are encouraged to arrive at the Michigan Ag Expo grounds at least 30 minutes prior to the session and meet at the mortality management tent just inside the east gate in order to board transportation.

“We want to give people the chance to see the composting process in action,” Rozeboom said, “and to give farmers the chance to see what all it entails.”


All three 11 a.m. composting sessions qualify for Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) Phase I credits. Producers interested in obtaining those must pick up a registration form following the presentation and submit it to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) to receive credits.

During the afternoon sessions, from 2 to 3 p.m. daily, attendees can learn about other composting methods, in addition to new opportunities within BODA guidelines for mortality management. On Tuesday, a demonstration of carcass reduction in a vertical mixer will show producers how the composting process can be sped up, as well as how to prepare carcasses for possible anaerobic digestion. On Wednesday afternoon, Kevin Kirk from MDARD will join MSU researchers to discuss the new anaerobic digestion rules for Michigan and best management practices for an anaerobic digestion system. Finally, several in-vessel composting systems will be demonstrated on Thursday.

“For those who are considering an option other than burial or rendering for their mortality management, we will introduce them to the options that are available. For those who are already composting but want to improve, they’ll see the techniques and management practices to help them do that,” Rozeboom said. “This will be for both those that want to try something new as well as those that already have practices in place and just want to make improvements.”

MSU’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources sponsors Ag Expo. It runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., July 19

and 20, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., July 21. Admission to the grounds and parking at Farm Lane and Mt. Hope Road are free.

To learn more about the educational sessions being offered at Ag Expo this year, visit the Ag Expo website at [www.agexpo.msu.edu](http://www.agexpo.msu.edu). 

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## Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station dons new name to reflect breadth, relevance of work

Michigan State University’s Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station has changed its name to MSU AgBioResearch.

This decision was not made lightly, MSU AgBioResearch officials said. Since its creation in 1888, the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station has had a proud history of contributing significantly to the world of agriculture as well as ensuring the wise use of natural and community resources and enhancing the quality of life in Michigan, the nation and the world.

The new name was selected following a yearlong process that included discussions with both internal and external partners.

“I am very pleased with the outcome of this naming process,” said AgBioResearch director Steve Pueppke. “Our new name along with the tagline ‘leading innovation in food, natural resources and energy,’ better conveys the breadth and relevance of the work we do, while remaining true to our land-grant mission in support of Michigan agriculture.”

*(continued on page 23)*

## Animal Agriculture Initiative awards more than \$314,000 in research, outreach funding for 2011-2012

The Animal Agriculture Initiative (AAI) at Michigan State University (MSU) has announced the recipients of project funding for 2011-2012. The AAI awarded a total of \$314,774 divided between seven projects.

The Animal Agriculture Initiative is Michigan's animal agriculture research, teaching and Extension initiative housed at MSU. It is a partnership between MSU, livestock producers and industry organizations, and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Its objective is to address challenges facing Michigan animal-based agriculture through research and Extension projects.

The AAI at MSU is vital to the health of Michigan's economy. A survey commissioned by the AAI in 2007 reveals that nearly \$22.9 million in annual economic activity can be linked back to the initiative. AAI-funded research adds \$11.5 million annually to the state's economy, and for every state tax dollar invested in the AAI, the initiative returns \$3.40 in gross state product.

Twenty-three project proposals requesting nearly \$1.13 million in funding were submitted for consideration by the Animal Agriculture Initiative Coalition, a group that provides program direction to AAI research and Extension projects involving the state's beef, dairy, equine, poultry, sheep and swine industries. The group also works with various industry advisory committees to help establish research priorities for improving Michigan animal agriculture. The AAI Coalition is made up of representatives from the MSU departments of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics; Animal Science; Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering; Crop and Soil Sciences; Food Science and Human Nutrition; and Large Animal

Clinical Sciences (College of Veterinary Medicine); AgBioResearch and MSU Extension.


Janice Swanson, interim chairperson of the MSU Dept. of Animal Science, director of animal welfare and director of the AAI Coalition, emphasized the strength of the research proposals received for consideration and the significance of funding these projects to the agriculture industry.

"Though research priorities are ever-increasing, available funding resources continue to decline," she explained. **"The AAI grants allow our faculty to conduct projects that directly benefit Michigan agriculture or to conduct pilot studies crucial to securing extramural funding for comprehensive research."**

Proposals were ranked on the basis of how well they addressed the issues identified as high priority by industry groups, MSU Extension program teams and the AAI Coalition.

Projects funded for 2011-2012 of interest to the pork industry include:

- Ronald Bates, MSU Department of Animal Science and MSU Extension: MSU Pork Quarterly newsletter, \$3,500
- Juan Steibel, MSU Department of Animal Science: Genome-wide QTL mapping for growth, carcass and meat quality traits in a pig resource population, \$44,000

More than 200 research projects have been funded by the AAI since the initiative was established in 1996 as part of the grass-roots-driven Revitalization of Animal Agriculture in Michigan Initiative. 

## Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station

(continued from page 22)

AgBioResearch is committed to turning new discoveries into practical, real-world solutions that generate economic prosperity, sustain natural resources and enhance the quality of life for all.

There are nearly 400 scientists at MSU who are part of the AgBioResearch network. They work in six MSU colleges: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Communication Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Natural Science, Social Science and Veterinary Medicine. In addition to agricultural production research, AgBioResearch scientists are investigating topics that range from alternative energy and bio-fuel production to childhood obesity, community development, environmental stewardship, and food safety and security.

AgBioResearch is vital to Michigan's agriculture industry, according to Jeffrey Armstrong, dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

"MSU AgBioResearch provides essential research and development leadership for Michigan's growing agriculture industry," he said. "The new name better communicates the important purpose it serves for state employers, communities and residents." 

Michigan State University  
AgBioResearch



## ***Guy Fieri Fires Up Inspiration with Pork for Ultimate Grilling Season Celebrity Chef Launches New Cookbook and Hits the Road in a Cross-Country Food Show Sponsored by the National Pork Board***

Grillers in search of big, bold and inspired pork dishes this summer can look to the “culinary rock star” himself, Guy Fieri. With the launch of his off-the-hook cookbook, *Guy Fieri Food: Cookin’ It, Livin’ It, Lovin’ It*, and a 16 city interactive culinary tour, Fieri fans can look forward to snagging tips from the master before putting them to good use on their own grills.

“As a huge POP (Pal-of-Pork), I’m proud that the National Pork Board has signed on to sponsor my second nationwide tour,” Fieri said. “Having the ‘power of the pig’ fueling this tour guarantees that it will be unlike anything fans have seen before!”

With a dose of Fieri inspiration, grillers can take their backyard gatherings to new heights this summer, using recipes such as Watermelon Pork Tacos and Pork Blade Steak Piccata from *Guy Fieri Food: Cookin’ It, Livin’ It, Lovin’ It*. Be it ribs, chops or loin, with its great taste and ability to compliment any occasion or palate, you can’t go wrong with pork on the grill.

### **On the Road, On the Page and On the Grill**

Fieri’s love of pork began as a kid when his family started raising pigs. As his culinary star has risen, Fieri’s name has become almost synonymous with pork. “We love to see how Guy’s incredible creativity comes to life with pork – we couldn’t ask for a more enthusiastic partner,” said Traci Rodemeyer, director of Pork Information for the National Pork Board. “America’s pork producers are so excited to help Guy share this passion with the entire country this summer.”

Between May 17 and June 7, the

‘Guy Fieri Food Show,’ sponsored by the National Pork Board, featured an interactive culinary event where attendees enjoyed a live cooking demonstration. With Fieri’s high-energy attitude amped up and the non-stop adrenaline rush of a rock concert, audiences walked away armed with recipes, tools and tips and a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

If you were not able to catch Fieri in person, his new cookbook, *Guy Fieri Food: Cookin’ It, Livin’ It, Lovin’ It* offers readers a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the man behind the food. His one-of-a-kind style literally jumps off the page, as he takes meals from everyday to over-the-top. America knows Fieri has always been adventurous when it comes to food, and his cookbook is chock-full of new recipes, including over 20 inspired pork creations. Among them:

- **Summer Grilled Pork** –

Featuring boneless pork chops and bacon, it’s “pork on pork,” rolled and


stuffed with big flavors and basted with a rockin’ honey, beer and mustard glaze.

- **Watermelon Pork Tacos** –

An unexpected pairing of juicy watermelon and lean pork tenderloin, these fresh summertime tacos come together in romaine lettuce “shells.”

- **Pork Blade Steak Piccata** –

With all the favorite flavors of its famous Italian namesake, Fieri shows off pork’s versatility in this reinvented masterpiece for the grill.

