

MICHIGAN PORK

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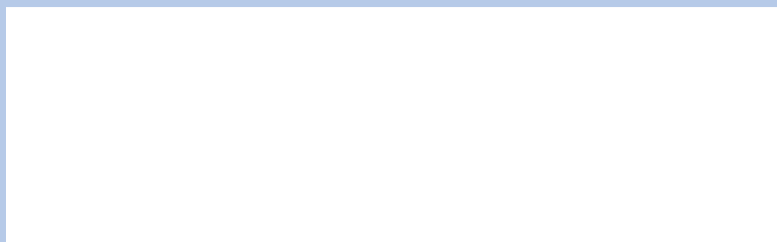
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Highlights from the 2012 Michigan Pork Conference

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SPOTLIGHT

2013 MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL PORK PRODUCERS SYMPOSIUM..... 4

DEPARTMENTS

PRESIDENT’S PAGE -PLAN TO ATTEND PORK CONFERENCE -
 ED REED,MPPA PRESIDENT..... 6
AS I SEE IT - THEY’VE COME TO BURY AGRICULTURE, NOT TO
 PRAISE IT. - SAM HINES, MPPA EXECUTIVE VP 7
WE ARE LISTENING 21
ALM UPDATE 24
CAPITAL UPDATE 26
PORK CHECKOFF 30
INDEX TO ADVERTISERS 35

FEATURES

2013 MICHIGAN PORK CONFERENCE SCHEDULE.....8
 2012 PROFESSIONAL PORK SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION.....9
 FARMERS AND HUNTERS REMINDED TO SHOOT FERAL SWINE..... 9
 AFLATOXIN LESS PERVASIVE THAN EXPECTED 10
 POSTON APPOINTED DEAN 11
 BREAKFAST ON THE FARM HAD ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR!..... 12
 NATIONAL PORK BOARD APPROVES ADDITIONAL FUNDING.....13
 BLOGGER TOURS MAKE AN IMPACT..... 14
 IDENTIFYING MARGINAL PIGS 16
 MPPA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.....17
 PAIN MANAGEMENT ISSUES ON THE HORIZON.....18
 U.S. PORK EXPORTS STAY STRONG IN 201219
 PORK CHECKOFF SPONSORS TASTE OF HOME COOKING SCHOOL20
 STUDY CONFIRMS PRODUCERS GET BACK \$17.40.....22
 MSU MEAT JUDGING TEAM COMPLETES IT’S SEASON.....23
 U.S.-EU TRADE DEAL MUST INCLUDE AGRICULTURE.....24
 ANTIBIOTIC USE, RESISTANCE CALLS FOR COLLABORATIVE.....25
 4-H SWINE STATE AWARD PRESENTED.....25
 RFS IS ‘BROKEN’28
 PORK PRODUCERS FEED HURRICANE VICTIMS.....29
 TASTE OF ELEGENCE.....35
 FERAL SWINE UPDATE 34
 EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION IN PORK PRODUCTION35



4



29

2013 Michigan Professional Pork

By: Dale Rozeboom, State Extension Specialist,
Michigan State University, rozeboom@msu.edu

The 2013 Michigan Professional Pork Producers Symposium will focus on educating producers about good management practices through presentations surrounding this year's theme, "Doing the Right Thing." This year's conference will focus on producers doing the right thing to prepare for future emergencies, doing the right thing when using alternative feedstuffs, and doing the right thing in tracking sow performance. And that is just the morning's presentations! During the noon luncheon award program a very current update on global and national issues relative to pork production will be provided. In the afternoon breakout session, attendees will choose to learn more about animal handling, the costs of converting to group sow housing, immunocastration, and alternatives to antimicrobials. The conference will be held February 21, 2013 at The Lansing Center.

The cost of the symposium is offset by sponsorship from MPPA, Michigan State University Extension, and Pfizer Animal Health.

The Symposium will also include a banquet luncheon and awards program. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with the program beginning at 9:00 a.m. Activities should conclude around 4:00 p.m. All attendees are encouraged to attend the Taste of Elegance reception held following the Symposium.

The Michigan Professional Pork Producers Symposium is an annual event that brings together swine producers from around the state to share information about the ever-changing hog industry. This year's symposium brings together speakers from both the academic and business world in order

to better prepare producers for the challenges they face in their quest to produce the world's pork supply.

Guest speakers, along with their presentations, this year include:

**Dr. Patrick Webb, "Secure Pork:
Disease Awareness, Preparedness,
Response and Recovery"**



Dr. Patrick Webb is the director of swine health programs at the National Pork Board, a position he has held since 2005. He is responsible for the Pork Checkoff's efforts in animal identification, pre-harvest traceability, foreign animal disease planning, and preparedness and response. Prior to this, Dr. Webb worked as a private veterinary practitioner in a food animal practice in rural Iowa. He has also worked for Iowa's Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship as a foreign animal disease program coordinator, where he developed the department's emergency preparedness plan for animal disease disasters.

Throughout his career, Dr. Webb has worked extensively on emergency preparedness and planning at the local, state and federal levels. He has developed and delivered numerous educational programs directed at training producers, veterinarians, county emergency managers and first responders on how to react to foreign animal disease disasters. Dr. Webb received his veterinary degree from Iowa State University, where he also received his bachelor's degree in animal science. He also has completed Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician School. Dr. Webb is a member of the American Association of Swine Veterinarians, Iowa Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association.

**Dr. Hans H. Stein, "Alternative
Feed Ingredients for Pigs"**



Dr. Hans H. Stein is a professor of Animal Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where he

Producers Symposium: “Doing the Right Thing”

is conducting research and providing outreach programs in the area of intestinal physiology and feed ingredient evaluation. Previous jobs include positions as assistant and associate professor at South Dakota State University, work in the feed industry and primary agricultural production. He obtained a PhD degree in monogastric nutrition from the University of Illinois, and a Master’s degree from the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen, Denmark. Dr. Stein was born and raised on a small livestock operation in the southern part of Denmark.

**Dr. Madonna Gemus-Benjamin,
“Sow Cards and Sow Longevity”**




Dr. Madonna Gemus-Benjamin has recently joined the faculty at Michigan State University as assistant professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences in the Michigan State University (MSU) College of Veterinary Medicine and Swine Health Extension Veterinarian with Michi-

gan State University Extension. Dr. Gemus-Benjamin comes to MSU from private practice, where she provided professional services to pork producers as well as regulatory and health agencies including the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Veterinary Drug Directorate. She has served on the Drug Use and Regulatory Committee on Extra-Label Drug Use as well as with the Canadian Swine Health Board National Biosecurity Training Program. She was president of Veterinary Science Consulting Inc., a swine veterinary practice serving the southern Alberta pork production industry. Previously, she held a veterinary position at Elanco Animal Health. She received her doctorate in veterinary medicine from the University of Guelph and completed a residency in swine production medicine and a master’s degree in animal welfare at Michigan State University.

**Neil Dierks, National Pork
Producers Council**



Neil Dierks is Chief Executive Officer of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC). In this position, he is responsible for the overall implementation of all NPPC programs. Dierks’ position requires him to spend time in both Des Moines, Iowa, the national office of NPPC, and in Washington, D.C. Beginning in 1990, Dierks served NPPC in a series of senior executive positions, including Executive Director of Operations, Vice President for Research and Education and Senior Vice President for Programs. Dierks was the Special Activities Director for the Iowa Pork Producers Association and Marketing Director for the Iowa Corn Promotion Board prior to serving with NPPC. Dierks grew up on a livestock farm in eastern Iowa and remains involved in a family farming operation. He is a graduate of Iowa State University. 

**Mark your
calenders for the
2013 Michigan
Pork Conference!
February 21,
2013!
Find the schedule
and registration
form pages 7- 8.**



By: Ed Reed
MPPA President

“ (The Symposium)... will examine the viability of sow pen gestation and how it affects your production's bottom line. ”

“Plan to Attend Pork Conference”

Ahh, finally another harvest season in the books. This one was decidedly the toughest in my lifetime. However, I am grateful for the corn we were able to put in the bin even if it was only one bin-full!

Now that harvest is over, I'd like to turn your attention to the upcoming 2013 Michigan Pork Conference. The Conference will be held on February 21st and is a one day event that includes the Michigan Professional Pork Producers Symposium and the Taste of Elegance Competition.

I always find the day educating, enlightening and entertaining, as I'm sure it will be to all involved in the pork industry. The Conference is designed to educate producers and contract growers about advancements in the handling of swine, as well as provide tips for beating high feed costs with alternative ingredients


The latter is very intriguing to me as I gave serious thought to planting some wheat around my farm this fall to feed next summer, but the alternative feed ingredients session is not the only thing that I am looking forward to. As everyone knows, biosecurity is a major issue in the production of high quality pork. Dr. Patrick Webb from the National Pork Board is going to talk about the importance of keeping facilities secure and disease-free. This section should be especially useful for contract growers whose pig barns aren't their primary duty during the

workday.

Another session I believe will be of interest, because of Michigan's decision to eliminate the use of gestation stalls in the future, is the economics of sow housing. This session will examine the viability of sow pen gestation and how it affects your production's bottom line.

One of the most entertaining events at the Conference is the Taste of Elegance restaurant competition which will also be held in the Lansing Center following the Symposium. Taste of Elegance spotlights Michigan chefs and challenges them to develop delicious pork entrees. Last year I participated in the judging by sampling several of the chefs' dishes which is definitely a presidential perk!

Finally, I want to stress the importance of becoming a member and remaining active in Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA). MPPA represents the collective interests of the Michigan Pork Industry and is the voice of pork producers in the legislative arena. This Conference is one way MPPA helps the proud Michigan pork producer make the best product in the world even better.

I look forward to seeing you there on February 21st. ! 



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

“ They seem to believe that if only agriculture would just turn back the hands of time all would be well. ”

“They’ve come to bury agriculture, not to praise it.”

Early last summer the Pork Board reported on a study that showed rather dramatically how far pork production had come since the 1950s. The study indicated that pork producers used 78 percent fewer acres and 41 percent less water to produce a pound of pork than was needed in 1959 resulting in a 35 percent reduction in carbon footprint.

This Checkoff-funded study was conducted by environmental researcher Dr. Garth Boyd who commented that this work “underscores just how much improvement farmers have made over the past half century.” He said, “The pork industry has been very successful in significantly reducing its environmental impact and use of natural resources by nearly 50 percent across the board per 1,000 pounds of pork produced, which is quite an accomplishment.”

According to the study, “much of the gains in efficiency can be attributed to the continuous improvements farmers have made over the years in both crop production and in the care they give their animals through better nutrition, health and overall management. This appears to be reflected in the study’s findings that showed a 29 percent increase in hogs marketed compared to 50 years ago with a breeding herd that is 39 percent smaller. Feed efficiency, a major factor that affects the land required for growing feedstuffs, has improved by 33 percent during this time frame.”

Gains like this aren’t unique to pork production as nearly every segment of agriculture can boast comparable successes over the past sixty years. With successes like this, one would think agriculture’s accomplishments

would be universally applauded but, to the contrary, modern agriculture is seemingly under attack, perhaps more than ever before, from many critics. The hue and cry from the critics reminds me of the familiar line in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar when Mark Antony says “I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.” Whatever their motivations, they have “come to bury agriculture, not to praise it.” Obviously, there are many motivations and agendas at play among the critics, but for those of us that are old enough to have seen agriculture’s accomplishments first-hand, it’s truly frustrating.

