

MICHIGAN PORK

The source for information affecting Michigan's Pork Producers

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MPPA and MAPI Combine Premier Educational Events

By: Dale Rozeboom, rozeboom@msu.edu and Darrin Karcher, dkarcher@msu.edu

Synergistic growth! Two are better than one! Winning with teamwork! These are just a few of the clichés that could be used to describe the educational direction being planned by Michigan’s pork and poultry farmers. Understanding the truth in these statements and being keen on keeping up-to-date with the latest and most useful information, the Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA) and the Michigan Allied Poultry Industries (MAPI) have decided to combine their premier educational events.

On February 19, 2015, MPPA and MAPI are joining efforts with Michigan State University Extension to host the first “Michigan Pork and Poultry Symposium.” This all-day event will combine the historic and popular meetings previously hosted by these commodity groups: The Michigan Professional Pork Producers Symposium and the Michigan Winter Poultry Seminar.

The 2015 Michigan Pork and Poultry Symposium will focus on educating producers about good production practices and excellent business management approaches. Through presentations surrounding this year’s theme, “Pleasing our Customer,” the conference is intended to provide producers with knowledge that will help them provide a growing human population an environmentally-safe, socially-acceptable, low-cost source of meat. The conference will be held at The Lansing Center in Lansing, Mich.

The anticipation is high, that the 2015 Michigan Pork and Poultry Symposium will become the acclaimed annual event that brings together pork and poultry farmers from around the state to share information about the ever-changing industries. This year’s symposium brings together speakers from both the academic and business worlds in order to better prepare producers for the challenges they face in their quest to produce the world’s food supply.

Guest speakers in 2015 will include:

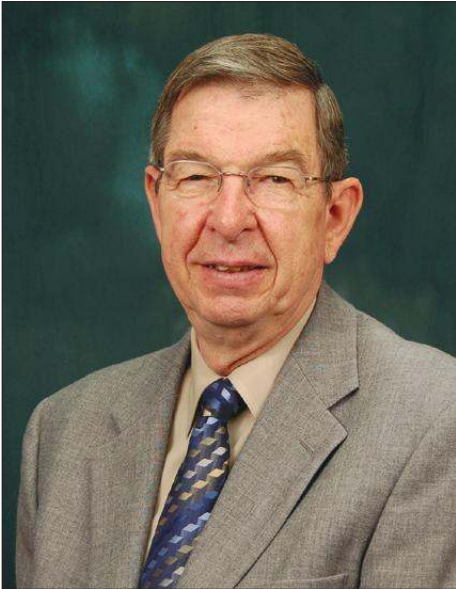
Mr. Mark McCully, “Branding and Consumer Trust”



Mark McCully (*pictured left*), Vice President of Production for Certified Angus Beef LLC, leads the company’s efforts to ensure long-term supply of Certified Angus Beef® brand products. In this role, he oversees strategies for working with cattlemen and increasing the number of Angus-influenced cattle that qualify for the brand. He also is responsible for the Packing Division. Through these efforts, the brand annually supplies consumers worldwide with nearly 900 million pounds of Certified Angus Beef® brand products. McCully joined the company in October 2000 as the director of packing. In June 2002, he helped develop and then coordinate a regional sales team to serve retail, foodservice and international business partners. In March 2005, he transitioned to supply development. Before these endeavors, he was the manager of sales and market development for Southern States Cooperative in Richmond, Virginia. He earned a bachelor’s degree in agricultural science from Western Illinois University, summa cum laude and pursued a Master of Science program in ruminant nutrition at Michigan State University.

(Bio adapted and photo from <http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com/ac2014/speakers.php>)

**Dr. Bernie Erven,
“Retaining and Incentivizing the Quality Employee”**



Bernie Erven (*pictured left*) is Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the Ohio State University (OSU). At OSU his teaching, extension and research activities were in human resource management and family business management. His consulting work with small businesses through Erven HR Services LLC focuses on family business relations and human resource management. For more than 40 years he has worked on issues such as hiring, training, motivation, discipline, compensation, and performance feedback. He has degrees from OSU and the University of Wisconsin. Bernie is a two-time recipient of the OSU Award for Distinguished Teaching. He has also received the American Agricultural Economics Association Teaching Award, a U.S. Department of Agricultural National Excellence in Teaching Award, both the Ohio State University Gamma Sigma Delta Extension and Teaching Awards, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation Cooperative Education Award and the American Agricultural Economics Association Group Extension Award.

(Photo from www.agecon.purdue.edu. - bio adapted from 2013 Growing MI Ag Conference)

**Dr. Henry Turlington,
“FSMA and Audits”**



Dr. Turlington (*pictured left*) is the American Feed Industry Association's (AFIA) Director of Quality and Manufacturing Regulatory Affairs. He joined AFIA in November 2013 and has an extensive background in the feed industry's quality assurance sector. Turlington's daily tasks surround the Food Safety Modernization Act animal food rule as well as spreading focus to the overall quality and technical leadership to AFIA's third-party certification programs. Prior to joining AFIA, Turlington previously held quality and food safety positions with The Nutro Company and Provimi North America. He earned a doctorate from Kansas State University and a master's degree from University of Kentucky in animal nutrition. He obtained his bachelor's degree from North Carolina State University in animal sciences.

(Photo and bio from <http://www.afia.org/Afia/AboutAFIA/StaffDirectory.aspx>)

More information about the 2015 Michigan Pork and Poultry Symposium to follow in the January *Pork Sampler*. To register for the symposium please fill out and return the form on page 12. Please note that the form may also be used to become a MPPA member or renew an existing membership.



By: Fred Walcott
MPPA President

“ We asked the employees to work harder, take more precautions, go above and beyond, and we still were losing piglets. ”

Thoughts and Reflections on Dealing with a PED Outbreak

An anniversary generally calls for reflection, whether it's the anniversary of your wedding day or of the day your farm was founded, it makes you think about where you were and where you stand today. Last year, around this same time, we were in the midst of a PED outbreak. The first sow barn broke on November 12, 2013, (which also happens to be my birthday, not a great present) and the remaining four units broke within 16 days.

The other day I sat down with my Production Manager, Thad, to talk about our break with the hope that relaying our experience with the disease to other producers would be helpful. Thad was really my “boots on the ground” and the one that discovered the initial break.

Thad described the day of the break to me. “I was visiting a sow unit and noticed some severe diarrhea. After making rounds, I went back to the unit to check on the younger piglets and it had gotten much worse,” he said.

“I spent the day there and was certain at that point that it was either PED or TGE.”

As a farm, we called our vets and put together an emergency plan pretty quickly. We shut down movement and went through and euthanized piglets.

When our first unit broke, we really were hoping to contain the disease to just that unit. We sold off the sow herd in that barn, and the barn was about 75 percent empty when we had another unit break. Also, as a precaution, we didn't take the mortalities to our com-

posting unit; choosing instead to bury them and reduce the chance of cross-contamination. One thing that had to immediately be ratcheted-up was sanitation. Everything had to be sanitized and washed daily. We stopped moving piglets from room to room and didn't do any cross-fostering.

We ended up having to euthanize piglets for the following 3 weeks, and didn't have 100 percent survivability until 10 weeks after the initial break. The financial aspect was significant, but the impact on employees was harsh. We asked the employees to work harder, take more precautions, go above and beyond, and we still were losing piglets. It's really discouraging because you don't, in reality, see the benefits of those actions. It was very stressful for the entire crew and it felt like we would never make progress. In April, we had two sow units break with a Delta virus and, although it cleaned-up quicker, it was still ugly.

Even now, a year after the initial break, we are still dealing with the after effects of PED. The virus worked its way through the nurseries and finishers because we had to continue to move piglets to new barns. We cleaned everything intensely and we would still have nurseries break when we put clean pigs in the facilities. We took a lot of swabs and, after the piglets in our units tested negative for the virus, we still had to have 12 consecutive additional clean swabs before being declared “PED free.” As we

market our last PED positive finishing barn, we feel like we have finally arrived on the other side of a very long, dark tunnel.

Breaking with PED definitely reinforced how much my employee team cares about the pigs and how committed they are to the biosecurity procedures that we have had in place and are always striving to improve. As a PIC supplier, we are also very grateful to have had the advice and counsel of our colleagues at PIC, whose vets helped review our existing biosecurity plans and worked with our staff to implement new methods.