For book information and Fieri’s off-the-hook pork recipes, visit [PorkBeInspired.com](http://PorkBeInspired.com) or “like” us at [Facebook.com/PorkBeInspired](https://www.facebook.com/PorkBeInspired). 



*Backstage before the show pork producers Brenda and Pete Blauwiekel, left, meet Guy along with MPPA Executive Director Mary Kelpinski and MPPA Executive Vice President Sam Hines.*

## DDGS - What You Need to Know NOW

As feed ingredient prices continue to climb from recent lows, it would be easy to decide to add more dried distillers grain with solubles (DDGS) to swine diets. However, as with most things, it's not that simple. Getting optimum performance from grow-finish pigs takes a comprehensive approach. That includes knowing the possible unintended consequences that could occur when changing diets.

Although many producers are now familiar with DDGS, it's important to know what their inclusion in swine diets can mean. The Pork Checkoff has funded many different studies to help provide answers.

### **Intake, Carcass Weight May Vary**

One researcher who has done a lot of work on DDGS is Jerry Shurson, a swine nutritionist at the University of Minnesota. He says that pigs' feed intake response to DDGS in the diet is puzzling because of disparate research findings.

He references work done by the University of Illinois and University of Minnesota that summarized 23 published studies reporting performance responses of grow-finish pigs with diets consisting of up to 30 percent DDGS. In these studies, average daily feed intake increased in two experiments, declined in six experiments and was unaffected in 15 experiments when DDGS diets were fed.

The reasons for the variable feed-intake responses to DDGS was unclear, Shurson said, and there is limited evidence suggesting that alternating between DDGS and non-DDGS diets could decrease feed intake in grow-finish pigs. Consequently, his research group conducted an experiment to determine the effects on pig performance and carcass quality of finishing pigs by switching between a diet of corn and soybean meal and a diet of corn, soybean meal and DDGS.

The results suggested that the frequent inclusion and removal of 20 percent DDGS from diets for finishing pigs does not adversely affect pig performance or carcass characteristics. However, it does appear that alternating 40 percent DDGS in and out of the diet may reduce feed intake and the hot carcass weight of finishing pigs.

### **Energy Considerations Can Affect Profits**

Does feeding DDGS to growing pigs work as well as it does in finishing pigs? Part of the answer lies in how much net energy is available to the pigs. However, that's not a standard measurement offered by DDGS suppliers.

To remedy this, Checkoff-funded research conducted by Hans Stein, a University of Illinois swine nutritionist, looked carefully at how the net energy of swine diets can differ substantially from the more common measurements of digestible energy or metabolizable energy. His findings showed that the latter two measurements systematically overvalue fibrous or high-protein feedstuffs and undervalue fats. Since these deficiencies in the measurement of dietary energy are critical to the economics of pig production, there is increased interest in using a system based on the net energy.

Using net energy rather than digestible or metabolizable energy, Stein said, would improve profits \$2 to \$3 per pig. His findings back this up since they showed that the net energy of DDGS was greater in finishing pigs than in growing pigs - something to consider when working with your nutritionist in devising a DDGS strategy for multiple phases of production.

## Secretary Vilsack Announces National Pork Board Appointments

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced six appointments to the 15-member National Pork Board.

Five appointments will serve 3-year terms and one will serve a 1-year term to complete the term of a Board member who resigned.

"I am pleased that these individuals have agreed to provide their time and expertise," said Vilsack. "I am confident that pork producers and importers will be well served by them."

In 2010, according to USDA statistics, there were 69,100 pork operations, representing about 64 million pigs at the beginning of 2011. Top pork producing states included Iowa, North Carolina, Minnesota, Illinois and Indiana.

The six appointees were chosen from among eight pork producers nominated by the National Pork Producers Delegate Body during its meeting in Phoenix, Arizona in March.

The newly appointed members representing pork producers are: Henry E. Moore, III, Clinton, N.C.; Glen Walters, Barnesville, Ga; and Janice Miller, Belden, Neb. Miller will serve a 1-year term to complete the final year of resigning Board member Gene Nemechek's term.

Members reappointed to the Board include: Conley Nelson, Algona, Iowa; Karen Richter, Montgomery, Minn; and Roy Henry, Longford, Kan.



*All activities reported under this heading are financed by non-check-off funds.*

## **SENATE APPROVES AMENDMENTS TO STOP ETHANOL SUBSIDIES**

The Senate recently approved as a rider to an economic development bill an amendment that would end subsidies to the ethanol industry. The amendment offered by Sens. Diane Feinstein, D-Calif. and Tom Coburn, R-Okla., which passed, 73-27, would begin to restore free market principles to U.S. agricultural policy by ending on July 1 the tax credits for conventional ethanol and the tariff on imported ethanol. Conventional ethanol is due to receive about \$6 billion in refundable tax credits this year.

An amendment offered by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., -- similar to the Flake amendment to the House agriculture appropriations bill approved recently (see below) -- that would have banned federal monies to pay for ethanol pumps and storage facilities. It failed to get the 60 votes needed under Senate rules. The McCain

The amendment was in response to a number of proposals that would redirect subsidies now going into the ethanol blender's credit into ethanol infrastructure and to "deficit reduction." The fate of this amendment is unclear because it will face a "blue slip" when it reaches the House because it is a revenue measure and those must initiate in the House.

NPPC, which supports allowing the blender's credit and import tariff to expire, backed the Feinstein-Coburn and McCain amendments, which, it said, would save U.S. taxpayers several billion dollars this year and have virtually no impact on ethanol production, jobs or prices. The organization pointed out, however, that none of the proposals do anything to address the precariously low corn supply.

## **EPA READIES RESPONSE ON MISSISSIPPI NUTRIENT PETITION**

Facing the threat of a lawsuit from environmental groups, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is planning to respond by the end of June to a nearly 3-year-old petition seeking limits for nutrients going into the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico, restrictions that critics warn will force widespread adoption of costly and ineffective controls. Environmental groups in 2008 petitioned EPA to set strict numeric criteria for preventing water-quality impairments to, as well as to establish total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for nitrogen, phosphorous and other nutrients for, the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. EPA has avoided setting numeric water limits and instead urged states to set their own. The petition states that EPA's inaction violates the Clean Water Act (CWA) and triggers the need for a federal standard. NPPC is part of a lawsuit against EPA over the agency's proposed TMDLs for the Chesapeake Bay, and the organization has been involved in talks with EPA's regional offices about nutrient restrictions. It's likely that NPPC's recent U.S. appellate court victory related to CWA permits for concentrated animal

feeding operations will affect EPA's ability to regulate livestock and poultry operations in any of the country's watersheds.

## **USDA SAYS NO TO BI-PARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST**

Despite the bi-partisan urging from 147 House lawmakers, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said he will not withdraw a proposed rule on buying and selling livestock and poultry. The House members, in a letter, asked that the proposed rule be withdrawn and that USDA propose a regulation "more consistent with the intent of Congress outlined in the 2008 Farm Bill." That legislation authorized USDA to promulgate new regulations under the Packers and Stockyards Act to address five specific areas related to livestock and poultry contracts. In addition to going beyond its congressional mandate, the USDA has tarnished the process in which this rule was developed. For example: by issuing official documents after the original rule was made public and by promising to revise its original economic analysis without offering pork producers and other stakeholders the opportunity to review such analyses. The bi-partisan letter signed by 147 House Members highlighted the concerns about the process and cited this as the reason the USDA should withdraw and re-propose. A recent analysis of the proposed regulation conducted by Informa Economics found that it would cost the U.S. pork industry nearly \$400 million annually, resulting in 2,000 direct pork related job losses. NPPC -- like the 147 bi-partisan House members -- has



strongly urged USDA to be open and transparent in its regulatory dealings with the U.S. pork industry.

## **WTO MAKES PRELIMINARY RULING AGAINST MCOOL**

A World Trade Organization dispute panel recently made a preliminary ruling on complaints filed by Canada and Mexico against U.S. country-of-origin labeling (COOL) requirements for meats and perishable commodities. The countries had argued that COOL requirements violate provisions of the WTO's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. In a statement, NPPC pointed out that U.S. pork producers opposed Mandatory Country-Of-Origin Labeling (MCOOL) when it was being considered by Congress because they believed the costs of complying with the law would outweigh any benefits. But producers will continue to obey the MCOOL law, said NPPC, which also pointed out that WTO panel decisions typically are appealed. The ruling is only preliminary, but WTO panels rarely alter their decisions in the final ruling, which is expected to be made public later this year. Once a final ruling is issued, the United States will have 60 days to appeal it. If the ruling stands, the United States will need to comply with the panel's decision, NPPC said, otherwise it risks retaliation from and a trade war with Canada and Mexico.