Dr. Nevil Speer, who is with Western Kentucky University and serves as chairman of the Animal Agriculture Advocacy Council for the National Institute of Animal Agriculture, wrote a commentary in *Feedstuffs Foodlink* where he pointed to several claims in an editorial he had read to make his point. I found them interesting and will share a few here. For example, following are some of the editorial writer’s assertions that Dr. Speer referenced, “...pigs can be raised sustainably and humanely for only slightly more than conventionally-tortured ones...;” “Enter industrial agriculture...propped-up by massive government tax subsidies...;” “Top it all off with government-sponsored checkoff programs...;” “While creating a national pastime of eating industrial animal products three times a day may have been a boon for Big Agribusiness (not to mention Big Pharma...for the rest of us it’s been a public health disaster.” Dr. Speer mentioned several more quotes from this editorial, but I

(continued on page 12)

2013 Michigan Pork Conference
Thursday, February 21, 2013
The Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave, Lansing, MI

8:30 AM Registration

MORNING SESSIONS

8:45 MSU Update

Dr. Raymond Geor, Chair, Large Animal Clinical Sciences, Michigan State University

9:00 MDARD Update: Director

Jamie Clover Adams, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

9:15 Secure Pork: Disease Awareness, Preparedness, Response and Recovery

Dr. Patrick Webb, Director - Swine Health Programs, National Pork Board

10:00 Break

10:20 Alternative Feed Ingredients for Pigs

Dr. Hans H. Stein, Professor of Animal Science, University of Illinois

11:10 Sow Cards and Sow Longevity

Dr. Madonna Benjamin, Extension Swine Veterinarian, Michigan State University

BANQUET LUNCHEON

12:00 PM Buffet Lunch

Awards Program

Speaker -Neil Dierks, NPPC

BREAKOUT SESSIONS-REPEATED

1:30 Handling Pigs II – Dr. Janice Siegford, Michigan State University,
Department of Animal Science

Sow Housing Economics – Dr. Ron Bates, Beth Ferry and Roger Betz,
Michigan State University

Improvest™ Update – Dr. Jim Bradford, Pfizer Animal Health

Alternatives to Antimicrobials – Dr. Dale Rozeboom, Michigan State University Extension

2:30 Break

2:45 Handling Pigs II – Dr. Janice Siegford, Michigan State University,
Department of Animal Science

Sow Housing Economics – Dr. Ron Bates, Beth Ferry and Roger Betz,
Michigan State University

Improvest™ Update – Dr. Jim Bradford, Pfizer Animal Health

Alternatives to Antimicrobials – Dr. Dale Rozeboom, Michigan State University Extension

3:30 Adjournment to Taste of Elegance

**2012 Professional Pork Symposium
February 23, 2013, The Lansing Center**

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Farmers and Hunters Reminded to Shoot Feral Swine

The Michigan Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and Natural Resources (DNR) are urging hunters and farmers to shoot feral swine and report any sightings. Feral swine are defined as free-ranging wild pigs, not owned by any person.

“As the fall crop harvest continues, we expect farmers to come across feral swine. These animals may transmit disease to domestic pigs and cause extensive crop damage for Michigan’s farming families,” said State Veterinarian Dr. Steven Halstead. “Farmers can help manage this problem by shooting feral swine. Additionally, I urge any owners of swine that may be loose to gather them immediately if they don’t want to be fined for livestock running at large.”

Feral swine are known to carry the Pseudorabies virus (PRV), which primarily causes newborn piglets to die. Older pigs can survive infection, becoming carriers of the virus for life.

“Feral swine are a significant risk to Michigan’s wildlife, ecosystems and agricultural resources, and they are a serious threat to humans and wildlife, said DNR Deputy Director Bill Moritz. “We encourage hunters to take feral swine in the wild when they encounter them. Doing so helps us manage and protect the state’s natural resources.”

Private land owners may shoot or trap-and-remove feral swine at any time. For a list of counties where feral swine have been sighted, please visit www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases. In Michigan, hunters with a valid hunting license of any type can shoot feral swine.

“Hunters often ask about the risk of consuming feral swine. Although the diseases associated with live feral

(continued on page 34)

Aflatoxin Less Pervasive than Expected

Despite early concern, very little aflatoxin has been detected in Michigan's new crop of corn. This is good news for growers who are already struggling with low corn yields, shattered soybeans and pending insurance claims.

Aflatoxins are liver poisons (hepatotoxins) produced by fungi in the genus *Aspergillus*. They are toxic to all organisms that consume grain, though ruminants such as cattle can tolerate higher concentrations than monogastric species (swine, humans, etc.) or poultry. *Aspergillus* fungi often colonize filling corn kernels when late summer weather is hot and dry, eventually causing ear mold or ear rot. The 2012 season produced ideal conditions for infection, leading the USDA to suggest pre-harvest testing of drought-damaged crops across the Corn Belt.

This year's loads of corn grain will also be tested when they reach the elevator. Two different assays can be used when testing samples. Samples are first viewed under a black light. An *Aspergillus* by-product called kojic acid fluoresces, glowing a blue-greenish gold under the short-wave ultraviolet light. However, the presence of kojic acid does not necessarily indicate high concentrations of aflatoxin. A second test can confirm the problem by detecting distinct aflatoxin proteins in ground samples.

As of October 10, some of Michigan's largest grain buyers, The An-




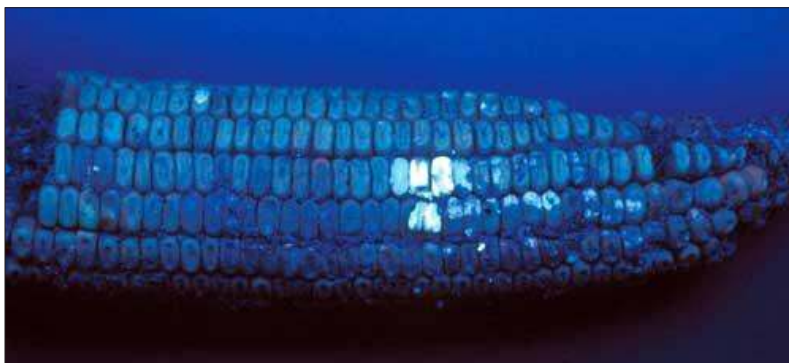
Common symptoms of Aspergillus ear rot. Photo credit: Harry Duncan, North Carolina State University

dersons Grain Group and Michigan Agricultural Commodities, had yet to detect aflatoxin above the standard 20 ppb (parts per billion) threshold. That said, growers still need to be vigilant in scouting for *Aspergillus* ear rot and managing potentially contaminated grain.

The driest areas of a field should be targeted in scouting prior to harvest. *Aspergillus* rot most often appears as a powdery, olive-green mold toward the tip of the ear. If ear rot is detected in an insured crop, growers should contact their insurance agent before the crop is harvested, stored or delivered for sale to protect their ability to make a quality-loss claim. The insurance

agent will collect samples from the crop and submit them to a federally approved facility for testing.

Uninsured growers can also submit samples for testing independently to inform their decision-making and head-off potential rejection at the elevator. Grain testing positive for aflatoxin above the 20 ppb threshold, but below 200 parts per billion (ppb), may still be used for finishing swine 100 lbs. or greater and 100 ppb for breeding swine, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines. When the affected crop is harvested, clearances in combine cylinders and rotors should be adjusted to limit grain damage. Storage of affected grain is not recommended. However, if the crop must be stored, running it through a grain cleaner first will improve air movement in the bin and minimize aflatoxins by removing susceptible cracked kernels. Drying air temperatures should be above 120 degrees Fahrenheit and the grain dried more than normal to a final moisture level below 13 percent. 



Kojic acid produced by Aspergillus fungi under a black light. Photo credit: Dept. of Plant Pathology Archive, North Carolina State University

Poston Appointed Dean of MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources



Fred Poston, Michigan State University's vice president for finance and operations, will serve as the next dean of the university's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) and special adviser to the president.

On October 26th the Michigan State University (MSU) Board of Trustees approved the appointment that will be effective Jan. 1, 2013. Poston will succeed Douglas Buhler, who has served as interim dean since January 2011. Poston would be returning to the college where he served as dean for eight years (1991-98).

"We are very grateful that Dr. Poston has agreed to return to the college where he began his MSU career," said MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon. "He brings to the position his knowledge of our land-grant mission, a strong awareness of the needs of Michigan's agriculture community, and, of course, familiarity with the college. I'd also like to thank Interim Dean Doug Buhler, who guided the college with a sure and steady hand

through challenging times."

Poston has been vice president for finance and operations since 1999. During that time, he has managed the financial planning of the university, kept housing costs among the lowest of the Big 10, overseen the building of a nationally acclaimed recycling center, and facilitated a new university-wide human resources management program.

"Fred possesses broad knowledge and understanding of both the mission of MSU and agriculture and natural resources industries, making him an ideal choice to lead this college," said MSU Provost Kim Wilcox.

In his time as dean, Poston guided the Revitalization of Michigan Animal Agriculture project, created Project GREEN (Generating Research and Extension to meet Economic and Environmental Needs), and developed the Partnership for Eco-System Research and Management with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

"I was elated to learn that Dr. Poston had agreed to return as Dean. He was an ardent supporter of the Revitalization of Animal Agriculture Initiative and he worked very closely with all the stakeholders to bring this effort to fruition," said Sam Hines, Executive Vice President of Michigan Pork Producers Association. "We look forward to working with him again on new opportunities to enhance agriculture in this state."


Selecting Poston was a great choice, said, James Byrum, president of the Michigan Agri-Business Association.

"I am thrilled about MSU's appointment of Fred Poston as dean of CANR," he said. "He has a long history with Michigan agriculture and understands the importance of the

industry in the state. He will restore the partnership between agribusiness and MSU and continue MSU's long commitment to agriculture."

Prior to coming to MSU, Poston was director of Washington State University's Cooperative Extension Service and associate dean of agriculture and home economics. Before that, he was on the entomology faculty at Kansas Cooperative Extension Service.

A native of Florida, Poston received his bachelor's degree from West Texas State University and his graduate degrees in entomology from Iowa State University.

A decision regarding the vice president for finance and operations role will be completed in the next few months. 

Watch out for "Drought Tips" throughout this issue and issues to come thanks to Pork Checkoff resources at <http://bit.ly/npbddrought>

A graphic with a blue background and a white border. The text is white and centered. The background of the graphic shows a field of crops covered in snow.

pork checkoff 2012 **Drought resources**

The logo for the 2012 Drought resources campaign. It features the words "pork checkoff" in a stylized font with a pig icon, followed by "2012 Drought resources" in a larger, bold font.

As I See It

(continued from page 7)

think I listed enough for you to get the view the editorial writer was espousing. Dr. Speer called the writer's comments "elitist rhetoric and erroneous labeling" and more than anything "troubling." He believes it's troubling because the conclusion this editorial writer and others bad-mouthing modern agriculture always seem to come to is that the "transformation and evolution of food production is the crux of the world's problems."

They seem to believe that if only agriculture would just turn back the hands of time all would be well. Speer says that's a scary thought and I think most of us with ties to modern agriculture would agree. For example, The Center for Food Integrity (CFI) has put this twisted logic in terms that should be easily understood, even by the naysayers. According to CFI, if the number of farms and level of productivity had remained constant since 1950, there would be no food available for anyone

in the states of California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Georgia. It's interesting to note that these nine states are the most populous in the U.S. and collectively account for 151 million people. I don't know about you, but since I live in one of those states, I wouldn't be too thrilled with the idea of not having anything to eat if we turned production methods back 60 years.

