

# MICHIGAN PORK

The source for information affecting Michigan's Pork Producers

4801 WILLOUGHBY ROAD, SUITE 5, HOLT, MICHIGAN 48842

2010, VOL. 35, NO. 1

## Highlights from Michigan Pork Expo ~Award winners, Pork Symposium, Taste of Elegance~



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# Michigan Pork Producers Recognize Award Recipients

Members of the Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA) honored their best leaders, producers and workers during their annual award luncheon, held in conjunction with the Professional Pork Producers Symposium, Feb. 11 at the Lansing Center.

"It's a privilege to work with such dedicated professionals," said Dennis DeYoung, MPPA president. "We appreciate this opportunity to thank them for their skill, leadership and commitment to the industry."

Dave Cheney, Mason, received the coveted Master Pork Producer Award for his long-time dedication and service to the industry. Cheney, a member of the MPPA board for 12 years, was heralded by DeYoung for his knowledge and ability to be "even keeled," even when the industry faced stressful challenges.

"Dave always knows how to relate to different people," DeYoung said. "He's very good at talking to legislators and explaining important issues."

While accepting the award, Cheney announced that his farm will soon be

dedicated solely to crop production and will no longer be involved in pork production.

"This was not an easy decision to make—primarily because of the people in this room," he said. "I learned a long time ago that being a member of this board is less about what you have to give, and more about what you learn from each other and take home with you."

Mary Kelpinski, veteran MPPA employee and current executive director, was presented with the Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor given by the association. Sam Hines, MPPA Executive Vice President, took the opportunity to thank Mary for her years of support and service.

"I hired Mary after an interview 21 years ago on New Year's Day, and it was one of the smartest things I ever did," he told the crowd. "She is committed to helping the pork producers throughout this state and she is very passionate about what she does. This is a richly deserved honor."

Jamie Barga, Vicksburg, was

named Swine Herd Manager of the Year. Barga has worked for H&H Feeds for nearly a decade, and is now in charge of readying the farm's gilts for farrowing.

"Jamie has overcome a lot of challenges while working for us," said Ryan Hunter, H&H co-owner and part of the team that nominated Barga. "He works hard and has really become a great asset to the company. Plus, he's a great addition to the company softball team."

Ron Giacobassi, Litchfield, took home MPPA's Grower Award for his superior knowledge, skill and commitment to the industry. Keith Blonde and Brad Blonde, also of Litchfield, nominated Giacobassi. Giacobassi began growing hogs for the Blondes after working for the father-son duo for nearly four years.

"Ron just doesn't understand the clock," Keith Blonde joked. "We have never had a more dedicated employee, so when he became interested in becoming a grower 10 years ago, we were thrilled."



*Left: Master Pork Producer Award recipient Dave Cheney pictured with his wife Laura, daughter Rita, and son Hayden.*

*Above: Distinguished Service Award recipient Mary Kelpinski pictured with her husband Joe and sons Andrew and Joshua.*



Giacobassi said the honor came as a surprise, and he credited Blondes for their guidance and helping prepare him for the challenges of raising hogs.

“They gave me the proper tools to continue in the production side of the business,” he said. “It’s a pleasure to work with them on a daily basis and all year long.”



*Left: Jamie Barga, right, received the MPPA Employee of the Year award from his employer Ryan Hunter, H & H Feed.*

*Above: Ron Giacobassi, right, received the MPPA Contract Grower Award from MPPA President Dennis DeYoung during the annual awards luncheon..*

## Pork producers look for ways to embrace change, maintain control

A variety of issues were addressed when pork producers gathered at the Lansing Center on Feb. 11 for their annual symposium. But, a common theme emerged: change is imminent and embracing it now will help producers maintain control of their destiny.

John Shelle, associate chair of the Department of Animal Science at Michigan State University (MSU), kicked off the day by pointing out that the world’s population is predicted to top 9 billion by 2050.

“We still have to feed that population, and that’s going to be a challenge for agriculture,” Shelle said, adding that animals contribute 53 percent of all food consumed in the United States, including 76 percent of the protein and 81 percent of the calcium. “There is going to be a real need for an increase in animal production on a worldwide basis.”

Shelle said he and his colleagues at universities throughout the country are charged with ensuring good, science-based information is available to support any changes in animal agriculture.

“We need to do a better job of making people aware of the science behind animal agriculture and human nutrition so decisions aren’t made on emotion,” he said.

Wendy Powers, director of environmental stewardship for animal agriculture at MSU, echoed Shelle’s thoughts on population growth, adding that Africa is far outpacing the rest of the world.

“About 35 percent of Africa’s population is undernourished,” she said. “Russia and southeast Asia produce about the same number of calories that they consume, but Africa is well below that. Here in the U.S., we produce about twice as many calories as

we consume.”