## **GROUPS SUE FDA TO COMPEL BAN ON ANTIBIOTICS USE IN LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION**

Groups opposed to modern livestock production have filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in an effort to compel the agency to ban certain antibiotics used in livestock production. The Natural Resources Defense Council, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Food Animal Concerns Trust, Public Citizen and Union of Concerned Scientists claim there is "growing evidence that the spread of bacteria immune to antibiotics has clear links to the overuse of antibiotics in the U.S. livestock industry." The law suit fails to mention that last summer FDA issued Guidance for Industry #209 that, when finalized, would restrict growth promotion/nutritional efficiency uses of antibiotics in feed, as well as increase oversight by veterinarians. While NPPC has offered comments to FDA on Guidance for Industry #209 it is important to note that numerous peer-reviewed risk assessments show that the risk to public health from animal uses of antibiotics is negligible. Additionally, the U.S. pork industry developed the Pork Quality Assurance Plus (PQA Plus) program to educate producers about good on-farm production practices, including antibiotics use. More than 53,000 pork industry workers have been certified under PQA Plus and about 13,000 farms have undergone assessments.

## **BILL TO BAN CERTAIN FOOD ANIMAL ANTIBIOTICS INTRODUCED IN HOUSE**

Rep. Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., introduced legislation to ban the use in livestock and poultry of certain antibiotics. Her bill, H.R. 965, the "Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act," would prohibit the use in food animals of antibiotics that prevent or control diseases and improve feed efficiency and weight gain. Proponents of the legislation, which has been offered in previous Congresses, claim that overuse of antibiotics in food-animal production is leading to an increase in antibiotic-resistant illnesses in humans. NPPC, which strongly opposes the bill, has pointed out that numerous risk assessments, including one conducted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, have shown risk levels associated with antibiotic use in agriculture that are extremely low and that nationally recognized scientific studies have shown that the removal of important animal health products could actually increase food-safety risks. The U.S. pork industry has programs – the Pork Quality Assurance Plus and the Take Care: Use Antibiotics Responsibly programs – that include principles and guidelines on antibiotic use that help protect animal and public health and animal well-being.

## **CONGRESSWOMAN TRIES TO JUMP-START ANTIBIOTIC BAN BILL**

Rep. Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., in a breathless press release issued in May, said the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, in response to a letter from her, reported that “over 70 percent of antibiotics administered to animals in feed.” According to Slaughter, that’s “a method of dispensation that has been linked to the rise of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria.” She also cited an FDA statistic that “80 percent of antibiotics are sold for use in agriculture.” Slaughter has introduced legislation – the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (H.R. 965) – that would ban from use in livestock production antibiotics for prevention and control of diseases and for feed efficiency. Slaughter claims such antibiotic use is causing antibiotic-resistant illness in people. NPPC pointed out that the 70 and 80 percent figures are only the amounts mixed in feed and sold, respectively, not the amounts actually used in livestock production. Additionally, the 80 percent figure is an estimate since FDA does not collect data on the amount of antibiotics sold for use in human medicine. As for antibiotic resistance, there are several scientific, peer-reviewed risk assessments showing virtually no risk to public health from antibiotic use in livestock, and most of the antibiotics delivered by feed, which is properly mixed by FDA-inspected mills, are used to treat disease, which Slaughter’s bill doesn’t address. Furthermore, there is no evidence antibiotics

in feed is mixed inconsistently – as Slaughter contends – or that such a delivery method is linked to a growth in antibiotic-resistant bacteria, according to NPPC.

## **BILL TO RESTRICT PRIVATE LIVESTOCK CONTRACTS INTRODUCED**

Legislation was introduced to prohibit certain livestock marketing contracts. Sponsored by Sens. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., Tim Johnson, D-S.D., Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, and Jon Tester, D-Mont., the “Livestock Marketing Fairness Act” would:

Require marketing agreements to have a firm base price derived from an external source.

Call for future forward contracts for livestock – cattle, hogs and lambs – to be traded in public markets where buyers and sellers can witness bids and make their own offers.

Exempt producer-owned cooperatives, packers with low volumes and packers who own only one processing plant.

Guarantee that trading is done in quantities that provide market access for small and large livestock producers.

The measure is similar to legislation introduced in 2007, which NPPC strongly opposed because of its restrictions on pork producers’ and packers’ ability to enter into private contracts. While the sponsors say the legislation is needed to correct “unfair meat packer practices” and alleged price fixing, neither the U.S. Department of Justice nor the U.S. Department of Agriculture has found any irregularities in contracting between

producers and packers. NPPC is analyzing the measure, but it appears to have provisions that will have serious negative effects on the U.S. pork industry and its ability to compete in the global market place.

## **NPPC MEETS WITH MEXICANS ON REGIONALIZATION AND RUSSIAN OFFICIALS ON RUSSIA’S WTO ACCESSION**

NPPC Vice President and Counsel for International Affairs Nick Giordano met recently with representatives from the Mexican private sector to discuss the “regionalization” of certain Mexican states as free of Classical Swine Fever (CSF). Efforts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), with the support of NPPC, have continued to make sure Mexico has the necessary animal health infrastructure and laboratory and disease management protocols to declare certain Mexican states free of CSF. NPPC supports Mexico’s efforts to export pork and pork products to the United States from regions that APHIS determines pose no risk of disease transmission. NPPC supports the principle of regionalization as a way of facilitating trade with areas free of contagious swine diseases and will continue to work with APHIS to address Mexico’s animal health concerns.

In late May, Giordano traveled last week to Moscow, where he met with high-ranking Russian officials and members of the Russian business community to discuss pork access issues

and Russia's World Trade Organization accession. Giordano also travelled to Geneva, Switzerland, headquarters of the WTO, for negotiations on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues associated with Russia's WTO accession. The U.S. pork industry continues to face a number of market access problems in Russia. U.S. pork sales to Russia have plummeted from 203,000 metric tons in 2008 to 83,000 metric tons in 2010. Those losses are the result of Russia's unjustified SPS barriers and unilateral reduction of its tariff rate quotas for U.S. pork. NPPC continues to work for the best possible market access deal through Russia's WTO accession negotiations. NPPC's priority is to establish more certainty and predictability in the Russian market for U.S. pork exporters through the elimination of SPS barriers and a large guaranteed tariff rate quota.

## **PEW-BACKED STUDY CONFIRMS THERE'S BACTERIA ON EVERYTHING**

A study funded by the Pew Charitable Trust, which also funded the work done by the now-named Pew Campaign on Human Health and Industrial Farming, purports to show that half of grocery store meat samples were contaminated with Staph aureus, a bacterium that can cause illness. The study's authors, who are consultants to the Pew campaign – which largely was composed of members opposed to modern livestock production practices, including antibiotic use – admitted that the public health relevance of their findings was unclear. The study

found Methicillin-resistant Staph aureus (MRSA) bacterium on just one sample each of beef, pork and turkey. Drs. Elizabeth Wagstrom and Peter Davies, with the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Population Medicine, pointed out that the MRSA isolates in the study were human types, meaning the meat likely was contaminated by a person. Additionally, the type of MRSA found was resistant to antibiotics not approved for use or used in food animal production in the United States. They also pointed out that:

Staph aureus is a common bacterium found on the skin of people – 30 percent of the population – and animals. It would have been unusual for the study's authors not to have found it on meat. While Staph can cause illness in people, it usually does not. It mostly affects people with compromised immune systems, open wounds or invasive devices – thus the reason that the vast majority of Staph infections occur in health-care facilities.

Staph on meat would not cause a Staph infection, but a toxin produced by Staph bacterium could cause food-borne illness, which would not be treated with antibiotics.

The study didn't measure how much – the level – of Staph found on samples. Simply finding low levels of Staph is no indication of the meat's potential to cause illness.

## **NPPC SUBMITS COMMENTS ON FSIS 'NON-AMBULATORY' LIVESTOCK PETITION**

NPPC and Michigan Pork Producers Association submitted comments on a public petition that requests the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service to amend its ante-mortem inspection regulations to prohibit the slaughter of all non-ambulatory livestock, including swine. Currently, federal MPPA regulations prohibit beef cattle that become non-ambulatory from entering the food supply. NPPC and MPPA said that banning the slaughter of non-ambulatory hogs would not only eliminate approximately 66 million pounds of safe and wholesome pork from the food chain but would be contrary to the available scientific evidence on non-ambulatory hogs and provide no added benefit to animal welfare, human health or food safety. The organizations pointed out that most hogs that become non-ambulatory are fatigued and will recover with adequate rest and that all animals destined for slaughter must be presented for ante-mortem inspection to FSIS inspectors as directed under the Federal Meat Inspection Act as well as an FSIS directive. It also cautioned that euthanizing non-ambulatory hogs would weaken the ability to detect early diseases and eliminate a method of comprehensive surveillance.