I said earlier that the constant barrage of criticism was frustrating, but it's more than frustrating, it's potentially problematic. It's problematic because if these messages aren't countered they can lead to consequences like gestation stall prohibitions, GMO labeling mandates and a host of other unwieldy regulations or policy directives that seem to be surfacing with greater frequency every day. Admittedly, I don't have the answers, but I think at the very least there is now

a realization among those of us in agriculture that we have a huge educational and public relations challenge before us. Groups like the Michigan Ag Council and the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) have been formed to begin addressing this challenge and literally every commodity organization has developed messaging designed to supplement the efforts of groups like the Ag Council and USFRA. The pork industry's "We Care" initiative is a case in point. In addition to supporting all of these efforts, MPPA is working on expanding its involvement in social media and exploring new ways to educate and inform the public, policy makers and other groups with whom we regularly interact. It's a big job, but I'm optimistic that our collective efforts can, over time, make a difference. At least it can be said that "someone's come to praise agriculture and not to bury it." 


Breakfast on the Farm had Another Successful Year!

After the inaugural Michigan Breakfast on the Farm (BOTF) event was held in 2009 at Dutch Meadows Dairy in St. Johns, interest in replicating this event led to four events in 2010, eight in 2011 and eight in 2012. More than 18,200 people attended the eight events in 2012, and more than 40,800 people have attended Michigan State University (MSU) Extension BOTF programs since they began.

BOTF gives consumers and farm neighbors a firsthand look at modern food production and the farm families who work hard to produce a safe, wholesome food supply for Michigan communities and the world. BOTF is an MSU Extension program that is guided by a statewide advisory council. Events are made possible through local partners, generous statewide and local sponsors, and many local volunteers.

BOTF showcases a selection of Michigan's outstanding farms and introduces the non-farm public to the life and business of modern agriculture through a fun and educational event that emphasizes the importance of environmental stewardship, food safety and good animal care practices. Surveys from past events show that approximately 46 percent of attendees had not visited a modern farm in 20 years or more. This educational program has helped to provide information and experiences for thousands of participants, who have changed their attitudes about modern food production as a result of attending a BOTF.

Host farms are selected by the state council through an application process. In an effort to reach consumers throughout Michigan, the council strives to have events in diverse geographic areas. For information on

past events and the BOTF program, visit the BOTF website, breakfastonthefarm.com. If you have specific questions or would like additional information, contact Mary Dunckel at 989-354-9870 or dunckelm@anr.msu.edu, or Nancy Thelen at 734-222-3825 or thelenn@anr.msu.edu. 

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National Pork Board Approves Additional Funding for Promotional Efforts

As pork producers struggle with record-high feed prices caused by the worst U.S. drought since the 1950s, the National Pork Board (NPB) has approved domestic and international marketing budgets that will help drive pork demand at a critical time.

The Board is committing \$27,735,000 in FY2013 for domestic marketing efforts and \$7,102,000 for international marketing efforts that will help stem producer losses that are forecast for this next year. The Board added almost \$2 million in additional dollars to the marketing effort from its September preliminary budget.

The action came as the board approved a 2013 program budget of \$69.8 million, slightly higher than the 2012 budget of \$69.3 million. The budget now goes to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for final approval. USDA oversees the NPB's spending of the Pork Checkoff.

"Pork is a great value in the grocery store today for consumers, but we




know we face challenges in the year ahead," said NPB President Conley Nelson, an Algona, Iowa, farmer and pork production executive. "As pork prices rise next year because of reduced pork supplies, supporting the *Pork Be inspired* advertising and promotional campaign is going to be important in moving more pork. During the first quarter of 2013, the Checkoff is working to feature pork at retail, in foodservice and online for a short-term, measurable impact for farmers."

Nelson added, "The Board added more funding for domestic promotional support to ensure that we can continue to build upon the success of the *Pork Be inspired* campaign. The campaign has been able to grow its target audience - consumers who are medium-to-heavy fresh-pork eaters - from 30 percent of U.S. households to 35 percent."

National data show that consumption of fresh pork is holding steady among all consumers while consumers in the Checkoff's *Pork Be inspired* target audience are trending toward

higher intake. This past September, the amount spent per U.S. consumer on pork was the highest of any month since 2004. In addition, the recent Pork Checkoff tracking study conducted in June surveyed 1,200 U.S. households and found that targeted consumers reported enjoying three servings of fresh pork in the previous two weeks. These consumers are open to fresh pork, with more rating fresh pork cuts higher compared with previous tracking studies.

Internationally, U.S. Pork exports are on pace to match the 2011 record of \$6.108 billion in value and 4.97 billion pounds. For the first eight months of the year, export value is more than \$56 per head.

"Farmers have come to depend on export markets," Nelson said. "Investing additional dollars into international marketing programs will allow the Checkoff to expand U.S. Meat Export Federation promotions, as well as to fund research to continue to keep export markets open and look at new market opportunities." 

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Drought Tip #1

Target Sows' Nutrients:

Improve sow productive lifetime by targeting diets for different parity ranges. Diets should have higher protein and energy levels for replacement gilts through parity two to prevent excess mobilization of body reserves during lactation. As sows become older, micronutrients (zinc, copper, iron, etc.) become critical nutrients that need to be maintained at high levels in order to maximize production efficiency.

Consider the added costs of adding additional feed storage and delivery equipment in gestation and lactation and strategies to sort and feed sows accordingly against the benefits of targeting sow nutrition more accurately and efficiently. For more information go to <http://www.pork.org/filelibrary/FeedWeb1210.pdf> or contact your local extension educator for assistance.

Blogger Tours make an Impact for Modern

Michigan Ag Council Hosts Mom Bloggers on First “Pure Michigan Agriculture” bus Tour

The Michigan Ag Council hosted its first bus tour on October 18th to give mom bloggers the chance to connect with local farmers and processors and inspire conversation about modern agriculture production and food



Bloggers enjoy their Michigan meal in the Kroger's Northville store.

processing in Michigan.

The “Pure Michigan Agriculture” bus tour took seven online communicators and several attendees representing the agriculture industry to the Horning family dairy farm in Manchester, Michigan Dairy—Kroger’s dairy processing plant, and a Kroger store in Northville. The event followed Michigan milk from cow to cup, giving bloggers the opportunity to see the milking process first-hand, witness key aspects of dairy processing, and visit the grocery store for a lunch of fresh Michigan foods and milk.

“The goal was to showcase, and encourage conversation about, Michigan agriculture from farm to table,” said Laura Moser, Manager of Communications for the Michigan Milk Producers Association and President of the Michigan Ag Council. “We wanted to

answer the food and ag questions that are important to moms and encourage them to share their experience with others.”

Michigan Pork Producers Association’s Executive Director Mary Kelpinski joined the bloggers on their tour and comments, “the blogger’s were receptive to modern agriculture, and they were very interested in where their food comes from.” Kelpinski continued, “it was nice to see that this type of consumer outreach would be a really good fit for hog farms in Michigan.”

At the farm, bloggers first learned about cow care and comfort, how the animals are milked and how the milk is tested and stored before it is trucked to the dairy plant. At the plant, the women were able to see the stringent food safety and quality standards in place at every level of processing. They had the chance to learn about the testing done in the on-site lab, catch a glimpse of cottage cheese and sour cream being made, and see how the plant makes its own milk bottles.

“It was really neat to see how the milk went from farm to table,” said blogger Lauren Weber of Mrs. Weber’s Neighborhood. “I feel much

more confident about the milk I drink and feed my kids every day. Michigan dairy farmers care about the families they are providing for, and I couldn’t be more proud to drink something that was made in my own backyard.”

To wrap up the tour, Kroger hosted all attendees for lunch in the grocer’s Northville store. Here bloggers were treated to a “milk tasting” and a lunch of such Michigan foods as Better Made chips, Kroger dips and milk, ratatouille, and warm Michigan apples over Hudsonville ice cream and Sanders caramel.

“What better way to make the farm to table connection than to serve lunch where these individuals buy their food,” said Dale Hollandsworth, Consumer Communications Manager for Kroger Michigan. “We wanted to follow the milk straight from the farm to the table.”

Dale also emphasized the importance of recognizing the Michigan farmers, both dairy and produce, who supply local Kroger stores. He shared how Kroger highlights local farm families on in-store signage and how they work to make Michigan foods more easily identifiable with a “Pure Michigan Agriculture” tag on all



The blogger’s visit to the Michigan Dairy processing plant allowed them to see how milk is handled and how dairy products are made.

Agriculture with Social Media Influencers

fresh-grown Michigan products.

“Consumers are begging to know where their food is coming from,” said Hollandsworth. “They want to know where to find Michigan foods.”

Blogger Regina Sober of The Crazy Nuts Mom is one of those consumers, and she commends Kroger’s efforts. “This tour has instilled deeper pride in Michigan products. I get a big grin when I see the Michigan made product signs while shopping,” said Sober. “I can make a difference when I buy Michigan.”

This bus tour was sponsored by the United Soybean Board, who will sponsor another Michigan Ag Council tour in the spring. To learn more, please visit miagcouncil.org.

Bloggers Learn Firsthand About Pork’s Sustainability

When blogger Vanessa Druckman visited Jeff and Alan Wuebker’s Versailles, Ohio, farm this past summer, she was struck by the realities of modern agriculture. Druckman was part of the Pork Checkoff’s 2012 Sustainability Tour, which included bloggers Sommer Collier, a food writer from North Carolina; Rebecca Lindamood, a baker and cooking instructor from New York; Alejandra Ramos, a recipe developer from New York City; Chris Grove, a barbecue enthusiast from Knoxville, Tenn.; and Rachel Tayse Baillieul, a home cook and “locavore” from Ohio.

“There’s no doubt that we consumers have an overly romantic notion of farming,” said Druckman, a Chicago-based recipe developer who blogs at chefdruck.com. As she and a group of bloggers toured the farrowing rooms and other swine barns, Druckman was impressed by the animal well-being practices emphasized at Wuebker

Farms.

“The Wuebkers’ care for their pigs was apparent,” she wrote in her blog post, *Peeking Into the World of Hog Farming*. “These animals are their lives, and they work tirelessly to treat them well so they are healthy and productive.”

The Wuebkers hosted the group, along with Dick Isler, executive director of the Ohio Pork Producers Council. Jeff and Alan, who were 2011 Pork Environmental Stewards, raise 43,000 weaned pigs per year with their families on their diversified farming operation.

“I wanted to emphasize the care we provide each animal and how connected we are to the land,” Jeff said. “For years we’ve applied nutrients from the livestock operation to our fields, so we’ve been recycling before it was mainstream.”

The tour at the Wuebkers’ farm showcased the continuous improvements that have made modern pork production much more sustainable during the past 50 years. “Social media has become an important way to connect with consumers, and this tour is helping get the word out about how producers are benefiting the environment,” said Teresa Roof, public relations manager for the Pork Checkoff.

The bloggers came prepared with a variety of questions from their readers, from “How many hogs are kept in a swine barn?” to “What causes grocery store pork prices to fluctuate?” The Wuebkers provided answers and helped correct misperceptions as they escorted the bloggers around the farm.


“I explained that I’m a consumer as much as a producer, and some of the bloggers were surprised to learn that I buy bacon, ham and other meat at the grocery store,” Jeff said.

The Sustainability Tour generated a

flurry of social media updates during and after the event. For every question generated by the bloggers’ Facebook posts, Twitter updates and blog entries related to the tour, the Checkoff donated one pound of pork to the “Feeding America” Ohio affiliate.

The Wuebkers encourage other producers to embrace opportunities like this to tell the pork industry’s story. “We were amazed by the reach these bloggers have through social media. Overall, they’ve offered a very positive impression of pork production.”

Over half a million people have seen something about the sustainable pork tour from the bloggers. This includes Facebook posts, tweets, pictures on Instagram and blog posts.