Looking back, one of the most frustrating things about our break was the mystery of where it came from and how it got into our sow unit. It's always on your mind, and you just want to figure it out. It also adds to the employee's ire, because they are trying their hardest to protect the pigs, and yet it still gets in the operation. We're a breeding stock supplier and have always had strict biosecurity protocols. It was just really concerning that we broke with the virus. Looking back, I really don't think that it was a lack of biosecurity that caused us to break, but it's one of those things to which we will probably never have a concrete answer.

As we work towards our second "PED Anniversary," there is always room for improvement. A good biosecurity plan happens over time and we are still re-working how we do things to always be moving towards tighter biosecurity.

Sanitation in our system is higher than ever before and we are always strictly adhere to our "biosecurity

pyramid." The pyramid organizes all of our sites by health risk. It is a system that helps us, no matter what we are doing from manure hauling to feed delivery, organize our travel from the sites most at risk of disease to the sites least at risk.

We are also very conscious about what goes into the barns. We've changed how bagged feed is delivered and the physical bags never enter the barn. We added bakers to our truck washes and have limited the number of times semen is delivered -now every three days rather than daily- and pigs are weaned twice a week rather than daily.

We also have implemented a lot of inspections. We have our veterinarian, Dr. Kober, on-site monthly to inspect the sow units. He played a huge part in the development of our biosecurity protocols. Thad, who is our PIC biosecurity officer and representative to PIC, regularly inspects every site and we rely on the sow manager at each location to make sure that biosecurity standards are being met.

Some of the other things that we have changed are that we give every employee a pair of white rubber boots that they wear from home and use walking up to the barns. The rubber boots can be consistently disinfected and aren't likely to be worn as a part of their "street clothes" to stores and other public spaces. We also started

using composting bags for our piglet mortalities. The bags break down and go directly into our compost bins. We are always trying to think "what could go wrong," whether it's how we pick up mortalities or how feed is delivered, it's really necessary to think of everything as a possible vehicle for contamination.

Every day our crew lives in genuine concern that we could re-break with PED and Thad definitely receives more calls to go look at random diarrhea outbreaks. Even after a year, we're on pins and needles about it. When thinking about how to talk to other producers about PED, it's not something that is easily put into a few words. You have to experience it first hand to truly know what you can do and what you might do differently and, if you have never experienced an outbreak, I really hope you never have to deal with one.

Looking back, I am thankful for the information we have about PED that we didn't have a year ago. Ongoing research fostered by \$3 million of emergency funding by the Pork Board will, hopefully, provide some answers over time as well. And, finally, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the extraordinary effort put forth by my wonderful team of employees – here's hoping the road to our 2nd anniversary goes a little more smoothly.



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James A. Kober, D.V.M., MS

svsmi@sbcglobal.net



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

“Pork’s market share was being significantly eroded by poultry that was perceived to be leaner by consumers ... ”

“Don’t confuse me with the facts.”

I expected that I might get some responses to my last article on pork quality and I did. What I didn’t expect was that the responses would all be in agreement with my suggestion that we need to take a look at quality again. The responses reinforced that we do, indeed, have a problem in this area and, although I don’t think it is anywhere near the magnitude of the challenge we faced to make hogs leaner in the 50s, it is something that needs to be addressed.

As I mentioned in the article, I believe quality is more than just leanness and we need to look at all aspects that go into providing consumers with an enjoyable eating experience. And, we need to do this realizing there is a multitude of preparation skills among our customers including even those who are culinary professionals. It’s been my experience that more chefs than not really don’t know how to cook today’s pork.

It’s been interesting to note that pork quality has become, even though subtly, a more frequently mentioned topic in some producer circles as well as among a few key customers, i.e., retailers, foodservice purveyors and even, occasionally, among consumers. This hasn’t gone unnoticed as the Pork Board has a pork quality initiative underway and it will be interesting to see what ultimately results from the study.

As I also mentioned in the article, I didn’t think I was alone in believing we may have gone too far in making hogs leaner and that it was beginning to look like we did this by neglecting

other factors that make-up quality, e.g., intramuscular fat (marbling), color, water holding capacity, etc. In the past year or so, I have seen the topic at least referenced in some articles and many times it is accompanied by a blanket assertion that the “Pork The Other White Meat®” (PTOWM) campaign was responsible for the quality problem pork has today.

To that assertion, I would certainly take issue. Repositioning pork as a white meat in the marketplace, which incidentally pork loin actually is based on USDA’s description, was not without controversy even at the time it was initiated. What most of the critics overlook, and possibly because some of them are too young to know, is that it was nearly a desperation move at the time. Pork’s market share was being significantly eroded by poultry that was perceived to be leaner by consumers, even though many cuts of pork had evolved through the efforts that were put in place to make hogs leaner, to be just as lean as chicken.

I am convinced that if the PTOWM campaign had not come along, the erosion in pork’s market share would certainly have continued and to what extent is anyone’s guess. It was a ground-breaking campaign that did just exactly what it was intended to do at the time; grab consumers’ attention and inform them that there was an alternative to chicken that could allay their concerns about fat. And, remember, at that time, there was a lot of concern about too much fat consumption. Recent research indicates that

concern may have been ill-conceived and helped contribute to today's obesity problem, but that's a discussion for another time. To me, it's hard to be critical of a campaign that developed one of the ten most recognized advertising slogans and accomplished its intended purpose, but I'm convinced many of the critics are not fully aware of the reasons why the campaign was initiated. Despite its successes, after several years it became apparent that the pork industry needed to move to the next phase and that is what gave rise to the Pork Be Inspired® campaign currently underway.

Some critics also like to take shots at the nomenclature change that was designed to simplify pork cut designations and make it easier for consumers to compare cuts coming from comparable muscle areas in both beef and pork. They say the pork industry now wants to compare pork to beef when earlier we wanted to compare it to chicken and we should simply leave it alone and let it stand on its own merits.

Again, I believe this criticism comes from a lack of understanding about what the cut name changes were intended to accomplish. As reported by the Pork Board, before the renaming process took place, the Pork Board and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association collaborated on an 18-month in-depth effort to research this area. The research showed consumers were often confused by the different names for similar cuts of meat and this confusion carried over to a lack of understanding about how to cook many beef and pork cuts currently available in the meat case. Simplifying names should help clear-up the confusion and result in greater sales as consum-

ers develop more comfort in knowing how to prepare various cuts.

The renaming decision was not, as some critics claim, pursued to compare pork to beef, suggest the two meats are similar, and capitalize on beef's popularity. Rather it was done to begin the process of allowing retailers to differentiate and merchandise pork cuts more effectively to aid consumers in selecting and preparing pork and, I would contend, the same benefits accrue to beef. Additionally, as the Pork Board explained, "the new cut names will eventually align with the foodservice industry as well to provide a consistent consumer perception of pork at restaurants and at home."

It's been a long time ago, but one thing that was drilled into me during my journalism training in college was to make certain your facts were accurate, even if you were writing an

opinion piece. In fact, if you wanted to make a compelling argument in an opinion piece, I was taught it was necessary to cite facts supporting your position. I believe there is way too much finding its way in print these days based solely on opinion and this is true regardless of the topic. When no factual basis is cited for one's opinion, it leaves a pretty hollow argument. But, thanks to the internet and social media, that seems to be where we have evolved today and, unfortunately, many take whatever is printed in those mediums to be factual. And, perhaps even worse, mainstream media is often just as guilty in crossing the boundary between reporting and simply stating an opinion that is unsubstantiated by factual validity. The old adage "don't confuse me with the facts" seems to reign supreme these days and that, in my humble opinion, is a truly sad commentary. 🐷



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Top Tips to Fight Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus

Summer's warmth may have slowed the spread of the virus, but fall's cooler, changeable weather has signaled the approach of a more favorable environment for the Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) virus to reprise its costly damage, according to Dr. Lisa Becton, the Pork Checkoff swine health and information director.

"Producers should recheck all their biosecurity measures, both on and off the farm," Becton said.

"After what we've experienced in terms of PED's ability to spread and survive, it's critical to maintain heightened vigilance and implement strict biosecurity."