## **PORK PRODUCERS PARTICIPATE IN SUCCESSFUL ‘FLY-IN’**

More than 120 pork producers and nine swine veterinarians were in Washington, D.C., April 13 and 14 to attend NPPC’s Legislative Action Conference and to lobby their lawmakers on issues of importance to the U.S. pork industry. Producers also heard from Rep. Mike Conaway, R-Texas, who is chairman of the House Agriculture Committee’s General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee; Jim Miller, senior policy adviser for the Senate Budget Committee majority staff; Jose Luis Paz, head of Mexico’s Trade and NAFTA Office and representative of its Secretary

of the Economy in Washington, D.C.; and Ambassador Ron Kirk with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Kirk praised the U.S. pork industry for ensuring that the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement was finalized. “We couldn’t have gotten Korea done without you,” he said. The Washington fly-in was highlighted by the well-attended “Rack of Pork” congressional reception held in the Cannon House Office Building Caucus Room. Representing Michigan at the “Fly-In” were: MPPA President Dennis DeYoung, Plainwell; MPPA and NPPC Board member Bob Dykhuis, Holland; and MPPA Board members Ed Reed, Marcellus; Fred Walcott, Allendale; Andy White, Jones; and Dr. James Kober, Holland.

## **MICHIGAN COURT UPHOLDS RULING ON CAFO PERMITS**

The Michigan Court of Appeals upheld a January 2009 lower court ruling in favor of the state Department of Environmental Quality, which requires all concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to obtain pollution discharge permits. The Michigan Farm Bureau along with the Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Allied Poultry Industries, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Crockery Creek Turkey Farm and Four D. Farms appealed the decision of a county circuit court. The farm groups argued that permits should only be required if a CAFO actually is discharging to a waterway of the United States, citing federal courts that have reached the same conclusion about such permits. The farm groups are considering whether to appeal the latest decision.

## **EPA ADMINISTRATOR GRILLED OVER AGENCY’S ‘AGGRESSIVE REGULATORY AGENDA’**

The House Agriculture Committee during a hearing in March, grilled U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson on her “aggressive regulatory agenda (pursued) at the expense of the livelihoods of America’s farmers and ranchers” and questioned her on the agency’s attempts to legislate through activist litiga-



*(from left) MPPA Board member Fred Walcott, Allendale; and MPPA and NPPC Board member Bob Dykhuis, Holland; visit with Representative Bill Huizenga during the NPPC’s Legislative Action Conference.*

tion. In a statement issued after the hearing, Committee Chairman Frank Lucas, R-Okla., said EPA's agenda is "at odds with congressional intent, defies common sense and lacks any kind of understanding or consideration for the economic impact it has on the livelihoods of those who feed us." In a related matter, the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Energy and Power Subcommittee approved legislation prohibiting the EPA from regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. The "Energy Tax Prevention Act of 2011" was passed on a voice vote and is expected to be approved by the full committee next week. The bill could pass the House later in the spring and may even pass the Senate, where a companion measure is pending.

## **CHINA HOLDS LARGEST GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR U.S. PORK EXPORTS**

In a series of presentations on behalf of NPPC, Iowa State University economist Dermot Hayes discussed food price inflation and China's challenges in producing food for its large and increasingly affluent population. Presenting to agriculture associations, policy institutes, congressional staffers and Administration officials, Hayes drove home the point that the Chinese market holds the largest growth potential for U.S. pork exports. China is currently over 98 percent self sufficient in pork production. If China increased U.S. pork imports as a percent of consumption by just 1 percent, the U.S. pork industry would increase sales by \$1 billion and would create more than 27,000 U.S. jobs.


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## **Chairwoman Stabenow**

*(continued from page 8)*

- Belding, MI
- **Mr. Ken Nobis**, Dairy Production; President, Michigan Milk Producers Association, St. Johns, MI
  - **Mr. Peter B. Blauwikel**, Pork Production; Member, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Fowler, MI
  - **Mrs. Karen Serfass**, Forestry Production; Past President, Michigan Forest Association, Dafer, MI
  - **Ms. Kristen Holt**, President, Quality Assurance International (QAI) and Senior Vice President, Food Safety & Quality, NSF International, Ann Arbor, MI
  - **Mr. Eric Davis**, Director, Food Initiative, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, Detroit, MI
  - **Mr. Dennis West**, President, Northern Initiatives, Marquette, MI
  - **Mr. James Reid**, Reid Dairy Farm, Grant Township, MI
  - **Mr. David Armstrong**, President and CEO, Greenstone Farm Credit Services, East Lansing, MI

### **Blauwikel Outlines Pork Industry Concerns**

Pete Blauwikel, Fowler, Mich., who is a member of the MPPA Board of Directors, testified on behalf of the pork industry and emphasized a number of concerns; including the need for Congress to focus on efforts that will allow the U.S. pork industry to remain competitive. Blauwikel said passage of pending trade agreements with Columbia, Panama and South Korea are critically important. He pointed out that exports contributed \$56.00 to the value of every hog sold in 2010 and that the U.S. risks losing significant market share to other pork exporting nations that are actively signing agreements with pork importing countries while the U.S. Congress delays acting on the important trade agreements before it. Blauwikel conveyed that pork producers are very concerned about adequate feed availability because of record low corn stocks and he encouraged the Committee to consider allowing landowners to take their land out of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) without penalty to increase production amid growing global demand and shrinking stocks of grain. Blauwikel said pork producers were very concerned about USDA's proposed Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) Rule that independent consultants have estimated will cost the pork industry \$400 million annually if implemented. Blauwikel said the U.S. pork industry opposes any legislation or regulations that restrict marketing opportunities or interventions into hog markets unless such actions address a clear, unequivocal instance of market failure or abuse of power. Blauwikel also expressed concern about the growing threat feral swine pose to the domestic pork industry as vectors for disease transmission. Blauwikel pointed out that feral hogs are known carriers of numerous diseases including pseudorabies, bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis that could be devastating to the commercial pork industry. He said state and federal governments need to bolster feral swine control programs and create "buffer zones" around domestic swine production pockets to safeguard the health of swine herds. 

## Legislators, Agri-Businesses Meet at Agriculture Informational Luncheon

Michigan agri-businesses and groups representing major commodities met last winter with

Michigan legislators at an informational luncheon aimed at highlighting agriculture's impact on the economy, its products and the many local jobs it produces, including investing millions of dollars in communities across Michigan in 2009.

"Michigan agriculture is eager to tell our positive stories to policymakers, and let them know that agriculture wants to be part of the solution for moving Michigan forward," Michigan Agri-Business Association President Jim Byrum said. "Michigan agriculture businesses have deep roots in their community, they hire locally and they are engines of development in rural communities and beyond. Michigan agriculture is continuing to invest and grow, and we want to continue growing the economy."

Byrum said that while the overall economy continued to struggle, Michigan agriculture continued to invest in numerous projects statewide, totaling about \$500 million in 2009 – a year when the economy remained mired in a global downturn.

"Agriculture is one of the few bright spots in today's economy and we expect this positive trend to continue in coming years, thanks to the terrific work agriculture businesses are doing in terms of increasing productivity, meeting growing demand and seizing new opportunities," Byrum said. "Michigan agriculture can grow even more with the right policies and the right priorities, including strengthening our roads, bridges and other infrastructure, and increasing our processing and production capabilities. We look forward to partnering with policymakers to see how agriculture can continue to play an important role in rebuilding Michigan."

Luncheon speakers included Ben Kudwa of the Potato Growers of Michigan, Ken Nobis of the Michigan Milk Producers Association, George House of Michigan Allied Poultry Industries Inc. and Sam Hines of the Michigan Pork Producers Association.

The speakers highlighted the economic contributions of their member businesses:

Michigan's No. 1 commodity – milk and dairy products – alone contributes nearly \$6 billion to the economy annually. Today, Michigan is the nation's eighth largest milk and dairy state and one of its most efficient, ranking fifth nationally in production per cow.

Michigan grows nearly \$100 million worth of potatoes, making it the 10th largest potato state in the nation. Michigan is No. 1 when it comes to growing potatoes used for chips.