“We surpassed the goal of 200,000 impressions within the first three days,” Roof said. “A pre- and post-survey gauged bloggers’ attitudes and opinions on sustainability and pork production.” The results showed a 57 percent increase in “I trust America’s pig farmers to provide the highest level of care for their animals.” They also had a 52 percent increase in “I trust America’s pig farmers to take good care of the environment,” and a 50 percent increase in “I believe America’s pig farmers raise their pigs using sustainable practices.” 



Jeff Wuebker giving the bloggers a tour through his hog barn.

Identifying Marginal Pigs can Help Producers Reduce Feed Costs

Pork producers are facing rising feed costs for the rest of 2012 and early 2013. High feed costs are a result of a difficult growing season, filled with drought and abnormal weather patterns. Some ways to help producers battle these record level feed expenses


are minimal and every effort to identify areas that can help reduce input costs should be made. As producers look for ways to use this high priced feed more efficiently on their farms, some consideration should be given to refining their culling and replacement

plans.

When utilizing high-price feed-stuffs in your swine diets you need to be focused on feeding productive animals and quickly identifying problem pigs. Eliminating marginal pigs from your inventory can be done in all phases of pork production. Assessing the pigs for lameness, health issues and ability to grow are priority areas when evaluating quality pigs. When selecting for quality, a pig's individual ability to maintain the same growth rate as its current group should be considered. With higher feed costs, you should be focused on animals that will need the least number of days to reach market weight.

Quality animals in your sow herd should also be a focus during times of high feed costs. Sows with good production history and overall physical appearance should make up the majority of your herd. When looking for animals to cull, you should evaluate the sows over their lifetime in the following areas:

- Milking ability
- Foot and leg health
- Age
- Number of born alive, number of weaned
- Number of days to return to estrus
- Farrowing rate

When considering how you are going to manage the increased feed costs for the future, consider working to eliminate all marginal animals from your production. This will help you focus on producing quality animals with high input costs. 



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Pain Management Issues on the Horizon for Livestock Producers

The 2012 harvest, high feed costs and lowering market prices are on the mind of every livestock producer. These issues will directly affect how producers manage their business and make financial decisions in the near future. With concerns like these, it is hard to look beyond the immediate challenges ahead and consider other issues that may have a long-term effect on livestock farming. Worldwide on-farm animal care practices which cause short-term pain continue to receive a significant amount of public attention.

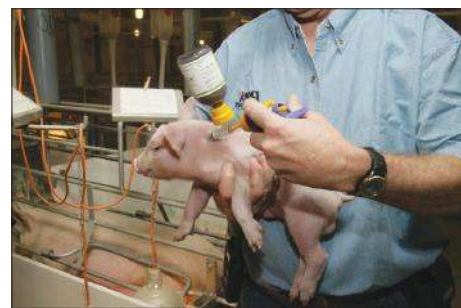
As we move into an era where consumers are increasingly concerned about how their food is raised, producers have no choice but to be actively learning more about how the ongoing discussion may or may not affect their work in the future. Everyday production practices such as castration, tail docking and dehorning are being examined and reviewed for their efficiency, necessity and impact the practice has on the animal and its wellbeing. There is increasing public concern about the pain a food production animal may experience. New or adjusted production practices that improve animal care and decrease pain may be in the future.

Animal care and well-being is not a new concept for producers. In 1989, the National Pork Board developed Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Plus, an education and assessment program


geared toward good production practices. PQA Plus contains an animal care and well-being component that was added to the program in 2007, which helps guide producers in the care of their animals and assures consumers that proper care is given. However, pain management regarding common production practices is a new concept for livestock producers. The production practices in question warrant an in-depth evaluation of the pain that is incurred by the animal during these experiences prior to any changes in management or mandates.

Minimizing pain for food production animals looks to be a common concept for the European Nations in the near future. In Europe, the French National Institute for Agricultural Research has already begun tackling this issue by appointing a committee to look into the issues surrounding pain management on livestock farms. This committee has suggested the 3S approach, 'Suppress, Substitute and Soothe,' to animal care:

"The first solution is to suppress any source of pain that brings no obvious advantage to the animals or the producers, as well as sources of pain for which potential benefits are largely exceeded by the negative effects. For instance, tail docking of cattle has recently been eliminated. Genetic selection on the basis of resistance criteria (as e.g. for lameness in cattle and poultry) or reduc-



tion of undesirable traits (e.g. boar taint in pigs) may also reduce painful conditions or procedures. The second solution is to substitute a technique causing pain by another less-painful method. For example, if dehorning cattle is unavoidable, it is preferable to perform it at a very young age, cauterizing the horn bud. Animal management and constraint systems should be designed to reduce the risk for injury and bruising. Lastly, in situations where pain is known to be present, because of animal management procedures such as dehorning or castration, or because of pathology, for example lameness, systemic or local pharmacological treatments should be used to soothe pain. These treatments should take into account the duration of pain, which, in the case of some management procedures or diseases, may persist for longer periods." (Minimising pain in farm animals: the 3S approach – 'Suppress, Substitute, Soothe' Authors: Guatteo, R., Levionnois, O., Fournier, D., Guémené, D., Latouche, K., Leterrier, C., Mormède, P., Prunier, A., Servière, J., Terlouw, C., Le Neindre, P.)

Producers in the United States are committed to producing a safe, healthy product for consumers, while creating a sustainable food production business. It is safe to say that as we look into the future of livestock production emphasis will be on further research of proper animal well-being in regards to pain management and producers will continue to provide their animals with the best care possible. 

Drought Tip #2

Review stocking densities in all phases of production:

Optimal stocking densities will result in the greatest economic gain with the least negative impact on performance or animal behavior. Consider the end weight of the hogs at typical marketing times and adjust the number of pigs per pen accordingly. For more information go to <http://www.pork.org/filelibrary/FeedWeb1210.pdf> or contact your local extension educator for assistance.

U.S. Pork Exports Stay Strong in 2012

Through the first five months of the year, U.S. Pork exports exceeded last year's record pace by 6 percent in volume and 15 percent in value. "A lot of this strength is attributed to China," says Becca Hendricks, assistant vice president of international marketing for the Pork Checkoff. Despite an upswing in China's domestic pork supplies, China's purchases of U.S. Pork were up 34 percent in volume (425.3 million pounds) and 83 percent in value (\$389.2 million) during the first five months of 2012, compared to that time last year. In addition, the export value of U.S. Pork has been trending upward to nearly every major destination in 2012. "These trends definitely play a role in producers' profitability," says Tim Bierman, a wean-to-finish pork producer from Larrabee, Iowa, who chairs the National Pork Board's Trade Committee. "The current export values equate to more than \$58 per head."

New Campaign Showcases U.S. Pork in Mexico

Mexico remains the leading volume destination for U.S. Pork. Exports through the first five months of the year were 15 percent higher in volume (560.1 million pounds) and 13 percent higher in value (\$463.6 million).

"Mexico is on track for a record year," says Hendricks, who notes that the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) recently launched a campaign to broaden pork's appeal among Mexican consumers.

USMEF, which is funded in part by Pork Checkoff dollars, has reached agreements with a number of large retailers in Mexico, to promote U.S. Pork through advertising and point-of-sale materials. "This campaign started in Mexico City and is now expanding to Monterrey, which is one of Mexico's largest cities," says Hendricks, who notes that per-capita pork consumption in Mexico is only about 35 pounds per year, compared to 60

pounds in the United States. "We feel there is still great potential for expansion of overall demand for U.S. Pork."

U.S. Pork gets Celebrity Treatment in Korea

Asia remains a key market for U.S. Pork. Exports to South Korea, for example, have been exceeding the five-year average. To keep this momentum going, the USMEF is partnering with celebrity chef Shin Hyo Seob, a judge on Korea's popular Chef King television program. In ads that will run through 2012, Shin

pace, although volume has decreased somewhat, Hendricks says. "The Checkoff is supporting new initiatives to promote more chilled pork in Japan, where U.S. Pork has a distinct advantage over the competition," says Hendricks, who noted that U.S. Pork can be shipped to Japan faster than pork products from Europe. "This should foster steadier demand from Japanese buyers."

Strategic Marketing pays off

Successful initiatives like this around the globe require research and



shares how he enjoys using four different cuts of chilled U.S. Pork.

The campaign has already attracted a lot of attention, since the ads appear in five Seoul subway stations that serve more than seven million commuters daily. "The goal is to raise awareness of U.S. Pork and associate it with leading chefs who choose only the best products for their dishes," says Hendricks, who adds that Korean social media specialists and bloggers have been doing an excellent job of promoting U.S. Pork, as well.

Chilled pork from the United States is also receiving a warm welcome in Japan, which remains the leading value destination for U.S. Pork, with exports through May of 2012 reaching \$869.1 million. This value is 10 percent above last year's record

strategic marketing, says Bierman, who notes that the Pork Checkoff's Trade Committee values input from Iowa State University Economist Dr. Dermot Hayes and other industry professionals.

"Before we try to get U.S. Pork exports into new markets or expand our presence in existing markets, we look at data like per-capita pork consumption, competition from other exporting countries, trade access issues and more," says Bierman, who adds that the USMEF also shares insights into the market potential of various countries. "Our ultimate goal is to get the biggest bang for our Checkoff investment in export opportunities, and we need to do that by thinking long-term." 

Pork Checkoff Sponsors Taste of Home Cooking School

Creating meal magic in minutes becomes an adventure at the Taste of Home Cooking School, where pork has been a real show-stopper this fall. For the second year, the Pork Checkoff is a national sponsor of the Taste of Home Cooking School, which ran through early December. Shows are being held in 145 U.S. cities, with up to 1,000 people attending each one.



MPPA Executive Director Mary Kelpinski serves up some pork samples to hungry attendees in Muskegon, Mich.

In order to enhance Pork's presence, Michigan Pork Producers Association participated at the Muskegon and Hudsonville Taste of Home Cooking Schools. Michigan Pork Producers Association cooked up pork samples, handed out recipes, and spread the message of the updated 145 degrees FDA recommended cooking temperature. Many of the attendees were won over by the juicy tenderness and great flavors.

"The great benefit of participating in the Taste of Home Cooking School is the ability to engage directly with our target consumers, who are interested in cooking and are looking for new ideas," said Laurie Bever, director of consumer marketing for the Pork Checkoff. At each show, a recipe for Pulled Pork Tostadas with

Slaw and Chipotle Cream is being demonstrated to attendees, who also learn how pulled pork can be used for a variety of delectable dishes.

"The shows create a lot of buzz and cooking excitement for favorite pork dishes that people can make time and time again," said Bever, who noted that more than 100,000 people attended the Taste of Home Cooking School in 2011.

To encourage the cooking-school attendees to cook with pork, the Pork Checkoff is offering a coupon for \$1 off any fresh pork product. The coupon and pork recipes appear in the cooking show magazine, which is distributed in a gift bag to attendees. The Pork Checkoff offered a similar coupon at the 2011 cooking schools and received a tremendous response.


"While a successful coupon-redemption rate is around 3 percent, our redemption rate was 8 percent," Bever said.


Taste of Home Cooking School research from last year's shows also indicated positive engagement with attendees: 84 percent had a positive opinion of pork, 75 percent were like-

ly to purchase pork, 66 percent were likely to recommend pork, 59 percent had/will make the featured recipe.




Chef Dana Elliott teaches the crowd how to prepare some favorite dishes in Hudsonville, Mich.

"We're trying to influence a large group of people with our advertising and promotions, so we have to make our Checkoff investments work hard," Bever said. "Sponsoring the Taste of Home Cooking School offers an effective way to bring pork top of mind to active home cooks and continue to inspire their use and creativity with pork." 