That, Powers said, could lead to opportunities for American farmers to feed hungry people in other parts of the world, but the challenge is to do so while paying attention to consumer demands.

“Consumers are making decisions about green lifestyles and are factoring in what they believe to be the truth about situations,” she explained. “How do we position ourselves to meet food demands in the face of societal concerns?”

Powers said housing options like vertical farming—building multi-story facilities that allow more animals to be raised on less land—might be one option. “More important,” she said, farmers need to diversify their operations to think of bigger, global issues beyond food production. “

*(continued on page 7)*



## Chefs compete to create best original pork entrée



*Chef Ramirez explains his entrée "International Pork Trio" to judge Noah Smith, Capital Services, during the Michigan Taste of Elegance competition held February 11, 2010.*

The average person walking in to a kitchen considers themselves a cook. Ian Ramirez considers himself an artist. That artistry helped him win \$1,000 and the title *Superior Chef* during the Michigan Pork Producers Association's (MPPA) 2010 Taste of Elegance. The annual competition, now in its 20th year, challenges chefs from throughout Michigan to create an original pork entrée that can be served in restaurants or cooked at home. MPPA partnered with Cargill, featur-

ing Sysco Corporation's premium White Marble Farms in providing pork for the competition.

Ramirez is the head chef at Brandywine Creek Whirlpool Performance Centre, an executive training facility tucked aside the Lake Michigan dunes near Covert. When he put his talents to the test on Feb. 11 at the Lansing Center, the judges called the unusual combination that made up his International Pork Trio, "a delicious treat of ingenuity."

"I like playing around with cheaper cuts of meat," Ramirez said. "The cheek, ear and shank are all great cuts that are underrated, and that's exactly why I wanted to promote them. They take a lot of time to cook, and most people aren't willing to put that kind of energy into it."

Ramirez's trio also won the *People's Choice Award*. It consisted of a French-style pork cheek confit with a fried pig's ear bird's nest; a Moroccan-inspired pork shank tajine with ras al hanout couscous; and an Asian-themed wasabi ponzu tempura battered pork rib with Asian vegetable slaw. All three were prepared for the first time during the competition.

"I entered the contest a long time ago, but I wasn't sure what I was going to make," said Ramirez, who is a second-year participant. "I came up with the idea three days before the competition, and tried it for the first time that evening. I was really confident in it and knew that it would work."

Scott Blackerby from Mission Point Restaurant on Mackinac Island was awarded *Chef Par Excellence* for his entrée North African Spiced White Marble Farms Pork Loin. David Darniot from The International Culinary School in Novi took home the title of Premium Chef with his Progressive



(continued from page 5)

### Tasting of Suckling Pig.

Ramirez will go on to compete against chefs from throughout the country for a \$5,000 grand prize and an all-expense-paid three-day cruise at the national Taste of Elegance, hosted by the National Pork Board, in Baltimore, Md., in June.

According to Mary Kelpinski, MPPA executive director, the program was created to encourage pork menuing in a creative and non-traditional manner. Chefs presented their entrees to a panel of four judges, who are looking for taste, appearance and originality.

"Pork is a versatile meat with many different applications," she said. "But it is often under-represented on restaurant and catering menus. This competition gives Michigan pork producers an opportunity get their product in front of more chefs and help them realize its potential."

Other chefs who created original dishes for the evening were:

- Jeffery Langer from The Lansing Center in Lansing, with his Southern Pride of Fried Swine
- Ted Cizma from the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme with Slow Cooked White Marble Farms Karubi Pork Rib with Root Beer Glaze
- Cheyenne Galbraith from Lake Michigan College Mendel

### Center in Benton Harbor with Pork Vindaloo

- Matthew Bedra from Whole Foods Market in Troy with Pan-roasted Pork Tenderloin with Celeriac-Potato Gratin
- Mark Hobert from Extendicare Health and Rehabilitation Center in Taylor with Mardi Gras Pork Delight
- Eric Batten from The Gallery at Snyder Phillips, a residence hall at Michigan State University in East Lansing, with his Three Way Pork Chimichanga
- Robin Holmes from Pacinos Food and Spirits in Escanada with Carnita Tapas Trio
- Geoffrey Jones from the Great Lakes Culinary Institute, part of Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City, with Swine-apple Cheesecake Salad
- Jake Robinson from the Pacific Rim in Ann Arbor with Pork San Sara
- Scott Swamba with SMS Catering in Howell with Asian-influenced Taste of Pork
- Matt Wilson from The State Room at the Michigan State University Kellogg Center in East Lansing with Pork Sirloin Roast Stuffed with Pork Sausage 

"We need to improve our efficiencies in energy, water use and production," Powers said. "I envision that someone who goes by an animal feeding operation thinks 'I not only get my food there, but some of my energy, some of my green space and spend some of my leisure time here'."