Michigan produces nearly 6 million turkeys every year, with a farm-gate value of \$120 million annually; has around 10 million laying hens, with

a farm-gate value of \$120 million annually; and grows nearly 5 million five-pound broilers per year, with an estimated farm-gate value of \$12.5 million annually.

Michigan's pork industry has an economic impact of up to \$750 million annually, creating more than 5,300 jobs – and is growing, with 25 percent of Michigan pork now exported.

Attendees at the luncheon included new Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville; new Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Sen. Joe Hune; Senate Agriculture Committee Vice Chair Sen. Darwin Booher; and Senate Agriculture Committee member Sen. Judy Emmons. About three dozen senators and representatives attended the bipartisan luncheon, together with Michigan agri-businesses such as Cooperative Elevator Co., Star of the West Milling, Carbon Green, Michigan Agricultural Commodities Inc. and more. 



*MPPA Board member Harley Sietsema, Allendale; Art Nor, Allendale; and MPPA Executive Vice President Sam Hines, visit with Senator Stabenow at the luncheon.*



## Spending Measure Puts ‘GIPSA Rule’ on Hold

### *Language in Agriculture Funding Bill Stops Development of Final Regulation*

Livestock and poultry organizations praised House lawmakers for approving an agriculture funding bill that prevents the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from finalizing its proposed regulation on livestock and poultry marketing contracts.

The House voted 217-203 to pass legislation that funds USDA, the Food and Drug Administration and related agencies for fiscal 2012, which begins Oct. 1, but denies money for USDA’s Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) to promulgate the livestock and poultry marketing regulation.

Known as the GIPSA rule, the regulation was prompted by the 2008 Farm Bill. But, as 147 House members recently pointed out in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, the proposed rule goes well beyond the intent of Congress and includes provisions specifically rejected during debate on the Farm Bill. Lawmakers also criticized USDA’s failure to conduct an in-depth economic impact study of the proposal before it was published.

The livestock and poultry groups expressed strong support for the House action:

“The National Pork Producers Council is grateful that the House is requiring USDA to take a timeout on the GIPSA rule, which as proposed is bad for farmers and ranchers, bad for consumers and bad for rural America,” said NPPC President Doug Wolf.

“And contrary to the proclamations from some general farm groups, the vast majority of livestock and poultry producers strongly oppose this regulation, which would cost them millions of dollars and lead to thousands of lost jobs.”

“At a time when cattlemen are wondering why the federal government seems determined to put them

out of business, it is encouraging to see the U.S. House of Representatives push back on government overreach into the private marketplace,” National Cattlemen’s Beef Association President Bill Donald said. “If this rule is implemented, family farmers and ranchers have the most to lose with consumers riding shotgun. This rule will kill jobs and consumer choice and will depopulate rural America. Jobs on the ranch will be lost and trial lawyers will be the only ones to reap rewards. The Senate needs to follow suit by stopping funding for this rule.”

“We commend the House for voting to rein in USDA’s GIPSA, which went far beyond its mandate from Congress in developing a rule on production and marketing of livestock and poultry,” said Mike Brown, president of the National Chicken Council. “We have consistently urged USDA to go back to the drawing board and produce a rule that responds to its instructions from Congress rather than trying to destroy the existing system as the proposed rule does. Now we hope that the U.S. Senate will see the wisdom in the House action and follow suit.”

“The National Turkey Federation is very pleased with today’s action by the House. After careful examination, our processor and grower members concluded the proposed GIPSA marketing rule will result in job losses and negatively impact turkey farmers in a variety of ways, including limiting their ability to enter into certain production and marketing agreements,” said NTF President Joel Brandenberger. “The more than 1,000 family farmers who raise turkeys in this country rely on production and marketing contracts to make a living. If the final rule were implemented, it could result in a fundamental change in the way turkeys are raised in this country, a change that may not benefit

farmers. This rule is so flawed it can’t be fixed, and Congress is right to try and scrap it, insisting that GIPSA go back to the specific provisions agreed to in the 2008 Farm Bill.”

Said American Meat Institute President J. Patrick Boyle: “We appreciate the House of Representatives’ recognition that the proposed GIPSA rule is a costly and misguided regulation that ignores its congressional mandate and court rulings from across the land. We hope that the Senate will take the same action so that USDA will do what it appears reluctant to do: write a rule that is consistent with congressional intent and that will not force meat and poultry companies and livestock producers across the country to dismantle the model that has made our U.S. meat and poultry production system competitive and the envy of the world.”

“Congress is exactly right to ask that USDA give its proposed rule a reassessment,” said National Meat Association CEO Barry Carpenter. “The negative consequences of not doing so will have an enormous economic impact on the industry and be felt disproportionately by innovative, independent operators who rely on marketing arrangements to create a unique product.”

The organizations consistently have criticized the proposed USDA regulation, pointing out that it would restrict marketing agreements between producers and processors, dictate the terms of production contracts, require additional paperwork, create legal uncertainty and limit producers’ ability to negotiate better prices for the animals they sell.

According to a study conducted by Informa Economics, the GIPSA rule would result in job losses of nearly

*(continued on page 34)*

## NPPC Scores CAFO Suit Victory Over EPA

In a unanimous decision issued March 15, a federal court ruled that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency cannot require livestock operations to obtain Clean Water Act (CWA) permits unless and until they have a discharge of manure into a waterway of the United States. The decision is a major victory for pork producers, said the National Pork Producers Council.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit in New Orleans said that EPA exceeded its statutory authority in requiring concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) that propose or that might discharge to apply for CWA permits.

NPPC, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the United Egg Producers and several other agricultural groups sued EPA over its so-called CAFO rule, which was issued in 2008 after EPA's core provision in the initial 2003 regulation was struck down by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit in New York City. In that 2005 decision, the court ruled that the CWA requires permits only for producers who actually discharge. EPA had sought to require permits even for operations that had a "potential" to discharge.

The 2008 regulation, which set a zero-discharge standard, included a duty to apply for a CWA permit for all CAFOs that discharge or "propose" to discharge. The rule essentially established a presumption that CAFOs "proposed" to discharge if any future discharge occurred. The rule covered production areas and crop land on which manure is applied and imposed fines of up to \$37,500 a day not only for illegal discharges but for the failure of a CAFO that had a discharge to apply for a CWA permit.

"NPPC is very pleased with the 5th Circuit's decision," said NPPC President Doug Wolf. "The court recognized a clear limit on EPA's authority

and required the agency to comply with the clean water law."

In arguments before the 5th Circuit, NPPC said the 2008 rule's duty to apply "constitutes a thinly veiled effort to impose the same duty to apply that was invalidated" by the 2nd Circuit. It also argued that the "failure to apply" violation creates substantial economic pressure to apply for a CWA permit and that the regulation shifts the burden to a non-permitted CAFO that has a discharge to establish that it did not "propose" to discharge.

The 5th Circuit Court agreed with NPPC's arguments, ruling on the "duty to apply" provision that previous court cases "leave no doubt that there must be an actual discharge ... to trigger the CWA's requirements and EPA's authority." It also struck down the CAFO rule's "failure to apply" provision, stating that its imposition is "outside the bounds of the CWA's mandate."

"Pork producers have worked hard


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### GIPSA

*(continued from page 33)*

23,000, with an annual drop in gross domestic product by as much as \$1.56 billion and a yearly loss in tax revenues of \$359 million.

The study also found that the regulation would impose on the livestock and poultry industries "ongoing and indirect" costs – eventually borne by producers and consumers – of more than \$1.64 billion, including nearly \$880 million to the beef industry, more than \$400 million to the pork industry and almost \$362 million to the poultry industry.

A study by John Dunham and Associates estimated the proposal's costs to be far higher than USDA initially suggested. 

to meet, and are meeting, the zero-discharge standard, which the pork industry has embraced," Wolf said. "Getting a federal permit is irrelevant to meeting the standard. The time, effort and cost of getting one is a complete waste when all that permit will do is tell producers to do exactly what they already are required and fully intend to do – not have a discharge."



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### NPPC Names Wagstrom Chief Veterinarian

The National Pork Producers Council has named Dr. Liz Wagstrom as its chief veterinarian; she began her duties on May 16. Wagstrom is located in NPPC's Washington, D.C., office.

Wagstrom, an internationally recognized expert on pig health, food safety and zoonoses, most recently was associate professor with the University of Minnesota's Center for Animal Health and Food Safety. Prior to that, she worked for the National Pork Board, first as director of Veterinary Services and more recently as assistant vice president for Science and Technology. Wagstrom also served as an epidemiologist and public health veterinarian for the Minnesota Department of Health.