Becton offers the following tips to help reduce the risk of PED transmission and subsequent losses:


- Communicate with everyone involved with manure handling. At this time of year, working with on-farm or commercial manure haulers is critical. Know everyone involved and don't let any of the manure crew members enter barns, office areas or walk over areas used by farm personnel. Never let them come in direct contact with pigs.
- Establish a line of separation for transport. Having a line of separation, which is the line between the area used by transporters and the area used by farm or market personnel, is critical for effective biosecurity. It reminds you that every contact with a site or market could contaminate your truck, trailer or chute.
- Maintain stringent cleaning of barns, trucks and trailers. With fall and winter's colder weather, this is even more critical. Proper cleaning steps include removing all manure and bedding, soaking with soap and/or degreaser, pressure-washing with hot water, disinfecting with an appropriate

disinfectant and thorough drying.

- Have a biosecurity plan in place for all non-farm personnel. Don't overlook the potential disease transmission risk posed by those who don't work on your farm. This includes state animal health authorities, PQA Plus® advisors, extension specialists, state and environmental management staff, supply or feed company staff, maintenance specialists (electricians, plumbers, etc.), veterinarians, nutritionists and utility providers (electric, water, propane gas, etc.).
- Know your farm's PED status at all times and report positive cases. While this may seem elementary, it's not. PED can be mistaken early on for other enteric diseases, such as TGE, so have a fast diagnosis plan in place with your herd veterinarian. Reporting positive cases is required by USDA. For full details, including potential testing cost reimbursements, visit the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website.



- Stay informed. The pork industry is working hard to fight PED. For new practical tips and the latest information on potential vaccines and other breakthroughs, check the Pork Checkoff's PED page, monitor other media outlets or set up free online alerts, such as on Google.

For more specifics on these protocols and other PED-related resources, go to pork.org/pedv. 

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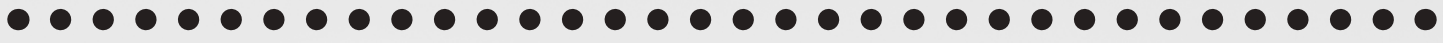
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Official Identification Required for Swine Exhibition

All pigs that will be shown at fairs, shows or exhibitions must have official individual animal identification, similar to cattle and sheep.

By: Beth Ferry, Michigan State University Extension

Exhibitions are right around the corner for many youth with swine projects in the state of Michigan. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) has asked that all pigs that are exhibited have official individual animal identification, similar to other species including cattle and sheep. This will allow the swine species to comply with Public Act 466 of the Animal

Industry Act and have them meet the stated guidelines within the act. By implementing this procedure, swine exhibitors and the state will be better prepared to respond to disease challenges by allowing for more complete traceability.

Included on the approved list of official ID tags is:

USDA 840 tags for swine - These types of tags have a unique 15-digit

number beginning with 840 and bear the U.S. shield. A Premises Identification Number (PIN) is required to purchase '840' tags from the USDA approved suppliers- where they come in a variety of colors.

Metal NUES tags - Metal National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags are available through MDARD at no cost. These tags include a non-

(continued on page 15)

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Identification for Swine Exhibition

(continued from page 14)


repeatable number etched on them.

Plastic NUES tags - The plastic National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags are only available for fairs to order as a group. MDARD will provide these tags for fairs at no cost. A non-repeatable number is printed on the tags.

It is important to note that only fairs can order the plastic NUES tags as a bulk order. The fair will then be required to complete corresponding paperwork, including exhibitor name and address linked to each tag.

Official ID is also needed for animals exhibited at jackpots and state shows. The exhibitor is responsible for acquiring either a USDA 840 tag or ordering a metal NUES tag from MDARD.

An option that is currently being phased out by the federal government is "900 series" tags (see below). For 2015 if they are used before March 11 they are considered acceptable.


Communication pieces for 2015 are currently being developed. To contact MDARD for your premise ID number or order NUES tags call (800) 292-3939, and if you have questions regarding official swine ID please contact a member of the Michigan State University Extension pork team, or MPPA at 517-853-3782, sprague@mipork.org. 

This article was originally published by Michigan State University Extension. For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>









Two Pork Producers are in the Next USFRA Faces of Farming & Ranching Class

The U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA®) has announced the winners of its second class of the Faces of Farming and Ranching program, after a nationwide search was concluded to help put real faces on agriculture for American consumers.

Two pork producers, Erin Brenneman (Iowa) and Thomas Titus (Ill.) are in the class. Other participants include: Darrell Glaser (Texas), Jay Hill (N.M.) and Carla Wardin (Mich.) were all named program winners.

The class will be active participants in the national dialogue about food production and set the record straight. These farmers and ranchers will share their personal stories and experiences through consumer-facing public appearances, events, media interviews and social media. 



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National Pork Board Introduces 2020 Strategic

Following more than a year of planning and development, the National Pork Board (NPB) released its new strategic plan focused on anticipating and managing the changing world facing U.S. pork producers now and in the future. The plan, to be implemented starting in January 2015, will be in place through 2020 to guide the organization.

Rooted in collaboration between industry and supply chain partners, the new NPB vision is to elevate U.S. pork as the global protein of choice by continuously and cooperatively working to do what's right for people, pigs and the planet.

"It's a plan sharply focused on a vision for the future of America's pork producers. It defines in clear, customer-centered language a set of objectives focused on results," said Dale Norton, Pork Checkoff president and a pork producer from Bronson, Mich.

"Our task force, which included pork producers and representatives from allied industries, defined a commitment to leverage industry and supply chain collaboration to achieve the vision."

During 2014, the task force met several times, analyzing and discussing economic forecasts and research collected from pork producers, protein processors, foodservice operators, retailers and consumers. Unlike the previous strategic plan, this new effort is more customer-centric, with a commitment to transparency and continuous improvement.

"In the planning process, we connected with customers and consumers. We heard their

desire to better understand and have dialogue about U.S. pig farming," Norton said.

"The resulting commitment to greater transparency and collaboration takes on a whole new focus and priority in this plan."

The task force set three distinct goals to drive NPB performance.



The goals, supported by a total of 17 specific and measurable objectives, include:

- **Build Consumer Trust**
– Working collaboratively with food chain partners, NPB will enhance consumer trust in modern pork production by promoting producer adoption of on-farm management practices that reflect the industry's ethical principles and by sharing its commitment to continuous improvement with consumers and key stakeholders.
- **Drive Sustainable Production**
– NPB will invest in research and producer education programs that enhance pork productivity and sustainability of pork production and deliver benefits to produc-

ers, their communities and consumers.

- **Grow Consumer Demand**
– Working in concert with food chain partners, NPB will grow domestic and international consumer demand by focusing on pork's improved nutrition, quality and sustainability.

Norton said the process also involved a thorough analysis of the domestic and global marketplace, including issues such as animal disease and welfare, food safety, nutrition, economics and the reputation of modern agriculture.

"Viewed collectively, the plan gives us a clear path for moving boldly from where we are now to where we want to be in the future," Norton said.

"We have our big-picture vision for the future and a collaborative blueprint for getting there together as an industry."

Two additional priorities emerged during the planning task force's meetings and discussions: clearly addressing the growing global need for pork and shaping the social responsibility commitment of the Pork Checkoff. Toward that end, the duties of two positions were expanded and elevated, with Becca Hendricks named as vice president of international marketing, and Jarrod Sutton named vice president of social responsibility.

"The concerns of our partners in both the international marketplace and the U.S. retail and foodservice arena need to be addressed," said John Johnson, chief operating officer of NPB.

"Food retailers' growing

Plan Focused on People, Pigs and Planet

interest in production practices and our pig farmers' social license to operate have an increasing impact on the farm. While, as an industry, we perform well – anchored by our ethical principles – we are continuously striving to improve.”

NPB will make an increased effort over the next five years to demonstrate this improvement by sharing information with consumers and senior management of retail and foodservice companies, including directors of global supply chains and corporate sustainability officers.

“International markets continue to grow in their importance to the U.S. pork industry. Today, 28 percent of our pork production is marketed internationally,” Johnson said.

“With rising incomes in the developing world and pork’s current position as the No. 1 source of animal protein worldwide, international trade requires a higher profile within our programs.”