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We are Listening

Dear MPPA:

Thank you for supporting Huron County Rural Education Day year number 15! To date we have educated over 10,000 3rd graders about agriculture! We are so very proud of these numbers!

*Sharlene Hagen, Debbie Kubacki,
Leanne Schuette*
Huron County Farm Bureau

Dear MPPA:

We would like to offer a sincere thank you for your help in making Sanilac County's Breakfast on the Farm a HUGE success. People came from miles around to learn where their food comes from. Without your volunteered time we could not have created this educational experience. Approximately 2,300 people attended the event. Over 175 volunteers helped make the event run smoothly. Undoubtedly, this was a team effort and your support was invaluable. Thanks again for helping us share our passion for agriculture.

*The 2012 Breakfast on the Farm
Planning Committee and the van
den Goor Family Geert, Gertie,
Anne, Giel and Lotte*

Dear MPPA:

The 37th annual Gladwin County Fair has come to a close. What a wonderful week we had here in Gladwin, Michigan. This was in part because of the gifts you so graciously provided for our "Gladwin County Homemaker of the Year" contest. Both adult and 4-H contestant appreciated and enjoyed the many items you provided.

We are writing to thank you for your part in making this year's

fair a wonderful success. Without your help our program would not be the rewarding experience that it is for our contestants.

Joanne C. Varner,
Secretary, Gladwin County Fair

Dear MPPA,

The 2012 4-H State Awards Committee would like to take this time to thank you for your support of the 2012 State Awards Program. The event would not have been possible without your dedication and continued support.

It is through your sponsorship that awards may be presented to the youths throughout the state. We are pleased to report that at the 2012 4-H State Awards Program that there were over 150 youth representing 32 award areas.

*2012 Michigan 4-H State Awards
Committee*

Dear MPPA,

A most sincere thank you for your assistance with the Southeast Michigan Breakfast on the Farm Program. Your support helped to make this educational event a huge success. Your sponsorship was deeply appreciated. The farm hosted more than 2,675 people for breakfast and those attending came from 90 towns spread across six states. This was a new record for participation! Over 200 volunteers assisted with the program and helped to make the event possible. Your support in various ways was incredible, and it was a great team effort. Thanks again for helping to educate others about agriculture.

*The 2012 Breakfast on the Farm
Planning Committee and the Choate
Families*

Dear MPPA:

The team was excited to travel to Texas for the High Plains contest and as always, greatly appreciates the support of our stakeholders and MSU.

We have received excellent financial support from the Michigan Meat Association, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Michigan Cattleman's Association, Michigan Sheep Breeders Association, MSU Block & Bridle Club, Meijer, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, and Department of Animal Science. We also appreciate the many meat processors who have allowed us to come in to practice, Bellinger Packing, Byron Center Meats, Little Town Jerky Company, McNees Meats, Fillmore Beef, Bernthal Packing JBS Packerland - Plainwell, Wolverine Packing, Tyson Fresh Meats in Joslin, IL and Cargill Meat Solutions in Schuyler, Nebraska. Thank you all for your great support!

Sarah Wells
Meat Science Academic Specialist
Michigan State University

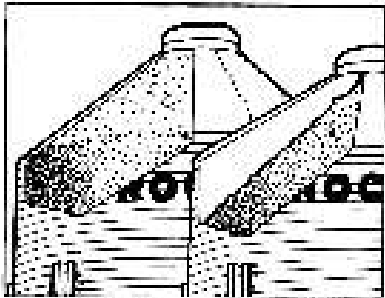
Dear MPPA:

The birthing tent at the St. Joseph County Fair was a success again this year. We strive to have an educational tent and your contribution added to our success. It is a very popular place to be all fair week. We would like to express our gratitude for the material you sent and that was available for the public all week which added to our success.

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Mendon, Michigan

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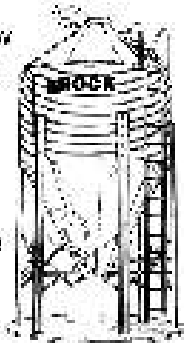


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Study Confirms Producers get back \$17.40 for Every Dollar Invested in Pork Checkoff

"In God we trust; all others bring data." - *W. Edwards Deming*

Members of the National Pork Board (NPB) have taken to heart that idea from Deming, widely credited with using statistical analysis to transform the Japanese manufacturing economy after World War II from a maker of cheap trinkets to a world leadership position in high-quality automobiles and electronics.

And like Deming, NPB President Conley Nelson told a group of reporters at World Pork Expo, members of the Pork Board believe, "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." Nelson was referring specifically to a new study that confirms the dramatic productivity gains made by pork producers in the last 50 years. But, he said the board is carefully measuring all the programs it funds with the Pork Checkoff.

For example, Nelson said, the board's strategic plan states that from 2009 to 2014 that it expects a 10 percent increase in per capita domestic pork expenditures. And from 2011 to 2014, it expects to increase U.S. Pork exports by \$1 billion and 1 billion pounds. The board also is demanding measurement from each of the tactics it approves in the annual budget.

Additionally, Nelson said, the board has just completed an evaluation of the Pork Checkoff's effectiveness, a study the U.S. Department of Agriculture requires of all checkoff programs every five years so the producers who invest in checkoffs can assess the value they receive in return.


The bottom line, according to the study's author, Cornell University economist Harry Kaiser: Pork producers get back \$17.40 of value for every \$1 they invest in the Pork Checkoff.

Steve Meyer, an economist who consults for the NPB, said virtually all of the checkoff-program evaluations

include a benefit-cost ratio and are peer-reviewed by other economists. Kaiser - using methodology similar to the previous two Pork Checkoff evaluations by economists at Texas A&M and the Research Triangle - developed an econometric model that looked at expenditures on advertising, non-advertising promotions, foreign market development, production research and demand-enhancing research.

Kaiser's study showed that farm production research generated the largest benefits for each Checkoff dollar spent and non-advertising promotions the smallest, though even this category had a return of \$2.60 for every \$1 spent. Perhaps more important, Kaiser estimated that a 1 percent increase in Checkoff spending in all five of the aggregated programs would return roughly \$10 million per year to U.S. producers.

Kaiser found that Pork Checkoff expenditures have positive and statistically significant impact on domestic demand, export demand for U.S. Pork and producers' cost of production. The positive impacts mean producers are better off due to Pork Checkoff expenditures, Kaiser concluded in the study.

Being "statistically significant" means that it is very unlikely that these positive impacts are the result of random variation in the annual data used in the model. In other words, the evaluation shows - with a confidence level of 95 percent or better - the Pork Checkoff is making positive tangible impacts on behalf of producers. 



pork
checkoff™

MSU Meat Judging Team Completes it's Season with a 4th. Place Finish

The Michigan State University (MSU) Meat Judging team recently finished their season at the International Intercollegiate Meat Evaluation Contest in Dakota City, Nebraska, on November 25.

Overall, the team ranked 4th out of 16 teams, which is the most successful a MSU Meat Judging team has been since 1985.

Other notable results this season included—the Eastern National Competition where they placed 8th overall, the American Royal Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition where they placed 7th overall, and the Cargill High Plains Contest where they placed 3rd.

Team member Julie Feldpausch, who placed 1st in Beef Grading, 1st in Lamb Judging and 10th in reasons at the High Plains contest, commented on her experience this year, “I’m beginning to realize more and more what a worthwhile experience this truly is,” Feldpausch said. “Along with countless networking opportunities, I’ve come to appreciate the field of meat science and where my meat comes from after it leaves the farm.”

Before joining the team, Feldpausch considered herself “in the dark” about meat judging and what her expectations would be. However, she was offered the opportunity to earn undergraduate credit for meat judging, she said.

“Welcoming the opportunity to




From left to right: Andy Stickel (Assistant), Andrew Weaver, Midland, Mich.; Julie Feldpausch, Hastings, Mich.; Audrey Ing, Milan, Mich.; Lane Carpenter, Charlotte, Mich.; Kelsey Steketee, Caledonia, Mich.; Emily Mitchell, Hudsonville, Mich.; Patrick Owens, Midland, Mich.; Molly O’Brien, Flushing, Mich.; and Sarah Wells (Coach).

learn about the meat industry along with developing critical thinking, decision-making and communication skills, I enrolled — a decision I don’t regret,” Feldpausch said.

Feldpausch plans to focus on swine nutrition and health in either a career or a graduate program once she finishes undergraduate school. She will also continue to manage her commercial sheep flock.

“It is easy to forget how big the animal science world is, so traveling across this beautiful country we call home, visiting different universities and competing against animal/meat science majors with diverse backgrounds but a common interest are inspiring,” Feldpausch said.

At the International Intercollegiate Meat Evaluation, individually Kelsey Steketee was 1st in Pork Judging, tied for 5th in Specifications, 7th in Reasons, and ranked 9th Overall. Audrey Ing tied for 6th in Placings and Lane Carpenter tied for 10th in Beef Grading. In the Alternate division, Molly O’Brien was 7th Overall. The team was ranked 2nd in Lamb Judging, 4th in Pork Judging, 4th in Placings, and 6th in Beef Grading. Overall, it was a phenomenal finish to a historic season.

Michigan Pork Producers Association contributes to the MSU Meat Judging Team Program. 

Drought Tip #3

Identify and sell non-select replacement gilts by 260 lbs. body weight:

Marketing females earlier will remove them before their growth curves change significantly resulting in lower feed efficiencies and more costly feed for the gain realized. Marketing these animals early also lowers the risk of injury or loss and prevents the gilt from reaching a market weight out of the ideal range for your packer.

For more information go to <http://www.pork.org/filelibrary/FeedWeb1210.pdf> or contact your local extension educator for assistance.



Agricultural Leaders
OF MICHIGAN

Michigan Soybean Association Joins ALM

“The Agricultural Leaders of Michigan (ALM) are pleased to welcome the Michigan Soybean Association to the coalition,” said Dave Armstrong, president and CEO of GreenStone Farm Credit Services. “The addition of the Michigan Soybean Association (MSA) will strengthen the voice of agriculture in Michigan and allow ALM to continue working to grow Michigan’s agricultural sector, create jobs and diversify Michigan’s economy.”

Agricultural Leaders of Michigan is a coalition of agricultural, commodity and agri-business leaders committed to promoting Michigan agriculture, participating in the ongoing dialogue about issues affecting our state and harnessing agriculture’s power and potential to further grow Michigan’s economy. In addition to MSA, ALM includes: GreenStone Farm Credit Services, the Michigan Agri-Business Association, Michi-

gan Allied Poultry Industries Inc., the Michigan Corn Growers Association, the Michigan Milk Producers Association, the Michigan Pork



Producers Association and Potato Growers of Michigan.

The Michigan Soybean Association is committed to voicing the needs and concerns of Michigan’s soybean industry. MSA strives to develop leaders that will provide highly effective representation for Michigan’s soybean farmers before all governmental agencies and the general public.

U.S.-EU Trade Deal Must Include Agriculture, Address Non-Tariff Trade Barriers, Says Coalition

While maintaining its support for a free trade agreement between the United States and the European Union, a coalition of U.S. food and agricultural organizations led by the National Pork Producers Council reiterated that any deal must include agriculture and that the EU must address non-tariff trade barriers.

In a letter signed by 60 organizations recently sent to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the coalition said it is important that any FTA with the EU be comprehensive and address impediments to trade in agricultural products. The coalition sent a similar letter in January.

“Carried out properly,” wrote the coalition to U.S. Trade Ambassador Ron Kirk, “a U.S.-EU FTA would generate economic growth and create many thousands of new jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.”