"Dr. Wagstrom brings a unique set of qualifications and perspectives, an in-depth knowledge of U.S. pork production and swine research and a long-standing relationship with the public health community," said Audrey Adamson, NPPC vice president of domestic policy issues. "At NPPC, she will have a broad portfolio, including domestic and international animal health and welfare, on-farm

*(continued on page 35)*

## USDA ISSUES Clarification To Statement On Antibiotics Use By Hog Farmers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a clarification to statements made about livestock producers overusing antibiotics and about that overuse leading to antibiotic resistance in humans. The statements were wrongly interpreted in a March 17 story in the *Wall Street Journal*.

In testimony before the House Appropriations Committee's agriculture subcommittee, USDA Agricultural Research Service Administrator Dr. Edward Knipping, in response to a question from Rep. Tom Latham, R-Iowa, said his department is conducting research on antibiotic use in livestock and antibiotic resistance. Knipping said that, while data suggest "in some cases, there are problems and concerns," they also show "this is not as severe an issue as it might be otherwise portrayed."


Despite those statements, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that "hog farmers are overusing antibiotics on their herds and that may be creating antibiotic-resistant bacteria that pose a threat to human health." The headline on the story said government data support that contention.

In its clarification statement, USDA said: "Dr. Knipping never said that swine producers were overusing antibiotics in the herds." He also pointed out, the statement said, that "some of that data and trends show that the resistance is not developing to the extent as otherwise might be portrayed." A transcript of the hearing supports USDA's clarification.

NPPC said claims that pork producers are overusing antibiotics, which is leading to antibiotic resistance, have no basis in fact and no science behind

them. Data from the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS), which does not gather antibiotic usage information, show resistance has been nearly unchanged for the past 10-15 years and that 2009 NARMS data on hogs show that antibiotic resistance is "low."

"Pork producers use antibiotics responsibly, under the direction of a veterinarian, to protect public health and the health of their animals and to produce safe food," said Howard Hill, DVM, who serves on NPPC's board of directors. "We are appreciative that USDA clarified what actually was said at the appropriations hearings."

The U.S. pork industry consistently has supported NARMS's work and urged it to conduct on-farm sampling of animals for antimicrobial resistance. 

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## NPPC Backs Dietary Guidelines' Goal Of More Nutrient-Rich Foods

The National Pork Producers Council expressed support for federal dietary guidelines whose goals are to reduce obesity, encourage the consumption of nutrient-rich foods and increase physical activity. Many cuts of pork, the organization pointed out, are lean, nutrient-dense sources of protein.

NPPC recognizes for food policy and nutrition guidance the importance of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, which were issued by the U.S. departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS).

"NPPC agrees with the guidelines' call for eating nutrient-dense foods, and many cuts of lean pork, including tenderloin and loin chops, contain quality nutrients," said NPPC President Doug Wolf, a pork producer from Lancaster, Wis.

Lean meat offers nutrients that often are lacking in Americans, including heme iron, potassium and vitamin B-12, a micronutrient not found in plant-based foods. Based on current consumption data from the HHS National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, Americans on an average 2,000 calorie-a-day diet consume 5.3 ounces of meat or meat equivalents. The USDA "Food Pyramid" suggests two to three servings of 2- to 3-ounce portions of meat, poultry or fish, meaning from 4 to 9 ounces a day.

"The solution to the obesity problem is not a shift from animal-based foods to plant-based ones but rather a shift from nutrient-poor foods to nutrient-rich foods, emphasizing the consumption of lean meats, including pork, along with vegetables, nuts and beans," Wolf said. 


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## Wagstrom

(continued from page 34)

production and public health and food-safety issues."

Wagstrom received a bachelor's degree in animal science and agricultural economics from the University of Minnesota and earned her doctorate in veterinary medicine and master's degree in veterinary preventive medicine from Iowa State University. She is board certified by the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine.

"NPPC is very pleased Dr. Wagstrom is joining our staff," said NPPC CEO Neil Dierks. "Her background, knowledge and skills make her a valuable resource for U.S. pork producers and the U.S. pork industry." 



# Pork Checkoff

*Reports on checkoff-funded promotion, research and consumer information programs.*

## U.S. Pork Producers Provide Assistance to Japanese Residents

U.S. pork producers are partnering with the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) to provide pork for victims of the massive earthquake and tsunami that struck northeastern sections of Japan on March 11. Estimates are that more than a half million Japanese residents are without adequate food and shelter. Food shortages are expected to last into the summer months.

On behalf of U.S. pork producers and importers, the National Pork Board has allocated \$100,000 from the Pork Checkoff to provide pork product and to help get it distributed to those in need in Japan, said Conley Nelson, a pork producer from Iowa and a member of the National Pork Board. USMEF, which represents the U.S. meat industry in Japan from its office in Tokyo, will work with U.S. pork packers and others who have established distribution networks in Japan to make sure the food gets to those who need it.

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## Quick Facts Offers

### Answers

Want to know about the leading pork item on restaurant menus? Curious about how many meals can be supplied from one pig? Ever wondered about pork's carbon footprint?

The Checkoff's Quick Facts: The Pork Industry at a Glance book, updated for 2011, has the answers. The 120-page guide, found at [pork.org](http://pork.org), offers accurate, informative updates ranging from how pigs are raised today to a breakdown of the industry's latest statistics.

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## Swine ID: Critical Step to Safeguard U.S. Herd

Nearly all, 95 percent, of pork producers have registered their premises and obtained a nationally standardized farm identification number, often referred to as a standard premises identification number (PIN). According to Patrick Webb, Pork Checkoff director of swine health, this demonstrates the clear understanding by producers of the importance of implementing the Swine ID Plan, so the industry has a standardized animal identification and pre-harvest traceability system for animal health that is consistent across all states.

"Having the traceability infrastructure in place at the state and national level is crucial for maintaining and expanding export markets and offers us an invaluable tool to use in the event of a foreign animal disease," says Webb. "It offers us a layer of protection that would not be possible without it."

Even as USDA transitions to the new Animal Disease Traceability framework, Webb says for pork producers it is business as usual concerning the implementation of the Swine ID Plan across the industry.

"The Plan fits within the new framework and produces in all 50 states and Tribal Nations can still request a premises identification number," Webb added.

## USMEF Global Initiative Targets Underappreciated Pork Butt

The pork butt is the Rodney Dangerfield of pork cuts. It's more tender, juicy, flavorful and affordable than many cuts in the pork carcass, but it doesn't get any respect. A new international initiative is out to change that.

U.S. pork processors and exporters met with U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) international directors and U.S.-based staff this August in a New Opportunity Conference to identify which pork and beef products would benefit from additional attention in the global marketplace, and what USMEF could do to better position the targeted cuts to increase both sales and profitability.

In the minds of those participating pork industry executives, there were no ifs or ands about it, the butt was far and away the top pork cut identified with the greatest unrealized potential.

"The pork butt grades very well when compared to the ham and loin muscles in terms of tenderness, juiciness and flavor," said Dan Halstrom, USMEF senior vice president of marketing and communications. "It truly is an attractive and affordable cut that is greatly underutilized."

Utilizing information from swine attribute research sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Iowa State University and the Pork Checkoff, USMEF is now conducting meetings with international retail and food service customers to educate them about the potential benefits to their business of adding pork butt to their product mix.

“USMEF is looking at a variety of markets for this initiative, including Mexico, the Caribbean, Canada, South Korea and Japan,” said Halstrom. “U.S. pork is the protein of choice globally, and we see opportunities to expand market share and compete with other proteins by educating our contacts there about the advantages of the pork butt.”

USMEF’s international team will take that research and use it to help customize recipes and product presentation for the pork butt by region - customizing it to fit the local cuisines.

Through the first nine months of 2010, U.S. pork exports are up 2 percent in volume and 9 percent in value over 2009, approaching 1.4 million metric tons or 3.1 billion pounds valued at \$3.5 billion. On a per-head basis in September, pork export value was \$41.33 per head compared to \$35.30 last year. For the year-to-date, exports account for nearly 24 percent of total U.S. pork production.

### Genetics Play Role in PRRS Battle

After two years of Checkoff-funded research, the PRRS Host Genetics Consortium already has provided important answers to help the industry battle PRRS.

The collaborative group -made up of the National Pork Board, the PRRS Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP), the Agricultural Research Service, USDA’s Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, private companies and universities - have come together to conduct a multi-year project designed to understand how host genetics influence the outcome of PRRS virus infection.

Previous results have affirmed that there are genetic components involved in controlling pig responses to PRRS virus infection. This research has identified new avenues for other areas of PRRS research,

including new diagnostic techniques, new surveillance approaches, and a better understanding of virus ecology.