“In the end, it’s all about helping ensure the long-term success of America’s hog farmers and their families,” Norton said.

“This plan taps into the emotional connections consumers have with their food and fuels a fresh dialogue about modern pork production and continuous improvement for the benefit of people, pigs and the planet, while continuing pork’s role as the global animal protein of choice.”

The plan was developed with the guidance of a specially appointed task force. Its members included:

Pork Board President Dale


PEOPLE PIGS PLANET

Norton and Karen Richter, immediate past president

Board members Jan Archer and Glen Walters; Roy Lee Lindsey, executive director, Oklahoma Pork Council; Randy Spronk, past president, National Pork Producers Council; Jay Akridge, dean of agriculture, Purdue University; Pork producers Robert Dykhuis, James Heimerl, and Craig Rowles, DVM; Rich Gallant, vice president, Cargill Meat Solutions; Joe Jordan, vice president, Domino’s Pizza; Joe Swedberg, vice president,

Hormel Foods; Leann Saunders, president, Where Food Comes From, Inc.; Rick Parker, director, JBS USA; Michael Skahill, vice president, Smithfield Foods; and a representative of a large national retailer.

NPB is responsible for Checkoff-funded research, promotion and consumer information projects and for communicating with pork producers and the public. Through a legislative national Pork Checkoff, pork producers invest \$0.40 for each \$100 value of hogs sold. Importers of pork products contribute a like amount, based on a formula. The Pork Checkoff funds national and state programs in advertising, consumer information, retail and foodservice marketing, export market promotion, production improvement, science and technology, swine health, pork safety and sustainability and environmental management.

You can view the plan at <http://bit.ly/NPBStrategic>. 



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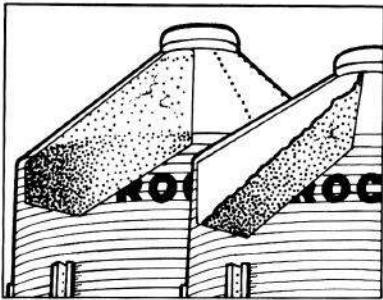
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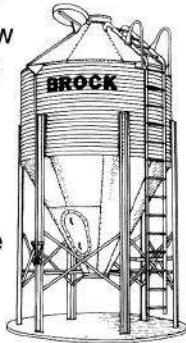


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Agriculturally Speaking...

By: Jamie Clover Adams,
Director of MDARD



Career Opportunities Abound in MI Food and Agriculture

I'm the Director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, but I'm also a mom. And, like all moms, I want the best for my daughter. We've reached that point in her life where she's exploring post-secondary education and career opportunities. While it's her decision to make, I'm encouraging her to seriously consider a career in the food and agriculture sector.

Opportunities abound in Michigan's food and agriculture economy - from the farm field to the consumers' plate. The sector's impact on the state's economy has surpassed Governor Rick Snyder's goal of \$100 billion annually—not to mention our exports into global markets have increased 85 percent over the last three years.

Career possibilities span the sector from herd managers, food scientists, lab technicians, sales managers, bankers, meat cutters, grain traders and veterinarians to plant managers, craft brewers, vintners and restaurateurs. Problem-solving, innovation and critical thinking skills are essential to every facet of our growing food and agriculture economy...from farm to fork.

Earlier this year, Governor Snyder and the Michigan Legislature added flexibility to the Michigan Merit Curriculum offering Michigan kids an opportunity to explore job prospects in food and agriculture through participation in career and technical education programs while maintaining important learning objectives. Now, career and technical education programs can incorporate the benchmarks of Algebra II to fulfill the Algebra II requirements; and, anatomy and agri-science were added as options for the science requirements.

With less than two percent of our population directly tied to production agriculture, we need opportunities to introduce young people to the food and agriculture sector. These changes to the high school curriculum requirements help provide that link.

Parents are given an awesome responsibility to guide their children as they grow into adults. Consider encouraging your child to explore opportunities in Michigan's growing food and agriculture sector be it through a four year college degree, skilled trades program or career and technical education program. Michigan's \$101.2 billion a year food and agriculture sector provides important career paths, so kids continue to have a bright future in our great state.

PIN Tag Deadline is January 1, 2015

Pork producers are closing in on a significant date for the industry's Swine ID Plan. As of Jan. 1, 2015, individual identification of breeding stock headed to harvest will transition from backtags to the use of official, USDA-approved eartags.

The eartags, called official premises identification number (PIN) tags, must be applied on the farm to individual breeding swine being marketed into harvest channels to link the animal to the sending premises. PIN tags are not required for feeder pigs, growers or market hogs.

In support of the Swine ID Plan, most major U.S. packers and processors will require PIN tags as a condition of sale for breeding stock beginning Jan. 1. To date, packers that will require the tags include: Johnsonville, Hillshire Brands, Calihan Pork Processors, Bob Evans Farms, Wampler's Farm Sausage, Pine Ridge Farms, Pioneer Packing Co., Pork King Packing and Abbyland Pork Pack.

"The official PIN tags are a significant improvement over backtags that are not imprinted with a premises identifier and are prone to come off," said Patrick Webb, DVM, director of swine health for the Pork Checkoff.

"When used in breeding stock, the official PIN tags will enhance pre-harvest traceability and national disease surveillance."

PIN Tags Play Key Role in Disease Outbreak

Sows and boars entering harvest channels are often commingled, sorted and shipped with animals from other sources. Individual identification is essential for targeted surveillance and rapid and accurate traceback for diseases that could affect trade and commerce, such as pseudorabies or Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

"If there is a disease issue, PIN tags could expedite the investigation, identify the site and aid officials in quickly



containing the outbreak to help limit potential damage for the producer and the rest of the industry," Webb said.

"The official PIN tags demonstrate to our trading partners that we have a valid pre-harvest traceability system. With more than 25 percent of U.S. pork production going to foreign buyers, that assurance helps keep export markets viable."

Webb added, "The official tags also play a role in the industry's Pork Quality Assurance® programs, providing an excellent way to identify sows and boars during production and to keep accurate treatment and movement records."

What is a PIN?

A premises identification number (PIN) will locate a specific animal production site. The standardized PIN is a USDA-allocated, seven-character alphanumeric code, with the right-most character being a check digit. For example: AB23456. Note that PINs are not the same as location identification numbers (LIDs) administered through a state's or tribe's internal system.

For more information or to register for a PIN, go to: pork.org/PINtag



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MI Pork PAC

Helping elect friends of the Michigan pork industry.

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A strong political action committee compliments our advocacy efforts at the state Capitol. By contributing to MI Pork PAC, you are helping to elect legislators who support your industry. By helping to elect lawmakers who support your industry, we can be assured that we will have maximum impact in shaping policy issues that impact you. A strong PAC assures us that pork producers and candidates who support us will be at the table when decisions impacting your industry are being made.

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NPPC Requests Review of Swine Disease Surveillance Program

NPPC asked USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to evaluate the efficacy of its Swine Influenza Virus Surveillance Program, which is set to expire in 2015. In a letter to APHIS Deputy Administrator Dr. John Clifford, head of the agency's Veterinary Services, NPPC said that, while it is important to detect the presence and general distribution of viruses that may have a significant impact on the swine industry, it is equally important to identify those that are, or may be, of public health concern and to identify genomic sequences of viruses that may be relevant for vaccine or diagnostic reagent development. The organization pointed out that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials recently voiced strong support for the surveillance program. NPPC recommended that APHIS undertake a formal review of the surveillance program to determine whether it should continue and if so, what improvements should be made. 

Gov. Rick Snyder Says Economic Impact of Food, Agriculture Industry Surpasses \$100 Billion Goal

Gov. Rick Snyder recently announced that Michigan's food and agriculture system has surpassed its economic impact goal of \$100 billion.

According to an interim estimate by the Michigan State University Product Center, Michigan's agri-food system has reached a total annual economic impact of \$101.2 billion. Snyder has continually encouraged the industry to set its sights on topping the \$100 billion mark.

"Michigan's food and agriculture businesses have helped lay the foundation for our economic turnaround," Snyder said.

"They recognize the value of investing in their communities and creating hometown jobs. Let's keep this great momentum going. The future is exciting for this dynamic industry."