Peter Brooks, professor emeritus of animal production from Devon in the United Kingdom, told producers that they will be challenged to make changes in their operations based on changes already implemented in Europe—some of which are based on the emotional needs of consumers.

"Confinement housing has become unacceptable to many consumers," Brooks said. "It's not something we have to like, or even understand. But it is a reality."

Brooks explained that gestation stalls—also known as gestation crates—have already been banned in Great Britain, Sweden and Finland. They will be banned in New Zealand and some parts of the United States in 2012 and throughout the European Union in 2013. He also anticipates that more meat packers and retailers will refuse to purchase pork products from farms that use confinement housing.

Legislation passed in Michigan last fall requires pork producers to phase out gestation stalls over the next 10 years.

"The future is group housing, and has been for some years," Brooks said. "You won't have the excuse that 'we can't do it' because people will point to Europe and say 'well, they do it'."

Brooks was quick to point out that group housing on hog farms "doesn't automatically imply good welfare."

He said sows' stereotypical aggressive behavior was originally attributed

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By: Dennis DeYoung  
MPPA President

*“Research tells us that consumers basically trust farmers to a high degree, but expect some proof.”*

## “Trust But Verify”

The months of February and March were quite busy for your MPPA Board of Directors. They were filled with many meetings, lots of challenges, and also some opportunities. Throughout this edition of the magazine you will be able to read about the details of many of these activities. However, I would like to summarize a few of my thoughts in this article.

Pork production's public image is a common topic these days. In fact, almost anytime you get a group of hog farmers together lately this subject comes up. Do you remember when our former president Ronald Reagan coined the phrase “trust but verify,” concerning our dealings with other nations? Basically, he meant that we wanted to believe what other countries were saying regarding strategic arms treaties and other issues but, just to keep everyone honest, we needed to confirm that what they said was accurate. I believe this is where we as pork producers find ourselves now. Research tells us that consumers basically trust farmers to a high degree, but expect some proof. Isn't that what we also expect when we make an important purchase?

Those who have been around agriculture for a while can remember when we didn't need to prove anything except our income. Unfortunately, those days are gone. I don't like the fact they are gone anymore than anyone but, whether we like it or not, when faced with today's realities, we need to do what today's challenges require. The Pork Board and National Pork Producers Council have developed programs such as We Care, Pork Quality Assurance Plus, Operation Main Street, and the Leader programs

to address this need. Are they the silver bullet that will solve all our problems? Probably not, however, they are a start and we can no longer afford to sit idly by and do nothing while our antagonists are actively criticizing and defining us in the minds of the public.

With modern agricultural practices being questioned by some, one of the speakers at NPPC's recent Legislative Action Conference posed an interesting question. He quoted statistics indicating that the world's population is expected to double in 50 years and that 70 percent of the increased nutritional needs will have to come through technology-driven production improvements since the ability to increase the land base is limited. The question he posed, that hasn't been raised much in the debate and certainly hasn't been raised by the activists and elitists who oppose modern agriculture and the full use of improvements in technology to feed a growing world population, was, if we have the ability to meet this need by using improvements in technology available to modern agriculture, is it morally acceptable not to use it? To me, this makes sense and is the basis for good stewardship. I believe the speaker certainly raised a valid point and, as I mentioned earlier, one that hasn't been discussed much up to this point. I believe there is a moral and ethical consideration to this controversy and it is probably long past due that this question be raised. Often the case is made that without using modern technology, food costs would be higher. However, the larger issue

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

*“Actually, I don’t believe I could ever become cynical about pork production or agriculture. . .”*

## I’m not cynical, just frustrated

I have stated numerous times in this column in recent years that I am trying very hard not to become cynical when faced with the constant barrage of attacks that pork production and all of modern agriculture seem to be bombarded these days. In the near term, it appears these attacks aren’t going to subside, so to ensure that I don’t become cynical, I have decided not to use that word anymore. In all seriousness, it probably didn’t represent a very good interpretation of my feelings anyway. “Frustration” is, in all probability, a more accurate portrayal, so from now on I have decided to use that word instead.