That means negotiating a high-standard, twenty-first century agreement, something that has been central to the Obama administration trade policy, the coalition pointed out. But that is not the type of agreements the EU has negotiated with other trading partners.

The EU’s past FTAs have excluded agricultural goods it produces, and its regulatory measures often conflict with World Trade Organization rules, including regulations on “genetically modified” crop approval and labels, which restrict U.S. corn, soy and refined corn product exports, and on production methods in poultry, beef and pork.

As part of agreeing to enter trade talks with the United States, for example, the EU Parliament said any FTA must include language on geographical indications, which would grant

(continued on page 28)



Antibiotic Use, Resistance Calls for Collaborative 'One Health' Approach

The message emerging from the "A One Health Approach to Antimicrobial Use & Resistance: A Dialogue for a Common Purpose" symposium, Nov. 13-15, in Columbus, Ohio, was clear: Antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance are the responsibility of all communities - human health, animal health and environmental health - and solutions will require collaboration of these health communities.

At the end of the three-day symposium, which was coordinated by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, presenters and participants agreed on numerous points:

- Antibiotics dramatically improve human, animal and plant health, and increase life expectancy.
- Antimicrobial resistance is not going to go away. A historical look at antimicrobial resistance shows antimicrobial resistance is not a new phenomenon but existed before mankind.
- The topic of antimicrobial resistance can be subtle, complex, difficult and polarizing. It is more than science and evidence. It's about politics, behavior, economics and conflicting opinions.
- Antimicrobial resistance is not merely a consequence of use; it's a consequence of use and misuse and each community-animal health, human health or environmental health - is responsible for antibiotic stewardship.
- The finger pointing and blame for antimicrobial resistance need to end. The time has come to work together.

"Finding a solution is not about compromise; it's about reaching agreement," stated Dr. Lonnie King, Dean of The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine. "We (animal health, human health and environmen-

tal health communities) need to focus on interests and not positions and initiate options for mutual gain. We need to find common ground - something we all can agree to when we disagree on other issues."

Topics addressed by the 13 animal health, human health and environmental health experts during the symposium covered:


- Overview of antibiotic use
- History of antimicrobial resistance
- Antimicrobial resistance surveillance
- Environmental contamination with antimicrobial residues
- Interplay of animal and human antimicrobial resistant populations
- Nationally funded antimicrobial resistance research projects
- Alternatives to antibiotics in agriculture

"The symposium's four interac-

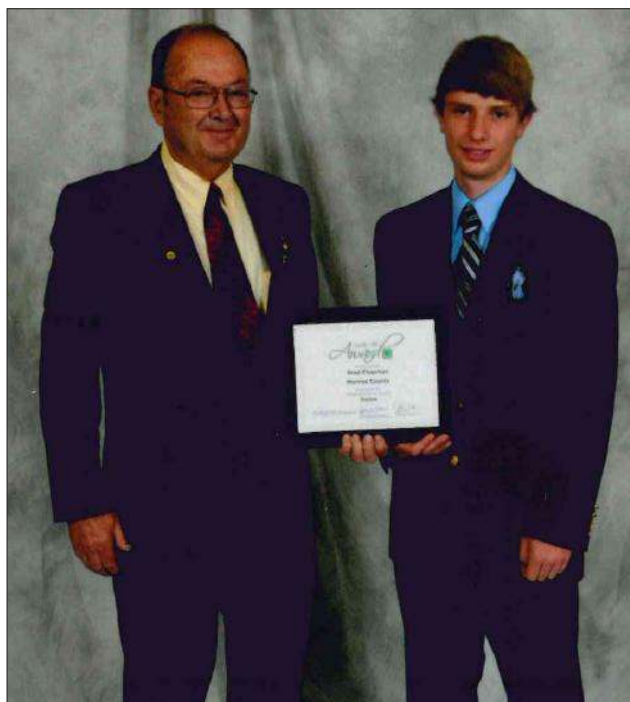
tive sessions allowed presenters and attendees to provide input to questions that moved the group to consensus," stated Dr. Leah Dorman, co-chair of the symposium, and Director of Food Programs at the Ohio Farm Bureau. "In the end, it was extremely evident that the dialogue among the animal health, human health and environmental health communities is critical to a solution."

"A 'One Health' approach is important. Plus, we need think in a much larger dimension."

Dr. Jennifer Koeman, symposium co-chair and Director of Producer and Public Health with the National Pork Board, agreed, adding, "It's about mutual gain and not a victory for any one community."

Presentations by symposium speakers will be available online at animalagriculture.org. 

4-H Swine State Award Presented



(Above) Presenter Larry See (left) with award winner Brad Chapman (right). Photo courtesy of Leighton Photography. Brad plans to become a veterinarian with the experiences he has learned from his 4-H project. The award is sponsored by Michigan Pork Producers Association. 

Brad Chapman of Monroe County was awarded the state 4-H award in Swine at the annual state 4-H awards assembly on June 21st at Michigan State University. Brad has been showing pigs since he was eight years old. He travels with his family to choose breeding stock every fall. Through these trips, Brad has learned how to choose structurally correct stock with adequate muscle. Because Brad has raised his own hogs, he has a better understanding of the hog raising and showing process and industry.

Brad plans to become a veterinarian with the experiences he has learned from his 4-H project. The award

Capital Update

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

GROUPS WANT RELIEF FROM ESTATE TAX

National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) joined more than 30 agricultural organizations in urging Congress to provide farmers and ranchers with permanent relief from the estate tax. The tax is levied on the net value – less an exemption – of an owner's assets transferred at death to an heir or heirs. A 2010 tax law set the exemption for 2011 at \$5 million and for 2012 at \$5.12 million; for both years the tax rate on an estate's value above the exemption was set at 35 percent. But for 2013 the exemption is scheduled to revert to a pre-2001 level of \$1 million per individual, with a 55 percent tax rate. There would be an extra 5 percent levy on estates valued at more than \$10 million. In letters sent to the Senate and House, the agricultural organizations urged lawmakers to extend the exemption level and retain the 35 percent rate until permanent repeal can be achievable.

THAILAND PLANS TO ASK FOR ENTRY INTO TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

The Thai Cabinet has approved a negotiating mandate for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement. The Thai government planned to announce its intent to join the TPP negotiations during President Obama's visit to Thailand

Nov. 18-19. Before officially engaging in TPP negotiations, Thailand must be invited by all 11 TPP member countries, and the Thai Ministry of Commerce must obtain parliamentary approval. The TPP negotiations represent the best opportunity for the U.S. pork industry to remove sanitary-phytosanitary barriers to trade and to eliminate import duties in the countries involved in the negotiations. Thailand restricts U.S. pork exports through a non-science-based ban on the importation of pork produced using ractopamine, the reluctance of the Thai Department of Livestock and Development to grant import licenses for uncooked U.S. pork and an inspection fee of five Baht per kilogram (\$162 per metric ton) on imported pork compared with an inspection fee of only \$15 on domestic pork. The inspection fee is in direct violation of World Trade Organization rules, which require inspection fees to reflect the true cost of inspection. Elimination of these barriers would result in annual U.S. pork exports to Thailand of \$25 million, according to Iowa State University economist Dermot Hayes.

ISO-OIE WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL WELFARE

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO), a private for-profit organization that seeks to develop voluntary international standards, launched in August in conjunction with the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) a consultation on the formation of a new working group on animal welfare. Although NPPC worked closely with other animal agriculture groups to craft the U.S. position on the working group in opposition to its creation, the estab-

lishment of the ISO working group was approved. The inaugural meeting was held on Oct. 23, with the goal of delegates discussing comments raised in consultation and defining the scope of the group's work. There was little consensus from stakeholders in attendance that the various industry standards and certification schemes in existence are a problem in need of addressing by the ISO or what void the ISO would fill in the development of animal welfare standards. Because of the lack of clarity in the full scope and role of ISO standards, the U.S. delegation volunteered to take a leadership role in the initial drafting of the working group's scope and standards structure before sending the draft to the full working group for comment. The U.S. delegation that attended the October meeting believes this is the most important opportunity to influence the ultimate direction and impact of animal welfare standards.

NPPC URGES NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA TO REMOVE UNSCIENTIFIC TRADE BARRIERS

NPPC Vice President and Counsel for International Affairs Nick Giordano recently traveled to Australia and New Zealand to meet with U.S. and foreign government officials and industry representatives to discuss restrictions on U.S. pork because of unscientific concerns for the transmission of porcine respiratory and reproductive syndrome (PRRS). The court system in New Zealand currently is reviewing a government import health standard that allows for the importation of consumer-ready pork from the United States. Giordano, who

was joined by Kansas State University PRRS expert Dr. Bob Rowland, argued that PRRS is not a food-safety issue and does not pose a risk to human health. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) does not include the trading of pork as a risk of spreading PRRS. The OIE emphasizes that the main risk of spreading PRRS is through trade in live animals and semen and does not list measures to control pork trade in its recommendations on prevention and control of the disease. The legal importation of fresh, chilled and frozen pork from PRRS-endemic countries never has resulted in any outbreak of PRRS in countries that are known to be PRRS-free. New Zealand and Australia, said NPPC, should remove all PRRS-related restrictions for full and open access for U.S. pork and pork products as a part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations.

HOUSE PASSES RUSSIA PNTR

The House approved by a 365-43 vote legislation authorizing permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) with Russia and ending the application of the Jackson-Vanik law. Russia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in August, compelling Congress to vote on extending PNTR status to the country and on repealing the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which affects U.S. trade with countries that restrict freedom of emigration and those with poor human rights records. The Russia PNTR bill requires the Obama administration to report on a number of trade issues, including sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) barriers against U.S. agricultural products. The U.S. pork industry has concerns about a number of matters related to Russia's

WTO accession, primarily related to non-science-based trade barriers that have negatively affected U.S. pork exports to Russia. Only 41 percent of U.S. pork plants are eligible to export to Russia because of the imposition of unscientific SPS barriers. NPPC continues to work with U.S. trade officials to obtain an agreement with Russia providing for stricter disciplines on SPS issues.

MEXICAN TOMATO SUSPENSION AGREEMENT

The U.S. Department of Commerce in 1996 initiated an anti-dumping investigation on fresh tomatoes from Mexico. Later that year, the department negotiated a suspension agreement with Mexican producers of fresh tomatoes that has since set a reference price for tomato imports from Mexico. The agreement subsequently has been renewed a number of times. In June 2012, U.S. tomato producers requested a withdrawal of the underlying anti-dumping petition to terminate the suspension agreement and possibly to file a new anti-dumping case. Following a short comment period, the Department of Commerce announced its preliminary decision to terminate the suspension agreement. It now has 270 days to issue a final decision. Termination of the agreement could lead to retaliation from Mexico against U.S. pork exports, putting the 9,000 U.S. jobs supported by current U.S. pork exports to Mexico at risk. If the U.S. pork industry were to lose the Mexican market, U.S. live hog prices would fall by \$14 within the first year, according to Iowa State University economist Dermot Hayes. During recent comment periods, NPPC and many other groups have urged the

Commerce Department to proceed with the utmost caution.

NEW PIG GENOME STUDY FINDINGS COULD ADVANCE PIG, HUMAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

According to a press release issued from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a new analysis of the pig genome reveals similarities between pigs and humans that could advance biomedical research. Findings from the study, reported in the journal *Nature*, also may lead to better breeding strategies, improved pork production and improvements to human health. The research was conducted by scientists as part of the International Swine Genome Sequence Consortium.