"We are known for crop diversity as well as safe, high-quality products to meet growing global consumer demand. Michigan is well-poised to see increased development in the food and ag arena," said Jamie Clover Adams, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

"It's a great time to be in food and agriculture. We are innovators, and the possibilities for career opportunities, new business creation and expansion are bountiful."

The study was first conducted in 2006 using 2004 data. Then, the food and agriculture system was determined to be valued at \$60.1 billion. An interim estimate in 2009 showed an increase in value to \$71.3 billion. In 2012, the study highlighted more

growth, pegging it at \$91.4 billion. The newest estimate shows the food and agriculture system continues on a consistent growth trend.

Chris Peterson, director of the MSU Product Center and the study's lead investigator, said strong commodity and food prices, along with growing domestic and global demand, help drive the increase.


"The study includes direct and multiplier effects of numerous aspects of the agri-food system," he explained.

"The impact of production agriculture alone is nearly \$13.6 billion, or 13.4 percent of the overall total."

The MSU Product Center produced the interim estimate at the request of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The last full report was issued in 2012 using 2010 data. Data from 2015 will be used to generate the next full report in 2017.

"Data from several different sources are used to create this report," Peterson said.

"Unfortunately, full data sets are only available every five years."

The MSU Product Center provides coordinated, university-wide assistance to help Michigan entrepreneurs develop and commercialize high-value, consumer-responsive products and businesses in the agriculture, food, natural resources and bio-processing sectors. 

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

EXECUTIVE ORDER ADDRESSES ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

President Obama recently issued an Executive Order outlining efforts to address the antibiotic resistance threat facing the public health system. Accompanying that announcement was the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) report on combating antibiotic resistance.

The Executive Order establishes a new interagency task force comprised of the departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services and Defense that will develop a national action plan to begin implementing PCAST's recommendations by Feb. 15, 2015. The order also calls for development of a rapid diagnostic test to identify resistant infections in humans, for research focused on new antibiotic development and for development of alternatives to antibiotics such as vaccines and probiotics.

The PCAST report supports the process now underway at the Food and Drug Administration to phase out the use of medically important antibiotics for food animal growth promotion purposes and to increase veterinary oversight of antibiotics used in agriculture. The report also recognizes the importance of antibiotics in producing safe, healthy food for Americans and the growing demand from the developing world.

Also recently, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on

Health held a hearing on "21st Century Cures: Examining Ways to Combat Antibiotic Resistance and Foster New Drug Development." Witnesses testified on the need for greater investing in new antibiotics, preserving antibiotic effectiveness and monitoring how antibiotics are being used in the medical field among other things. National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) issued a statement in response to the release of the Executive Order, highlighting the actions pork producers have taken through PQA Plus® to preserve antibiotic effectiveness. In addition, NPPC President Dr. Howard Hill penned an editorial focusing on the antibiotic resistance issue.

FDA PUBLISHES ANTIBIOTICS DATA REPORT; HARVARD STUDY ON ANTIBIOTICS RELEASED

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration published its annual report on sales and distribution data of antibiotics approved for use in food-producing animals. Collected under the Animal Drug User Fee Amendments of 2008, the data for 2012 – the latest year for which data are available – show 61 percent of the antibiotics sold for use in food-producing and non-food-producing animals were medically important. Of all antibiotics, 42 percent labeled for production and therapeutic uses were medically important, and 59 percent of medically important antibiotics were sold over the counter.

For antibiotics important to human medicine, production uses are being phased out under FDA's Guidance 213 and over-the-counter sales will end in favor of Veterinary Feed Directives.

Comparing data from 2009 to 2012, the report found that sales of antibiotics increased by 16 percent, but sales of medically important antibiotics labeled for production and therapeutic uses went up just 9 percent. FDA noted in the report that "animal drug sales data represent a summary of the volume of product sold or distributed through various outlets by the manufacturer intended for sale to the end user, not the volume of product ultimately purchased by the end user for administration to animals."

In a related matter, a new study from Harvard University's School of Public Health on the risk to human health of antibiotics use in animal agriculture found that "the limited data available make it hard to quantify the relationship between antibiotic use in animals and the occurrence of clinical [antibiotics] resistance." The study authors note that "the evidence for human health risks directly attributable to agricultural antibiotics runs the gamut from speculative to scant."

WTO RULES ON COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING, NPPC URGES LAWMAKERS TO FIX LAW

As expected, the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled that the mandatory Country-Of-Origin Labeling (COOL) statute violates U.S. international trade obligations by discriminating against Canadian cattle and pigs and Mexican cattle. COOL requires meat to be labeled with the country where the animal from which it was derived was born, raised and slaughtered.

The decision could allow Mexico and Canada to place tariffs on U.S.

imports. NPPC is urging the Obama administration and Congress to fix the law to avoid trade retaliation from Canada and Mexico. As it did in a 2012 ruling on a previous version of COOL, the WTO requested that the United States bring the “inconsistent measure into conformity with its [international trade] obligations.”

NPPC opposed COOL when it was being debated by Congress as part of the 2002 Farm Bill, worked for flexibility in the labeling scheme when lawmakers said it would be part of the 2008 Farm Bill and joined with several other meat organizations in filing a lawsuit against the most recent iteration of the regulation implementing the law. NPPC supports an approach to labeling that provides important information to consumers, complies with U.S. international trade obligations and does not undermine U.S. meat supply chains and unnecessarily raise costs.

TPP MINISTERS CITE PROGRESS AT APEC SUMMIT

Leaders from the 12 nations involved in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact released a joint statement touting significant progress and claiming to have narrowed the outstanding gaps in the negotiations.

The leaders met on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit that was held November 7-11 in Beijing, China. President Obama attended the annual meeting. While in Asia, he also visited Myanmar for the East Asia Summit and finished his tour in Brisbane, Australia for the G-20 summit. In recent months, progress on the TPP has been limited due in large part to bilateral market access issues between the

United States and Japan in the areas of agriculture and automobiles.

The United States has never agreed to allow a trading partner to exempt as many tariff lines as Japan is requesting – 586. In the 17 free trade agreements the United States has concluded since 2000, just 233 tariff lines have been exempted from having their tariffs go to zero. Japan’s current offer is unacceptable, and NPPC will continue to push for a final TPP that aligns with the original objective of creating a high-standard, 21st century agreement that eliminates tariffs on virtually all products.

NPPC WANTS ‘WATERS OF THE U.S.’ RULE WITHDRAWN

Because it has “numerous and substantial flaws,” a rule proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intended to clarify their authority under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) over various waters should be withdrawn, said the NPPC in recently filed comments.

Currently, the agencies’ jurisdiction – based on several U.S. Supreme Court decisions – includes “navigable” waters and waters with a significant hydrologic connection to navigable waters. The proposed “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) rule would broaden that to include, among other water bodies, intermittent and ephemeral streams such as the kind farmers use for drainage and irrigation. It also would cover lands adjacent to such waters.

“The rule was supposed to bring clarity to what are and what are not water bodies regulated by the federal government, but it fails to do that,” said NPPC President Dr. Howard Hill,

a pork producer from Cambridge, Iowa.

“While pork producers appreciate the efforts of EPA and the Corps of Engineers to define their jurisdiction, the proposed rule will create many more problems than it theoretically will solve.”

Under the proposed rule, tributaries, impoundments of tributaries, wetlands and wet areas “adjacent” to those waters are without exception defined as WOTUS; ditches, with two exceptions, are considered tributaries and, therefore, categorically WOTUS, regardless of the quantity, duration or frequency of water flowing in them; and determinations on whether “other” waters are WOTUS would be made on a case-by-case basis.

According to analyses by agricultural organizations, including NPPC, and federal agencies, the rule would encompass millions of miles of streams and adjacent lands, subjecting any activity near or on them – including, for farmers, applying fertilizers and pesticides and (potentially) planting crops – to CWA permitting. The regulation also would expose farmers to citizen lawsuits, alleging, for example, that ditches on cropland should be regulated under the CWA.

“EPA and the Corps of Engineers should withdraw the WOTUS rule, work with agriculture to craft something that reflects real on-farm conditions and propose a new rule,” Hill said.