From this research, producers will be able to:

1. Determine the relationships between PRRS viral levels, weight gain and underlying pig genetics;
2. Develop better management techniques for the control of PRRS virus infection and disease;
3. Improve surveillance for PRRS virus and other infectious diseases; and
4. Identify genes and phenotypic markers that are linked to specific infection and growth outcomes.

“With the continued support of the PRRS Host Genetics Consortium in the coming year, the researchers will be able to use genetic markers in breeding programs to identify pigs that are more resistant to PRRS infection, tolerant to infection, produce a desired immune response and/or respond well following vaccination,” said Dr. Lisa Becton, the Pork Checkoff’s director of swine health.

“Checkoff support of the research conducted by the members of the consortium is putting us on the right path to help the industry with this major disease,” she said.

The U.S. pork industry can continue to be a leader in food production and meet domestic and world demand for pork as long as exports continue to grow, feed grains are available and producers are allowed to operate without undue legislative and regulatory burdens, said the National Pork Producers Council in congressional testimony.

NPPC President Doug Wolf, told the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry that the U.S. pork industry is doing well but has concerns about issues that could jeopardize its continued success.

He pointed out that exports have been a boon to the U.S. pork industry, which is the world’s No. 1 exporter of pork. But, he said, “the industry will not stay in that position if competitor countries cut trade deals in key markets and the United States does not.”

NPPC urged lawmakers to approve the pending free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. The deals, when fully implemented, will generate more than \$770 million in additional pork exports, increase hog prices by more than \$11 per head and create more than 10,000 U.S. pork industry jobs, according to Iowa State University economist Dermot Hayes.

Wolf cautioned the panel that, as good as exports can continue to be for the industry, “they will do little good if domestic policies hamper producers’ ability to operate.”

He mentioned two issues: the availability of feed for animals and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s proposed regulation on buying and selling livestock – the GIPSA rule.

Tight feed-grain supplies, driven in part by subsidized ethanol production, could cause spot shortages of feed this year, and producers are worried

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## National Pork Board Elects New Officers

Everett Forkner, a pork producer from Richards, Mo., has been elected president of the 15-member National Pork Board. Forkner, is the owner and president of Forkner Farms Inc., which has 550 purebred sows and markets 7,500 hogs per year. With members of his family, he also raises corn, soybeans and wheat on 2,000 acres in west central Missouri.

National Pork Board members also elected Conley Nelson, a pork producer from Algona, Iowa, vice president and Karen Richter, a pork producer from Montgomery, Minn., treasurer. All three will serve one-year terms beginning immediately.


Forkner has traveled the world to sell his purebred pigs in Europe, China and Southeast Asia. An animal science graduate of the University of Missouri, he has maintained his passion for improving swine genetics. He has served as president and on the board of the American Landrace Association and on the board of the United Duroc Association.

He also has a long history of service to the pork industry at the local, state and national level. He is a past president of the Vernon County Pork Producers and served on that group's board of directors from 1970 to 1995. He also has served on the Missouri Pork Producers Association Board of Directors. Additionally, he also is a member of Vernon County Farm Bureau and Vernon County Cattlemen's Association.

Nationally, he is serving his second three-year term on the National Pork Board. He has served as chairman of the producer-led Animal Science Committee. He also has served on the Niche Committee and as a member of the Nutritional Efficiency Consortium. At the board level, he serves on the Administrative Committee.

Nelson is the general manager of

the Murphy-Brown LLC Midwest operations with 89,000 sows and markets 3.7 million hogs a year. He also owns a 4,400 head wean-to-finish operation. Nelson is a graduate of the Pork Checkoff's Leadership Academy and is serving his second three-year term on the board. At the state level, he serves on the Iowa Pork Producers board of directors, its audit committee, the membership and leadership committee and the swine health and animal well-being committees. He is a member of the Kossuth County Pork Producers and the Humboldt County Farm Bureau.

Richter of Montgomery, Minnesota, owns and operates a farrow-to-finish operation with 185 sows and markets 3,300 hogs per year, while raising corn, soybeans and wheat on 650 acres. Nationally, she serves on the Pork Checkoff Trade Committee and is an Operation Main Street presenter. She has also served on the Checkoff Nominating Committee, the Plan of Work Task Force and as a Pork Act Delegate. Richter served on the Minnesota Pork Board executive board and numerous committees. Locally, she is active in the Le Sueur County Pork Producers. She has held several offices including state director, treasurer and vice president and has chaired several committees including ambassador, scholarship and membership. 



## Pork Producers Support a Sustainable Future

For America's pork producers, focusing on the principles of Earth Day is a daily part of how they manage their farms. Yet, even with a long history of being good stewards of the environment, producers continue to seek ways to improve their overall sustainability to benefit their animals, their neighbors, their local community and consumers worldwide.

"To us, sustainability is the ability to endure," said Randy Spronk, a farrow-to-finish pork producer from Edgerton, Minn., who serves on the National Pork Board's Environmental Committee. "That's why pork producers support the development of swine operations of all types and sizes that safeguard animal health and welfare, improve the food safety of pork and are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable."

Pork production contributes only one-third of one percent (0.33%) of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, every pound of pork produced in the United States today has a smaller carbon footprint than it used to have 20 years ago, due to improved production methods employed by producers over the years. Things such as:

- **Improved feeding programs** that carefully match swine diets to the nutrition needs of the pigs' based on their sex, age and stage of growth ensures the pig's health and welfare without overfeeding nutrients that end up in the manure.
- **Using manure as a natural fertilizing agent** to replace or offset the use of commercial fertilizers that are made from

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**Get tips and hints on improving your pork production operation on the  
Pork Information Gateway Web site  
at <http://msu.porkgateway.com>!**

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# We are Listening

## Dear MPPA:

I wanted to thank, Mary Kelpinski, for presenting to our 4-H members and parents on Saturday morning, April 16. The presentation she gave on the Swine Industry was very well done. The whole presentation was exactly what we were looking for. The 4-H kids and their families were able to take home some valuable information. Many of them spoke with me before leaving and felt that they gained information that they really did not know anything or very little about. That was the goal and she did a fabulous job achieving it! Our hope now is that they take the information to heart as they plan their 4-H livestock projects.

We really appreciate Mary taking time out of her busy schedule, especially at this time of year, to address our 4-H livestock kids and help our program.

Thank you!

*Eva Beeker*  
Program Instructor  
4-H Development  
St. Joseph County

## Dear MPPA:

As Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, I wanted to let you know that I hosted a roundtable discussion with members of the Committee about a number of proposed EPA regulations that would impact Michigan farmers. We met with USDA Secretary Vilsack and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, and had a very productive discussion about the need to hear the voices of farmers, ranchers, and foresters whose businesses would be affected by these proposed regulations.

As you know, I have been working hard to ensure that EPA regulations do not burden Michigan's agribusinesses.

I know that you are good stewards of the land and water. In the end, we all share the same goal of strengthening our economy, protecting our food supply, and maintaining productive land and clean water for future generations of farmers.

Today's discussion was the first of many I want to have with the Administration to make sure that the needs of agriculture are understood before these regulations are proposed. I have also created a USDA/EPA Working Group that will bring together all the stakeholders to look at the impact of EPA regulations and find a way forward on these issues.

As this work continues, I will keep you informed on our progress. As always, I welcome your input and involvement.

*Debbie Stabenow*  
United States Senator

## Dear MPPA:

I would like to thank you for your sponsorship of the Michigan Pork Producers Association youth scholarships. Your support of the pork industry's future is deeply appreciated.

As a sophomore at Michigan State University and a 2011 scholarship winner, I have had the opportunity to turn a passion for the livestock industry into a career pathway. I am currently pursuing Bachelor of Science degrees in Animal Science and Agribusiness Management (with an Agronomy specialization), which I hope to utilize after graduation to promote animal agriculture, providing consumers with the knowledge necessary to make informed choices where agricultural products are concerned. The MPPA scholarship program has played a vital role in helping me accomplish my goals.

Again, thank you for your contin-

ued support of the youth involved in the swine industry. I greatly appreciate your kindness, and look forward to working with you in the future.

*Elizabeth Oliver*  
2011 MPPA Scholarship Recipient  
Byron, Mich.

## Dear MPPA:

My name is Jaime Curth, I participated in the Extemporaneous Public Speaking contest at the State Level this year and was awarded a Silver. Extemporaneous taught me a lot about dedication, self-motivation, and broadened my leadership abilities. I would like to thank you for my plaque and for supporting the FFA organization.

Thank you,

*Jamie Curth*  
Vermontville, Mich.