NPPC MEETS WITH CANADIAN, MEXICAN PORK PRODUCERS GROUPS

NPPC President R.C. Hunt, President-Elect Randy Spronk, Vice President Dr. Howard Hill, CEO Neil Dierks and Vice President and Counsel for International Affairs Nick Giordano met recently in Mexico with staff and board leadership from the Canadian Pork Council and the Mexican pork producers organization, the Confederation de Porcicultores Mexicanos. The producer groups discussed issues of mutual interest, including animal health, food safety, industry economics, animal care and trade.

Livestock, Poultry, Dairy Producers Say RFS Is 'Broken'

A coalition of livestock, poultry and dairy organizations on Nov. 16th expressed extreme disappointment with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's denial in the wake of the worst drought in more than half a century of requests that it waive a federal law that requires corn to be turned into ethanol for gasoline.

The Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) requires 13.8 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol to be blended into gasoline in 2013, an amount that will use about 4.5 billion bushels of the nation's corn crop, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"We are extremely frustrated and discouraged that (the) EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) chose to ignore the clear economic argument from tens of thousands of family farmers and livestock and poultry producers that the food-to-fuel policy is causing and will cause severe harm to regions in which those farmers and producers operate," the coalition said.

In fact, dozens of poultry, pork, beef and dairy operations have filed for bankruptcy, been sold or simply

gone out of business over the past several months because of rising feed grain prices.

"How many more jobs and family farms have to be lost before we change this misguided policy and create a level playing field on the free market for the end users of corn?" the coalition asked. "It is now abundantly clear that this law is broken, and we will explore remedies to fix it."

USDA's Nov. 9th crop report puts this year's corn harvest at just 10.7 billion bushels, down 13 percent from last year and down 28 percent from USDA's May projection. The ethanol industry will use more than 40 percent of the corn supply next year.


Further, the carry-over stocks for 2012-13 are now forecast at 647 million bushels, less than 5 percent of expected corn usage and the lowest amount ever. This is a 35 percent decrease from last year's carry-over amount. This means there likely would be no corn reserves for next year should the country experience another poor crop.

"We now have about one-third less

of the corn that we need to adequately supply animal feed, ethanol, exports and sufficient carry-over levels," the coalition noted. "But the government continues to mandate that a significant amount of the corn supply be blended next year into gasoline."

When Congress expanded the RFS in 2007, certain "safety valves" were added to the law. One provision allows the EPA administrator to reduce the required volume of renewable fuel in any year based on severe harm to the economy or environment of a state, a region or the United States.


In addition to the livestock, poultry and dairy organizations, a bipartisan group of 34 U.S. Senators and 156 House members and nine governors petitioned EPA to grant a waiver of the federal requirement for the production of corn ethanol because the mandate, coupled with a drought that has reduced yields and pushed up prices of feed grains, has caused the severe economic harm for which Congress added "safety valves."

"Unfortunately, EPA chose to ignore all of them by issuing a decision that is going to cost more American jobs, put family farmers and ranchers out of business, create an animal feed crisis and cause food costs to soar in the coming months," the coalition concluded. 

U.S.-EU Trade Deal

(continued from page 24)

the EU exclusive rights to certain product names that, nonetheless, have been widely used outside of Europe for many years. (The United States, for example, would not be allowed to export to the EU "Parmesan" cheese, which is named after the Italian region where it first was produced.)

"We cannot help but be skeptical that the EU is prepared to undertake a U.S.-style comprehensive negotiation and to include the agricultural sector," the coalition wrote. 

Drought Tip #4

Maintain correct ambient temperature:

Consideration should be given to providing an optimal room temperature for each stage of production. Colder pigs will consume more feed at a loss in feed efficiency in order to generate heat because their maintenance requirement is increased. This trade-off needs to be evaluated and decisions made accordingly.

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Pork Producers Feed Hurricane Victims-MPPA Commits Funds to Help out

The Pork Checkoff's event trailer traveled to the East Coast to assist in feeding victims of Hurricane Sandy, the largest Atlantic hurricane on record to hit the northeast coast.

Although 24 states have been impacted by the storm, the hurricane hit New York and New Jersey especially hard, flooding numerous streets, tunnels and subway lines, as well as cutting off electricity to parts of the city and its suburbs. In response, pork producers from several states rolled up their sleeves to help feed those impacted by the storm.

"The event trailer, a mobile kitchen equipped with grills and cooking supplies, traveled to New Jersey to offer assistance serving pork products to those in need," said Conley Nelson president of the National Pork Board. "This is just another way pork producers demonstrate that they care for people and their communities."

Contributing to a better quality of life in producers' communities is one of the six ethical principles of the *We Care* initiative, a joint effort of the Pork Checkoff, through the National Pork Board, and the National Pork Producers Council.

Producers spent the first two days serving pork loins and brat patties at the Ocean Co. YMCA in Tom's River, N.J. The remainder of the week was spent at the Brick Township Police Athletic League in Brick, N.J., in collaboration with Operation BBQ Re-

lief. In all, over 9,100 servings – 158 boneless loins, 306 boneless half loins and 408 packages of brat patties – were distributed over the course of the week to New Jersey residents. Extra product was donated to Operation BBQ Relief to continue distribution in Brick, N.J.

Nine states donated assistance through monetary support – California, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Utah. Six states provided support by sending volunteers, including Iowa, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.

Industry partners Smithfield Foods, Johnsonville and Hatfield Brands offered support through product donations. Smithfield donated 1,600 pounds of pork loin; Johnsonville contributed 5,760 pork patties; and Hatfield supplied 51 cases of boneless half loins and seven cases of sausage grillers, equating to 1,000 total



A South Dakota pork farmer helps Restore the Shore volunteers load pork sandwiches.

pounds.

"The Pork Checkoff and America's pork producers are grateful for these contributions, which made the relief effort a success," said Nelson. "This was a great opportunity for producers to give back to those on the East Coast who were hit hard by the hurricane."



The We Care trailer.



Pork producers grill for victims of hurricane Sandy.

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

Checkoff's Print, Online and TV Ads Showcase Pork's Possibilities to Consumers

An essential ingredient of any successful advertisement is a great hook, and pork's tantalizing new ads are snapping consumers to attention.

"Our food looks so delicious that it draws people in according to our research," said Laurie Bever, director of consumer advertising for the Pork Checkoff. "The Pork Checkoff's latest print, online and television ads are designed to get people thinking about the possibilities of pork this fall."

The magic that is pork is captured in 15 second and 30 second national television ads that aired through mid-October on a variety of cable channels, including Food Network, Cooking Channel, ABC Family, Lifetime Movie and many others. The ads featured an array of pork cuts and delicious recipes, including roasts, ribs, chops and pulled pork, in a variety of settings.

"Consumers like how these television ads show pork prepared in different ways, which inspires them to try new meal options with pork," said Bever, who noted that the Checkoff is producing new television spots to run in 2013.

New for 2013, the Pork Check-

off has added QR codes to magazine ads to track how many consumers use their smart phones to scan the codes to view videos at PorkBeInspired.com. Popular clips include how-to tips on using marinades, rubs and glazes, ideas for cooking with pulled pork, and ways to entertain with pork.

"Magazines are still a good way for us to connect with consumers, because people spend time with their favorite magazines clipping recipes, finding a website and scanning QR codes for information," Bever said. "Online, consumers are looking for immediate information, so print and online advertising nicely complement each other."

The Pork Checkoff's culinary videos are also embedded in ads at high-traffic sites, such as Hulu.com. "People come to Hulu, ABC.com and recipe sites to watch videos online. We've had great success with consumers watching our video banner ads," Bever said.

In addition, the Pork Checkoff's online sponsorships at AllRecipes.com, BHG.com (Better Homes and Gardens), Cooking.com, Food.com, FoodNetwork.com and other sites offer an effective way to measure results.

"People are actively looking for information and recipes on these sites, and we get an instant measure of our Checkoff advertising investment," Bever said. "We can see how many people are coming from these sites to PorkBeInspired.com to print recipes, watch videos and access other pork information."

The Pork Checkoff uses a methodical system for measuring results from all its advertising investments, from tracking click-through rates online to

researching consumers' response to the creative components and messages of print and television ads.

"We make Checkoff dollars work hard," Bever said. "We're trying to influence a large group of people through our advertising, and we strive to maximize the Checkoff investment with every ad placement we run."

Pork Checkoff Announces the 2012 Environmental Stewards

The Pork Checkoff, along with its cosponsor, National Hog Farmer magazine, has selected four pork farms to be honored as the 2012 Pork Industry Environmental Stewards. The award, now in its 18th year, recognizes producers who demonstrate a firm commitment to safeguarding the environment and their local communities.

This year's award recipients are:

- Future View Farm, Willow Street, Pennsylvania
- Trail's End Sow Farm, Ames, Oklahoma
- Reed Family Farms, Ottumwa, Iowa
- Dahl Family Farm, Dawson, Minnesota

A panel of judges, who represented pork producers and environmental organizations, selected the winners.

The committee reviewed applications from pork producers who are committed to upholding the ideal relationship between pork production and the environment. The applicants' farms were evaluated on their manure management systems, water and soil conservation practices, odor-control strate-

gies, farm aesthetics and neighbor relations, wildlife habitat promotion, innovative ideas used to protect the environment, and an essay on environmental stewardship. "Once again, the winners of this prestigious award consist of another great group of pork producers," said Lynn Harrison, chair of the Environmental Stewards selection subcommittee and former president of the National Pork Board. "The 2012 Stewards are real-world examples of how farmers who produce pork demonstrate the *We Care* principles every day as natural protectors of the environment and as good neighbors in their communities."

Pork Burger Patty Sales Soar

When Johnsonville® introduced its flavored pork burger patties in 2011, it fired up a trend that has rekindled the thrill of the grill this year for consumers across the country.

"These popular patties have sold extremely well and have been a great addition to the pork family," said Patrick Fleming, director of retail marketing for the Pork Checkoff. "It's exciting to note that these are incremental sales. In other words, purchases of the pork patties aren't replacing sales of other meat or pork items, including sausage links."

Johnsonville's one-third-pound pork burger patties are sold frozen in two-pound boxes. They are available in four flavors, including mild Italian sausage, bratwurst, cheddar bratwurst and chorizo.

The Johnsonville burger patties have broken new ground, Fleming

added. "Prior to this, pork had no representation in the frozen patty market," Fleming said. "The frozen Johnsonville patties have created a brand-new category for pork in the retail market, and sales have been strong."

To keep the momentum going, the Pork Checkoff is partnering with Kroger supermarkets this fall to promote Johnsonville pork patties through a direct-mail piece to consumers who enjoy tailgating.

"The burger has received a makeover, and pork lovers are celebrating," Fleming says. "Pork patties are a terrific example of adding value to ground pork."

Pork Checkoff Steps Up Its Hispanic Marketing Efforts

The growing influence of the Hispanic culture in the United States has prompted the Pork Checkoff to enhance its Hispanic marketing efforts by aligning with the *Pork Be inspired* brand campaign.

"Hispanic consumers make up 16.7 percent of the U.S. population, with the percentage continuing to grow," said Traci Rodemeyer, director of pork information for the Pork Checkoff. "Hispanic consumers love pork, and we want to continue to educate and inspire this huge segment of the population about pork's possibilities."

This past summer, the Checkoff teamed with 100 Wal-Mart stores in Texas, from Corpus Christi to Houston and beyond, to encourage home cooks to put pork on their grills. Each weekend June through August, bilingual

brand ambassadors hosted a party in the parking lot at each store.

The brand ambassadors fired up grills and handed out pork chop samples and recipe brochures featuring "Pork with Rice" and other pork dishes. They also visited with consumers who stopped by Wal-Mart's meat cases.