At least, said NPPC in its comments, after considering public comments and making any changes to the rule, the agencies should reissue the regulation prior to finalizing it.

Program offered on Effective Management of Farm Employees

By: Phil Durst, Michigan State University Extension

Employees on the farm either drive the operation forward or they hold it back. The difference is often in the way that farm owners and managers work with their employees. Michigan State University Extension Dairy Team has put together a meeting on Effective Management of Farm Employees to help farm owners and managers develop their skills and perspective for better management of employees.

That meeting will be offered January 27 & 28, 2015 at the Doubletree Hotel, Bay City and January 29 & 30 at the Hilton Hotel, Grand Rapids Airport. This interactive meeting with specialists from industry and MSU is designed to provide farm owners and managers a solid basis for building their business with employees.

The meetings begin at 5:30 pm with dinner on day 1 in order to provide an early opportunity for developing a

peer network of like-minded people and to begin to share the issues you face and better understand how others handle them. Session 1, "Attracting Good Applicants in Today's Job Environment" is after dinner.

On day 2, there are three sessions starting with "Building Teamwork on the Farm" and then "Capitalizing on Your Employee's Desire to Learn". After lunch the program finishes with a session on "Achieving High Quality Performance".


Complete information and on-line registration is available at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/ManagingEmployees/>

The cost to attend is \$160 for the first participant from a farm and \$140 for each additional participant from the same farm. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged.

Speakers for this dynamic program include:

- Lori Culler, CEO of AgHires, an online job board and recruiting firm. She has over 13 years of talent management experience providing management consulting services in the ag industry.
- Phil Durst and Stan Moore, MSU Extension Sr. Educators who have led a project that involved 174 farm employee interviews from which recommendations have been developed to improve employee management.
- Felix Soriano, CEO of APN Consulting, a dairy consulting business where they believe that the large herd manager's success depends on getting things done through others, and therefore, works to help producers become excellent communicators and leaders of well-trained, talented, and skilled employees.
- Corey Risch, MSU Assistant Professor whose experience includes working as a Farm Business Consultant for Clemson University, where she provided financial and management consulting services to farmers and agribusinesses in South Carolina.
- Matt Wood, Regional Sales Manager with Vita Plus Corporation. Wood has worked as a full time Dairy Specialist for Vita Plus in the thumb area for 10 years, consulting with dairy clients on their farm management and nutrition for that time period.

For more information or questions, contact Phil Durst at 989-387-5346 or durstp@msu.edu or Stan Moore at 231-533-8818 or moorest@msu.edu.

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2015 Green and White Swine Youth Education Fair and Open Market Hog Show

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This event for Youth will feature;

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2015 Michigan Pork and Poultry Symposium

Co-Sponsors: Michigan Pork Producers Association
and Michigan Allied Poultry Association

Thursday, February 19, 2015

The Lansing Center, Lansing, MI

This program will focus on enhancing food safety, retaining quality employees, and gaining better recognition by consumers. Although a bit varied, these topics come together as we think about a sustainable quality and quantity of pork and poultry food products. The pork and poultry farmers of Michigan take great pride in producing food. The afternoon breakout sessions will focus on new research findings from MSU and how it may lead to change on the farm.

Registration form located on page 12.

2015 Michigan Pork Producers Association State Informational Meetings

This program is presented at four different locations across Michigan in late March. This year, it is tentatively proposed that topics will address important aspects of worker safety. Watch for further details regarding topics, locations and dates in the Michigan Pork magazine, and on-line at www.mipork.org,



NPB Funds New Swine Health Information Center

Entity to Focus on Preparing for Future Disease Threats

At its regularly scheduled November meeting, the National Pork Board's (NPB) board of directors approved the funding of a national Swine Health Information Center. The new, autonomous venture will focus its efforts on implementing industry preparedness for disease challenges that could affect U.S. swine herds.

According to Dr. Paul Sundberg, vice president of science and technology at the NPB, a \$15 million investment by the Pork Checkoff would fund the center for five years. The center would be governed by a board consisting of representatives from NPB, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), the American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV) and at-large pork producers.

"It's our intention to establish a center that can improve our preparedness for swine diseases with the combined resources of swine veterinarians, producers, researchers, diagnosticians and state and federal animal health officials," Sundberg said.

"We have learned a lot over the past



year and a half from our experience with PED virus and we want to create a unique, collaborative system that will help us achieve our overall goal of preparing for the next emerging swine disease."


Sundberg says the proposed new center would work toward recognizing and filling the resource and knowledge gaps that currently exist in swine disease diagnostics as they relate to


emerging diseases. Also, the new center would work with the Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases at Texas A&M University to help facilitate swine health data analysis.

"Although this is a one-time allocation of supplemental funds outside of our regular budget, we realize that this is an investment in the future of the U.S. pork industry," said Dale Norton, NPB president and producer from Bronson, Mich.


"In the coming months, we will reach out to producers, gather their input and design a center that best meets their needs."

Sundberg emphasized that the Swine Health Information Center would not be specifically responsible for a disease response plan nor would it duplicate current AASV, NPPC or National Pork Board efforts. The USDA will continue to oversee and manage classical foreign animal diseases, such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease, that already have a preparedness plan in place.


More information on the new center will be announced at the annual National Pork Industry Forum, which will be held March 5-7, 2015, in San Antonio, Texas. 



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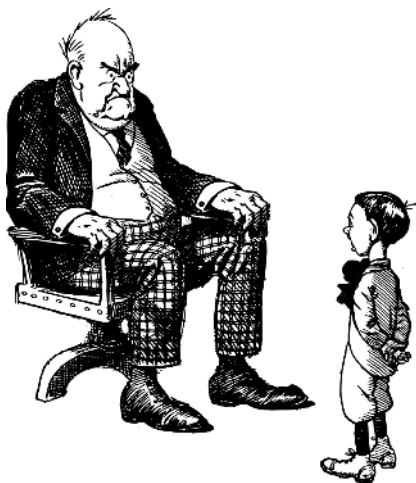
Zeeland, Michigan
Ben: 616.291.3697 Tom: 616.304.5832



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The brand identity of "Pork" has certainly changed over the years! Each brand idea was conceived to elevate the position of pork and help consumers see it as the meat of choice. Currently the Pork Be Inspired® campaign encourages consumers to get creative and use pork more often.

The campaign uses eye-catching photography and recipes to engage with consumers who enjoy cooking and already use pork products.



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Pork Checkoff

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

Pork Checkoff Celebrates Hispanic Traditions with Celebrity Chef Lorena Garcia

The flavor and versatility of pork makes it a favorite staple among Hispanic homes. To celebrate the love Latinos have for pork, the Pork Checkoff has launched a Hispanic marketing campaign that includes a partnership with celebrity chef Lorena Garcia.

Garcia, one of the country's most popular Latina chefs, has a passion for creating juicy and delicious recipes in the kitchen. She also enjoys creating pork-inspired recipes with a unique Latin touch.

"I am thrilled to share my culture and love of pork through these new recipes that families may enjoy in everyday meals," said Garcia, who is well known for numerous TV series such as *Top Chef Masters*.

"I believe in keeping it simple but interesting."

Through this new collaboration, the Pork Checkoff is launching *Sabrosos Momentos Con Chef Lorena Garcia* (Flavor-Filled Moments with Chef Lorena Garcia). The first of the two-part multi-media series will feature three delicious pork-inspired video recipes and educational videos that showcase three popular pork cuts: tenderloin, ribs and shoulder. The recipes will be "Pulled Pork Scramble," "Pork

Tenderloin Sautéed" and "Pork-Back Ribs with Mango and Chile de Arbol."

"The main inspiration for my cooking is to bring loved ones together to enjoy wonderful food," Garcia said.

"It is something that has always fulfilled me."

The Pork Checkoff also has launched PorkTeInspira.com, a new Spanish-language website with corresponding social media channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. PorkTeInspira.com, a resource of information and culinary experiences with pork, will engage consumers with recipes, nutritional content, choice pork cuts, health and pork safety content and cooking tips.

"We are delighted to engage the Latino community in the United States with Chef Garcia and PorkTeInspira.com," said Jose de Jesus, director of multicultural marketing for the Pork Checkoff.