## Dear MPPA:

I would like to thank you for sponsoring the Swine Proficiency Placement Award. Having swine production as my SAE has been a very rewarding experience that I have learned a lot from.

Thank you for your continued support of FFA.

*Addie Spolyar*  
Litchfield, Mich.

## Dear MPPA:

It is important to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation to the Michigan Pork Producers Association for their continued support of Michigan 4-H Youth Development through their donation to sponsor the annual 4-H Beef, Sheep, and Swine Teen and Adult Leaders Workshop. The workshop was held at Kettunen Center on February 26-27, 2011.

(continued from page 12)

There were approximately 140 teen and adult participants that represented over 25 Michigan counties in this year's workshop. The program topics vary each year but continue to address aspects of livestock production and management, financial literacy and marketing, career exploration, and numerous life skill development components.

We greatly appreciate the presentation given by Mary that provided information to the teens and adults and focused on learning how to become an effective advocate and spokesperson for agriculture. Based upon the evaluations submitted at the end of the workshop, her session was very well received.

Best wishes,

*Ken Geuns*

Extension Specialist – Livestock Youth Programs

**Dear MPPA:**

I am writing to let you know about an exciting opportunity available for farmers and rural small businesses in Michigan.

As Chairwomen of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, I want to create opportunities for Michigan Farmers and small businesses to save money and reduce energy usage. I was pleased to support, as part of the most recent Farm Bill, the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Farmers and small businesses in Michigan used REAP money to build wind turbines, install solar arrays, and replace grain dryers – to give a few examples.

Competitive grants are awarded for renewable energy projects (like building a wind turbine) and for energy-saving projects. Any project that reduces energy use and results in energy savings can qualify for an

energy efficiency grant.

If you are interested in applying for one of these competitive grants or loans, contact your regional USDA office. If you do not know your regional office's number, you can visit the Michigan USDA Rural Development website at: <http://rurdev.usda.gov/mi/> or you can call the Michigan headquarters at 517/324-5157.

If you would like a letter of support for your grant application or need help, please feel free to contact one of my regional Senate offices: Flint, Saginaw, Bay, Thumb (810-720-4172); Mid-Michigan (517-203-1760); Northern Michigan (231-929-1031); Southeast Michigan (313-961-4330); Upper Peninsula (906-228-8756); or West Michigan (616-975-0052).

*Debbie Stabenow*

United States Senator

**Dear MPPA:**

Thank you Michigan Pork Producers Association for the trophy you donated for my Swine Production Proficiency Award.

*Kristen Cantrell*

**Dear MPPA:**

Thank you, Mary Kelpinski, for speaking at our district meeting about issues effecting the livestock industry. Our delegates really appreciated you sharing your knowledge. We look forward to working closely with the Michigan Pork Producers Association. It was a pleasure to meet you and thank you again for your time.

*Abra Dunn*

United Producers, Inc.

6,000 pigs per year. They also raise row crops and a small beef herd on 1,000 acres. He went through the Operation Mainstreet training last summer and has done several presentations in the East Lansing area.

"A skilled workforce is essential for the competitiveness of this industry," Nemechek said. "We need young leaders to look at pork not just as a food choice, but as a career. This is a chance for the industry to encourage these young people to join a workforce that offers many diverse opportunities. We have needs in production management, veterinary medicine, environmental management, food safety, genetic improvement, nutrition and much more.

"On behalf of the Pork Checkoff and its partners, the National Pork Board and the pork industry, we congratulate this year's Pork Industry Scholarship recipients," Nemechek said. "We look forward to welcoming them into our industry in the future."





## Sustainable Future

(continued from page 38)

petroleum products. This not only helps reduce the energy use associated with making the commercial fertilizers, but also helps build the carbon content and moisture-holding capacity of soils.

- **Improved manure management and application practices**, such as following carefully developed manure management plans that match the manure nutrient applied to the nutrient needs of the crops to be grown. Also, injection or incorporation of the manure nutrients at the time of application, not only ensures getting the full fertilizer value of the manure, but guards against runoff that could impact water quality.
- **Controlling odor.** Windbreaks are an important feature of many swine

farms, because the trees help filter the air and reduce the potential transfer of odor from the farm.

“These are just a few examples of how producers strive to be good neighbors in the communities in which they live,” said Stokes.

As the pork industry plays its part to feed an ever-growing world population, the Pork Checkoff is developing new tools to help producers become more sustainable, Stokes added. A new carbon footprint calculator is in final stages of development that will help producers identify areas on their farms where they can become more efficient and potentially reduce their carbon footprint. This tool was launched at World Pork Expo in Des Moines in June.


We want to ensure that the resources required in pork production are used as efficiently as possible, with little or no waste,” Spronk said. “By focusing on environmental sustainability, we can help protect precious resources for future generations.”

For more information on how America’s Pork Producers are focusing on sustainability, visit [www.pork.org](http://www.pork.org).

## Without Obstacles

(continued from page 37)

that a weather event in the Corn Belt, for example, could affect next crop year’s – 2011-2012 – supplies. NPPC requested USDA to address the potential crisis, but the agency has taken no action.

On the GIPSA rule, Wolf said one study found it would cost the pork industry alone nearly \$400 million annually and could force producers like him out of business. NPPC has asked USDA to scrap the rule, to write a regulation on only the five topics Congress told it to address in the 2008 Farm Bill and to conduct an economic analysis – open to public comment – of any rule before it is finalized. 

### **Public Notice by Michigan Pork Producers Association and the National Pork Board**

The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 2012 National Pork Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body will take place at 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 14, 2011, in conjunction with a Board of Director’s meeting of the Michigan Pork Producers Association in room 321 of the Green-Stone Farm Credit Services building, 3515 West Road, East Lansing, MI 48823. All Michigan pork producers are invited to attend.

Any producer, who is a resident of the state and has paid all assessments due may be considered as a delegate candidate and/or participate in the election. All eligible producers are encouraged to bring with them a sales receipt proving that hogs were sold in their name and the checkoff deducted. For more information, contact Michigan Pork Producers Association at 3515 West Road, Suite B, East Lansing, Michigan 48823, telephone 517/853-3782.

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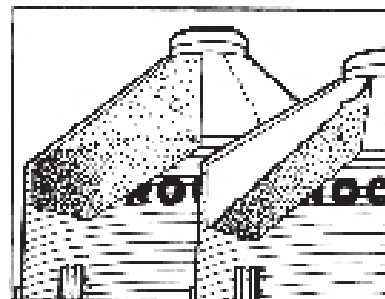
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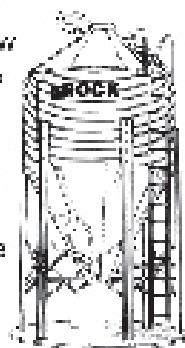


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Age weaned	17 days
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Avg. born/litter	11
Avg. live born/litter	10.3
Avg. weaned/litter	9.5
Age weaned	24 days
Avg. pig weight	22.1 lbs.

### Nursery/Finish Performance

Number of days in nursery	53
Avg. daily gain in nursery	1.018 lbs.
Avg. on-test weight finish	68 lbs.
Avg. off-test weight	238 lbs.
Avg. daily gain on-test	2.048 lbs.
Feed intake per day on test	4.98 lbs.
Feed efficiency test finish period	2.549 lbs.

### Nursery/Finish Performance

Number of days in nursery	48
Avg. daily gain in nursery	1.025 lbs.
Avg. on-test weight finish	71.3 lbs.
Avg. off-test weight	328 lbs.
Avg. daily gain on-test	2.07 lbs.
Feed/day on test	5.80 lbs.
Feed efficiency	2.805 lbs.
Lean gain/day	1.057 lbs.
Age at slaughter	198 days
Days in finisher	124
Total gain/day of age from birth	1.657 lbs.



### A-1200 terminal- line sire

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Avg. backfat (Routh Pack)	0.56 in.
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Avg. backfat (Tyson)	0.95 in.
Avg. loin depth	2.82 in.
Avg. live weight	328 lbs.
Avg. carcass weight	242 lbs.
Carcass Premium	\$6.52
Yield	76.21%
Fat-free lean gain/day	1.05 lbs.

### Meat-Quality Evaluation

Loineye avg	6.35 sq. in.
Visual color avg.	2.92
Visual marbling avg.	2.32
Percent of intramuscular fat	2.32
Visual firmness avg.	2.035
Wetness avg.	1.857
Minolta score avg.	54.01
pH avg.	5.82

Meat-quality analysis by  
Dr. Steve Moeller at  
The Ohio State University Meat Lab.



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