"Wal-Mart's theme is 'meal solutions with the freshest ingredients possible,'" said Rodemeyer, noting that the Pork Checkoff partnered with Kingsford Charcoal and Bush's Baked Beans on the Wal-Mart events. "The grilled pork promotions were such a hit that the brand ambassadors needed more recipe brochures to distribute."

The Pork Checkoff looks forward to working with Wal-Mart on more pork promotions, said Rodemeyer, adding that the Checkoff is looking at new ways to connect with Hispanic consumers.

This summer, focus groups were held in San Antonio and Los Angeles to determine if the Checkoff's Hispanic marketing strategy is resonating with consumers. Participants shared opinions about print, radio and online media advertisements and offered feedback on the Checkoff's Spanish-language website found online at porkelsabordermilplatillos.com.

"The research affirmed that we're on target with our messages," Rodemeyer said. "We also learned that bicultural Hispanic consumers look to their grocery retailer as a trusted source of information, so we're developing plans to work even more closely with retailers in 2013."

Pork Checkoff

Since Hispanic consumers are social-media savvy and love to share recipes, the Checkoff is revamping its Pork el sabor de mi platillos website and has launched a Spanish-language Facebook page, Rodemeyer said. She added, "Pork is an important part of the Hispanic culture. We want to provide plenty of inspiration to help consumers celebrate this tradition."

Bloggers, Publix Promote Pork's Healthy Eating Challenge

Flavor-packed pork tenderloin may taste like a guilty pleasure, but bloggers and Publix supermarkets showed consumers how healthy this lean cut can be.

"Publix featured healthy pork cuts nearly every week during the first quarter of 2012," said Rob Kirchofer, national retail marketing manager for the Pork Checkoff. "This partnership was a tremendous success and helped drive pork sales."

Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., Publix is one of the nation's top 10 retailers and operates 1,000 stores throughout the southeastern United States. To keep pork top of mind with consumers, the Checkoff launched an online integrated program with Publix supermarkets and a blogger network, the Motherhood.

Through the Motherhood, the Pork Checkoff selected 25 influential bloggers in the Southeast to try

pork recipes and share in the "Good and Good For You Challenge."

"It was great to see these bloggers highlight their local Publix's weekly pork specials, which ranged from pork tenderloin to bone-in loin roasts," said Cathy Lee Fredrickson, online content manager for the Pork Checkoff. "Bloggers are very receptive to pork information, and working with a blogging community like The Motherhood helps spread our message even farther."

To encourage bloggers to share pork recipes and spread the word about pork tenderloin's Heart-Check mark designation from the American Heart Association, the Checkoff supplied the bloggers with coupons and meat thermometers to give their readers.

Producers Gain Knowledge in Social Media to Help Speak-Up for Pork

The Pork Checkoff hosted an advanced social media workshop in October, with five pork producers from around the country attending the eight-hour hands-on training. The workshop was specifically designed to meet the needs of the attendees, with topics including how to create and customize a business Facebook page, how to utilize Facebook Insights and how to manage content with best practices.

Also covered was Twitter and how to utilize it to "reach beyond the choir." Rounding out the training was helpful tips for keeping blogs

fresh, watching analytics, sharing among all social media platforms and reaching the right audience. The Pork Checkoff has a social media playbook available for pork producers who are interested in learning more about social media. For more information on the social media playbook or for information on additional social media training workshops to be held in 2013, please contact Teresa Roof at TRoof@pork.org or at (515) 223-2616.

Agricultural Secretary Vilsack Announces Pork Board Appointees

Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced five new appointments to the 15 member National Pork Board. The appointees will each serve a three-year term. The new appointees chosen to represent pork producers are Craig Mensink, Preston, Minn.; and Carl Link, Fort Recovery, Ohio. The reappointed members of the board are Brad Greenway, Mitchell, S.D.; Dale Norton, Bronson, Mich.; and Lisa Colby, Newburyport, Mass.

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

We Care Barn Worker Kits Now Available

Producers are encouraged to utilize the new *We Care* barn worker posters. The posters serve as on-farm reminders that employees are accountable to the six ethical principles outlined in *We Care* initiative, which is a joint effort of the Pork Checkoff, through the National Pork Board, and the National Pork Producers Council.

Kits that include six laminated posters per set (size 18" x 27") can be ordered in both English and Spanish, with a trainer's guide

provided with each order. Quantities can be ordered for multiple managers, field advisors, farm locations, etc. Each poster highlights one of the *We Care* ethical principles including:

- Food Safety - Delicious pork is on the consumer's mind.
- Animal Care - They can't take care of themselves.
- Community - Lend a hand to people in your communities.
- Public Health - A direct impact on the health of people.
- Environment - The actions you take help preserve the world.
- Safety - Use safe practices on the job.

To order the *We Care* barn worker posters, please contact the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-7675 or visit porkstore.pork.org



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Farmers and Hunters Reminded to Shoot Feral Swine

(continued from page 9)

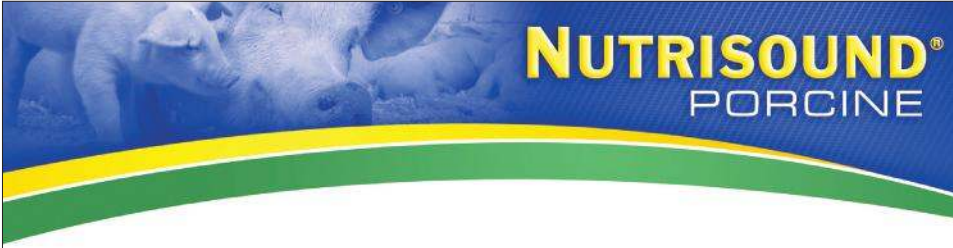
swine are of serious concern to livestock owners and to natural resource managers, it is highly unlikely a person will contract an illness by eating thoroughly cooked meat of feral swine," said Dr. Halstead. "Natural parasites such as trichinella may be found in wild pig meats. Cooking meats to an internal temperature of 170.6°F. will kill this parasite; this temperature will kill viruses and bacteria as well."

If you see or shoot any feral swine,

please contact: the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services at: Nathan.A.Newman@aphis.usda.gov or by contacting the office number at 517-336-1928. Please provide the date of observation or take, your name and address, your phone number and email. Please note the crossroads, the county and the nearest city. Be prepared to provide the number of animals, the type (adults or piglets), and if crop damage was observed. 

Feral Swine Update:

Last year the DNR outlawed feral swine by declaring them an invasive species. In retaliation, several suits were brought to court by sport shooting facilities alleging that the DNR did not have the power to do so, and that it was unconstitutional. Marquette County Circuit Court Judge Thomas Solka ruled recently and rejected the claim that the state's ban on exotic swine is unconstitutional. He did, however, say that the lawsuits can move forward because they raise other issues for courts to consider such as areas of arbitrary and capricious, separation of powers, violation of due process and equal protection, and takings. The plaintiffs have until December 10th to appeal this decision, drop the suit or move forward with trials on the other issues.



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A NEW APPROACH TO MANAGING FEED CHALLENGES

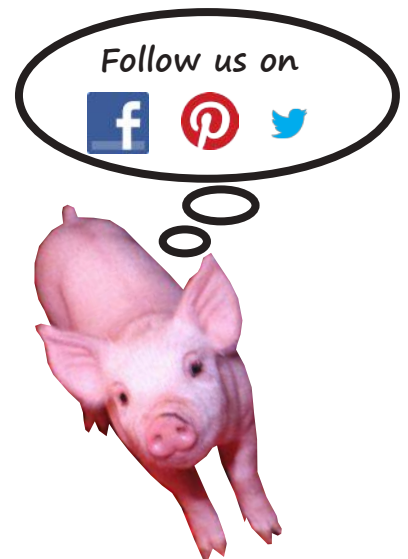
Currently additives focused around feed quality challenges can be grouped into two categories: binders and probiotic solutions. Clays and mannanoligosaccharides are the binders available on the market. Clays are the oldest of all treatments. Their effectiveness is limited both by the amount and number of different compounds they bind. Some products may bind important minerals and generally have a high inclusion rate in the diet. Poor quality feeds continue attacking swine and their internal organs. Ultimately the damage is still happening and will take its toll on health, production, reproductive and immune system failure. Increasing the nutritional plane is a solution that will only mask the real problem and can be quite expensive.

Nutrisound[®] Porcine is a unique direct-fed microbial product that is more effective than other direct fed microbials because of the presence of L-form bacteria. **Nutrisound[®] Porcine** is designed specifically for environmental feed challenges caused by molds and their metabolites. **Nutrisound[®] Porcine** should be fed when: feed ingredients are in poor condition; symptoms are present and feed assays show problems. Common signs of these problems are: loose manure, low or erratic feed consumption, hyper estrogenic effects, and poor reproductive performance including weak heats, and even abortions. **Nutrisound[®] Porcine** enhances the immune system to assist the swine when faced with these challenges.

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Employee Compensation in Pork Production Remains Competitive

In an effort to highlight competitive salaries and benefits in the pork industry, the Pork Checkoff conducted a Compensation and Human Resource Practices Survey through AgCareers.com. During the fall of 2011, surveys were completed by a total of 214 producers, ranging from large to mid-sized operations. Survey respondents represent 46 percent of U.S. pork production.


“Our goal was to not only show that jobs in the pork industry are competitive with those in other industries, but also to ensure people looking for work and students alike could consider a career in pork production,” shares Jim Lummus, producer learning and performance manager for the National Pork Board. “We want people to know that managers of pig farms can make \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year, plus they have all the advantages of living in rural communities.”

For the purpose of the survey, the ‘large operations’ audience represents farms with 25,000 or more sows in production. Mid-size operations are defined as those operations with less than 25,000 sows in production or over 1,000 head finishing.

After being surveyed on numerous topics including compensation, benefits, human resource management, recruiting, part-time staff and safety, several key findings stand out. For example, 51 percent of operations pay an hourly rate of \$8.51-\$10.50 for animal caretakers with no swine experience, and 21 percent of operations pay an hourly rate of \$12.51-\$13.50 for animal caretakers with 5 or more years of experience. Each position, including those on the farm and in production support, was analyzed in detail. Complete information is available in the full report on pork.org/resources.

“The survey results provide a benchmark for producers to compare their employee wages and benefits,”

adds Lummus. “This is a great opportunity to see how their farm compares with others in the industry, so they can retain employees and encourage youth and new hires to consider staying in pork production long-term.”

Not only are wages competitive with other industries, benefits also were comparative with 62 percent of operations offering a bonus (incentive) plan for farm employees during the last three years and 71 percent offering medical coverage. Most operations award an average of 8.5 paid vacation days, 5 paid sick days and 6 paid holidays for all employee categories after one year of service. With these benefits, employees can easily consider a career in pork production. 

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<i>Wooden Farms</i>	13
<i>United Producers</i>	16
<i>Bakker Consulting</i>	20
<i>Top Line Equipment</i>	22
<i>Swine Vet Services</i>	28
<i>Nutrisound</i>	34
<i>AmeriScan</i>	36



Market Flexible

238#

DLY female
x
A-1200 boar



328#

DLL female
x
A-1200 boar

Sow Productivity

Avg. number of pigs/litter	9.5 (gilt litters)
Avg. litter weight	134.25 lbs.
Age weaned	17 days
Avg. pig weight	14.13 lbs.

Parent-line female
DLY Now Available

Sow Productivity

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.



A-1200 terminal-line sire

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.

Carcass Cut-Out

Avg. backfat (Routh Pack)	0.56 in
Avg. yield	76.13%
No Paylean® used	

Carcass Cut-Out

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.



Consulting Veterinarian
James A. Kober, DVM