"Pork has been part of our Latin culture for generations, and we want these new recipes by Chef Garcia to inspire creativity and offer new and healthy ideas to prepare our favorite pork dishes."

Exports Add More Value to U.S. Pork

The record pace of U.S. pork exports continues to accelerate and put more money in producers' pockets, despite intense global competition and other market challenges.

"We can be proud of what we've accomplished with exports," said Brian Zimmerman, a pork producer from Beatrice, Neb., who chairs the Pork Checkoff's International Trade Committee. "Through the first eight months of 2014, exports made up 28 percent of U.S. pork and pork variety

meat production, and the value of exports amounted to \$65.29 per hog."

The numbers reflect an upward trend from 2013, when exports comprised 26 percent of U.S. pork production, and the value of exports equated to \$53.95 per head.

Exports to leading markets, such as Mexico, Japan and South Korea, continue to increase. Also, for the first eight months of the year, the U.S. pork export volume was up 6 percent at 1.48 million metric tons, while the value increased 15 percent to \$4.53 billion, compared with the same time period in 2013.

"The industry did not expect the volume and value to be up at this point in the year with such high pork prices," said Becca Hendricks, vice president of international marketing for the Pork Checkoff.

"U.S. pork is still very competitive globally, however, and our customers can rely on a consistent supply of high-quality pork."

Chilled Pork Captures More Market Share

Market access issues have influenced U.S. pork exports in 2014. In particular, the Russian closure of major markets caused significant global trade shifts.

"While export volumes from the United States to Russia were not substantial, the impact has been seen as competitors, such as the European Union (EU) and Canada, had to find customers for product that they had been shipping to Russia," Hendricks noted.

When Russia suspended imports of EU pork in January due to African swine fever, a large increase in European pork entered Asian markets at very low prices. This has driven even more intense global competi-

tion in regions such as Asia and Latin America – both key markets for U.S. pork. Still, the United States is gaining an advantage with its chilled pork exports, which have increased in many markets.

“Chilled products bring more value than frozen products,” Zimmerman said.

“Plus, when customers buy chilled product, they typically buy on a consistent, 52-week basis rather than a spotty basis.”

Lofty Goals Build Momentum

In early November, the NPB’s International Trade Committee joined other U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) members in Arlington, Va., for the USMEF Strategic Planning Conference. Producers heard from exporters and USMEF staff around the globe regarding market issues, opportunities and export priorities.

NPB’s newly adopted strategic plan has set a goal of increasing U.S. pork exports by an average of 9 percent in volume and value annually by 2020.

“It’s a lofty goal, but we’re working toward it by focusing on variety meats, new products and promotions to create loyalty,” Zimmerman said.

“We want to keep this export momentum going.”

USDA Announces Change in Payments for SECD Testing to Underscore the Importance of Premises ID Numbers

The Veterinary Services program of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is providing

updated information on an upcoming deadline associated with the Premises Identification Number, or PIN, and its use in the Swine Enteric Coronavirus Diseases (SECD) program. PINs are required to accompany diagnostic samples submitted into the SECD program supporting efforts to reduce both the prevalence and adverse effects of emerging enteric coronaviruses.

PINs have clear benefits in tracking emerging diseases like PED when they are diagnosed on the farm. In fact, federal and state authorities have already seen significant improvement in the percentage of samples that are submitted with a valid PIN – growing from 10 percent in June to more than 75 percent today. This saves time and resources across the entire pork industry as USDA continues to monitor for cases of SECD.

That is why beginning Dec. 15, the USDA will only pay for testing the sample types if the submissions include a valid PIN. If a sample is submitted without a valid PIN, laboratories will charge for testing. A detailed list of sample tests to be paid by USDA was previously sent to producers this past June. (see below)

The Pork Checkoff has been communicating the benefits of valid PINs and wants to reinforce the upcoming requirement that all submissions be accompanied by a valid PIN. The Federal Order also requires the date of sample collection and the type of unit being sampled (sow, nursery, finisher) at the time of sample submission. This data is critical for monitoring the potential increase in SECD cases through the coming winter months.

June 15, 2014, message from USDA:

USDA will pay for diagnostic testing to support the initial diagnosis of PED virus and PDCoV in swine herds

and to support the monitoring and management plans of herds meeting the USDA’s case definition, regardless of the test result (positive and negative results). Samples submitted to NAHLN laboratories from farm sites or export quarantine facilities located in the United States for PED virus and PDCoV testing will be paid for by the USDA through blanket purchase agreements with the NAHLN laboratories. These samples may include individual animal samples or environmental samples which are linked to specific farm sites and live pigs. Currently the USDA will only support diagnostic testing using PCR. Support for other diagnostic assays will be considered in the future.

Approved sample types submitted for PED virus and PDCoV PCR testing eligible for reimbursement include: Intestines, Feces, Fecal Swabs, Oral Fluids, and Environmental Samples (specifically associated with a farm site and live pigs).

Samples submitted from truck washes, trucks, trailers, other transport vehicles, feed, feed mills, and other non-farm site samples including those submitted for research purposes will not be paid for by the USDA. Please contact your NAHLN Laboratory for more information on what PED virus and PDCoV diagnostic assays are reimbursable by the USDA as well as for submission procedures for PED virus and/or PDCoV PCR testing. The local Veterinary Services district offices and NAHLN program office (NAHLN@aphis.usda.gov) are also able to answer specific questions.

Farmers on Social Media... why do you think it's important?

Social media is a huge part of our culture, #hashtags reside on nightly newscasts and Facebook icons show up in commercials. For this reason, among others, many would agree that it is important for associations and businesses to have a social media presence. So if farmers and their interests are already represented online through those entities, what is the purpose of having individual farmers online and interacting with consumers? I asked a group of farmers, who are active on social media, to tell me why they prioritize social media.

- Megan Sprague, sprague@mipork.org

"We view social media as one tool in our risk management toolbox. If we want to continue farming like we farm, where we farm, we have to have a local community that trusts us. When a crisis hits it is too late to create a community."

- **Emily Zweber**, Minnesota,
zweberfarms.com,
dairy farmer with direct to consumer meat
and egg sales.

"My motivation comes from talking to people in my life/career off the farm who have no farm background. They're not too concerned with what they're eating but they're also fairly clueless (through no fault of their own) about ag and ag issues. That's dangerous when at some point a vocal minority is proposing and pushing legislation that does affect my bottom line or my ability to operate the way I feel is best. Knowledge is power. Bruce Vincent, advocate, pointed out people make the right choice based on the info they have. When a choice is presented we need them to know our side too."

- **Jennifer Heim**, Kansas,
heimdairy.wordpress.com,
dairy farmer

"I know that despite my efforts or the efforts of the antis, people still have to eat. I know that many people will watch an undercover video and they will rant online about never buying dairy again and the next day will buy some cream cheese for their bagel. So I could say that what I do doesn't matter but this is why I do it...Americans have been able to trust farmers for a very long time. I want to keep their trust. I want my neighbors to walk into the grocery store and feel good about the products that I helped to put on the shelves. My efforts aren't about my bottom line. My efforts are about preserving the trust people have in me and my peers. My efforts aren't measurable with dollars and cents, instead they are measured by happy customers."

- **Carrie Chestnut Mess**, Wisconsin,
dairycarrie.com, dairy farmer.

"I keep coming back to people don't want to know until they do - then they want the info RIGHT NOW!

That means if it's not up and out there they are not going to wait for any of us to do a blog about it, they're not going to ask questions and aren't going to track down where we are, especially if what they want to know is in passing."

- **Jan Hoadley**, Alabama, *slowmoneyfarm.com, rabbits and poultry direct to consumer.*

"Small vocal minorities can make a big difference if no one is reinforcing the majority, especially when it comes to legislation. If

we're not embracing new ways to interact with our consumer base, someone else will step into that void, and we have no way of knowing what information they'll use to fill that void. There might not be a bottom line problem now, but businesses and industry groups need to look beyond the here and now and see what current trends mean for future viability."

- **Zach Hunnicutt**, Wisconsin, *@zjhunn, corn, popcorn and soybeans.*

#connect

Thank you to everyone who responded to our recent MPPA Communication Survey. We appreciate your input and look forward to incorporating your suggestions into future communications.

A good representation of the industry responded to tell us that our readers:

- Would like to see more farmer features.**
- Enjoy communication that is delivered via mail.**
- Would like to keep the number of issues the same.**
- Would like to see a calendar of events incorporated.**
- And many other insightful comments!**

Pat Albright, Dennis Wooden and E. Wayne Miller DVM were randomly chosen out of our survey respondents to receive a \$100 Cash Card.

Thank you!

MPPA COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY

Michigan Pork Producers Association would like to know what you think about how we communicate with you!

This survey will take about ten minutes to fill out and a summary of the results will be published in an upcoming issue of Michigan Pork.

Find the survey online at: <http://bit.ly/mppasurvey>

RETURN A SURVEY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$100 VISA CASH CARD!

By returning this survey either by mail or online you can enter our drawing for one of three \$100 Visa cards. Inside the brochure, write your name and email or phone number on the line provided in order to be entered.

Please re-fold brochure, tape the long edge and return via mail.

Have A Very Merry Christmas!

-Sam, Mary and Megan



SWEET SOUTHERN SLOW-COOKER HAM

- 1 BONE-IN FULLY-COOKED HAM, ABOUT 5 1/2 POUNDS
- 1 CUP APPLE CIDER
- 1/2 CUP DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 1/3 CUP KENTUCKY BOURBON*
- 1/4 CUP HONEY
- 1/4 CUP DIJON-STYLE MUSTARD
- 4 SPRIGS FRESH THYME

Place the ham in a large slow cooker. Whisk the cider with the brown sugar, bourbon, honey and mustard. Slowly pour over the ham. Scatter the thyme sprigs into the slow cooker.

Cook, on HIGH for 4 hours or on LOW for 8 hours, or until very tender. Remove ham to rest on a cutting board. Pass the remaining cooking liquid through a fine mesh sieve into a saucepan. Simmer for 10 minutes or until slightly reduced. Cut the ham into chunks or slices. Brush the cut pieces with the cooking liquid before arranging on a platter. Serve warm or room temperature.
Serves 12

*For a non-alcoholic alternative: replace the bourbon with 1/4 cup water and 1 tablespoon vanilla extract.



Great Lakes Crop Summit

January 28 - 29, 2015

Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort
Mt. Pleasant, MI

Bring your employees and farm partners to get the most out of the trade show and more than 30 concurrent educational sessions on corn, soybean and wheat issues!

Featured Speakers:

Agronomist Ken Ferrie

Evelyn Browning-Garriss,
The Weather Whisperer

Dr. Mike Boehlje,
Purdue University

Industry representatives and university researchers from seven Midwestern states

Certifications:

Attendees can earn the following credits:

12 RUP recertification credits (6 each day)

13.5 CCA credits for full attendance
(NM 2.5, SW 4, PM 2, CM 3, PD 2)

1 MAEAP credit

Those needing to recertify by exam will have the opportunity to take the RUP test on Thursday, January 29.

Registration and a full schedule are available online at

www.GreatLakesCropSummit.com

or call the Michigan Corn office at (517) 668-2676 for more info.



We are Listening

Dear MPPA:

We, at the Michigan 4-H Foundation, want to again express our great thanks for your support of the 2014 State 4-H Youth Recognition Program! Your gift made it possible for 4-H youth from across the state to participate as delegates competing for state honors in the Swine Science State 4-H Award category, and to be recognized at the very special state awards celebration that took place Thursday, June 19, 2014 at Spartan Stadium at Michigan State University.

Abbey Miller

Michigan 4-H Foundation
East Lansing, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

We would like to thank you for donating to the Taste of Michigan that served over 300 guests. Events like this would not be possible without business like yours! Thank you!

Shiawassee County Farm Bureau
Shiawassee, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

Thank you, for donating the Picnic Basket to the 2014 AutumnFest. We truly appreciate your support of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) Alumni Association scholarship and student club grant programs.

Kathryn Reed

CANR
East Lansing, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

On behalf of the Quality of Life (QOL) Scholarship Golf Outing planning team, thank you for your

generous support of this year's outing. The sponsorships, donations and prizes we receive enable us to raise money to benefit the QOL Scholarship Fund. Scholarships are awarded to employees or children of the Michigan departments of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), Environmental Quality, and Natural Resources. This year we were able to donate over \$5,800 to the fund!

Jeanne Hausler

MDARD
Lansing, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

I want to extend my deepest appreciation for your generosity at the 2014 Spartan Livestock Open. It was once again a successful day for all involved and a wonderful time for livestock friends to cordially reminisce. I look forward to future conversations as well as keeping the Michigan livestock community abreast of the development of the programs and students involved.

Adam J. Conover

MSU Department of Animal Science

Dear MPPA:

Thank you for donating items to include in kids goody-bags at our Agricultural Literacy day. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Abby Wietzke

Olivet FFA
Olivet, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

I wish to thank everyone at MPPA for generously awarding me with the MPPA Scholarship Award. Folks like you have helped make it possible for me to have completed my sophomore year at MSU. I always wanted to attend MSU and I have enjoyed

every minute of it. Once again, thank you so much for helping me further my education, develop my personal and professional self, develop great friendships and make memories that will last a lifetime.

Bryant Chapman

South Rockwood, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

We wanted to send an extra Thank You to you for the use and donation of all your goodies for a booth at our farm celebration! It meant the world to us that you participated! I truly believe everyone who attended the event left with a better understanding of Northern Michigan agriculture and that is hugely in thanks to your involvement!

Keegan Shooks

Shooks Farms
Central Lake, Mich.

Dear MPPA:

Thank you for the refreshing article, "We Need to Start Focusing on Pork Quality Again." My husband has been saying the same thing for the last 20 years! My comments, on how dry and tough pork chops from our own pigs were, would elicit his response that it was the lean hogs and not my cooking that was responsible for the "cardboard" chops. We found pork steaks much more succulent and tender because of the fat and marbling in them!

Thank you again for your article and your honesty - a breath of fresh air!

Candy Schmiedicke

Michigan 4-H State Awards – Swine Science

The 2014 Michigan 4-H State Awards Recognition Program was held on Thursday, June 19 at the Huntington Club in Spartan Stadium on the campus of Michigan State University. Youth from across the state competed for the title of State Award winner, the highest honor bestowed on Michigan 4-H youth, in 19 project award categories.

Chase Wehner of Menominee County was the 2014 4-H State Swine Science Award winner in the senior division. Chase is a 17 year old student at Stephenson High School and a member of the Varsity basketball and golf teams. He began his 4-H career showing a lamb and his pony. His projects have grown and expanded to him showing sheep, horses, pigs, steers, goats, chickens and rabbits. His main project is raising market hogs and breeding swine for show. He has learned many practical skills, leadership skills and gained a lot of self-confidence along the way.


Madalin Roberts of Oakland County was the 2014 4-H State Swine Science Award winner in the junior division. Madalin is 14 years old and participated in the Oakland County 4-H camp. She has been involved with many projects in 4-H including swine,



Pictured left to right, Chase Wehner, senior division winner; Megan Sprague, MPPA Program Director; and Madalin Roberts, junior division winner.

rabbits, poultry, calves, photography cooking and more. She is currently the secretary of the Oakland County Livestock Club. Her family raises Berkshire and Crossbred showpigs and competes with them on the county, state and national level.

4-H programs offer youth the opportunity to engage in rich learning experiences that result in life-skill development, content knowledge, lifelong friendships and connections

with other youth, adults and industry professionals that help them grown and succeed. To learn more about Michigan 4-H Youth Development, contact your local MSU Extension office or visit <http://www.4h.msue.msu.edu>. To see the recording of the recognition program and to view a presentation of all the 2014 state 4-H Award delegates, visit http://4h.msue.msu.edu/awards_scholarships/4-h_recognition_program. 

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Productive maternal females are the foundation to our program. Our high health, closed herd of 1,100 pure Landrace sows crossed on 100% Swedish large white boars, produces maternal females to be utilized as parent or grandparent lines.



Swine Systems' Swedish genetic lines originate from a program that has been evaluating genetics for efficient, lean quality production for over 70 years.

Swine Systems' program allows producers to purchase boars or gilts for their own production. Retailers or consumers can also purchase processed meat from our program.



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