Actually, I don’t believe I could ever become cynical about pork production or agriculture, but there seems to be plenty to be “frustrated” about these days. Everyday there seems to be a new frustration surface and March 16 certainly bore that out when I received an email late that afternoon from one of the national organizations to which we belong asking whether I knew anything about the Governor’s proclamation declaring March 20 as “Michigan Meat-Out Day.” I confirmed that I did not and thought it probably was a false rumor, or at least I hoped that it was. Unfortunately, it was not. I don’t know what the Governor’s thought process was in issuing the proclamation. I later learned that neither the Director of Agriculture nor the Governor’s Agriculture Policy Advisor knew about the proclamation before it was issued and that was even more puzzling to me. One would think that if you were going to issue a proclamation of this type you would at least consult those two individuals. Some have suggested that, since the Governor’s Office receives many requests to

issue proclamations from a multitude of different groups, an overzealous staffer simply put the proclamation before the Governor and she signed it without much forethought. For several years, groups such as Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM) that promote a vegan lifestyle have pressed governors; some would say duped governors, to proclaim a meat-out day in conjunction with National Agriculture Day. Regardless of how it happened, the Governor’s action probably did more to promote meat than discourage consumption as the article about Meat-Out Day on page 10 in this issue explains.

Of greater concern is the proliferation of attacks that America’s food production system is under today. As I mentioned earlier, literally every day something disconcerting is brought to our attention. Many of us, in fact I think I can say that all of Michigan agriculture, were dismayed, or should I say “frustrated,” to learn recently that the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources was sponsoring an appearance on campus of Michael Pollan, author of *Omnivore’s Dilemma* and an avowed critic of modern agriculture and the animal production segment of the food system. It was also disturbing, “ah frustrating,” to learn that HSUS had successfully infiltrated a national 4-H conference and distributed pamphlets to the young people attending. The pamphlets pointed out how they could organize HSUS youth organizations in their schools and encourage their peers to pursue a vegan lifestyle. It would seem that someone in the 4-H

*(continued on page 15)*

# MPPA Shocked by Governor's Meat-Out Day Proclamation

Following Governor Granholm issuing a proclamation on March 16 declaring March 20, which also happens to be National Agriculture Day, as a "meat-out" day, Michigan Pork Producers Association issued the following statement:

"Michigan Pork Producers Association was shocked and dismayed with Governor Granholm's decision to proclaim March 20th as 'Michigan Meat-out Day.' The pork industry is a vital part of Michigan's agricultural economy contributing more than \$500 million annually in economic activity. But, more importantly, Michigan's pork producers are concerned about the confusing signal the proclamation sent to consumers. Most health professionals agree that nutrient-dense meat products, including pork, can be part of a healthy diet along with a proper balance of fruits and vegetables. Producers have worked very hard to improve the quality of pork products and were extremely disappointed that the Governor would issue a proclamation lacking scientific validity that disparaged products from Michigan's livestock sector. Michigan Pork Producers Association is committed to redoubling its efforts to inform consumers about the vital role pork plays in a healthy diet."

The outcry from all segments of Michigan agriculture and the brouhaha created by the Governor's proclamation forced the administration to make

an attempt at damage control by issuing a second proclamation on March 17 declaring March 20 as "Michigan Agriculture Day." Although she did not rescind the original proclamation or apologize for issuing it, her second proclamation stated:

*"Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today (has) issued a proclamation declaring Saturday, March 20, Michigan Agriculture Day, which coincides with National Agriculture Day, observed on the first day of spring since 1973.*

*"Our state's agricultural diversity offers something for everyone," Granholm said. "From top-quality meat and vegetables to fine produce like apples, melons and blueberries, Michigan farmers produce wholesome, healthy food we all can enjoy."*

*Agriculture is the second largest component of Michigan's economy with an impact of over \$71.3 billion. Between 2006 and 2007, agriculture grew over five times faster than the state's general economy - 11.9 percent versus 2 percent - making it a key component of Michigan's economy now and into the future.*

*Michigan produces over 200 agricultural commodities, more than any other state except California. Michigan dairy products provide a \$5.1 billion impact on the state's economy,*

*placing the state ninth nationally in milk production. With an annual economic impact of \$394 million, Michigan cattle production ranks 30th in the nation. The Michigan poultry industry produces 2.7 billion eggs each year, adding up to an annual value of \$211.5 million. Michigan field crops like corn, dried beans, soybeans, sugar beets, hay and wheat contribute another \$1.3 billion to Michigan's economy each year.*

*"Whether Michiganians celebrate Michigan Agriculture Day with a cheeseburger made with Michigan beef and dairy or a soup made with Michigan beans, I hope people throughout the state take a moment to enjoy Michigan's agricultural bounty on Saturday," Granholm said.*

*Over one million Michiganians work in production agriculture, food processing, and other related businesses. Michigan's integrated network of family farmers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and consumers work to ensure a safe and nutritious food supply enjoyed by millions throughout the state."*

*"In the end, the Governor may have inadvertently done more to promote meat by her meat-out proclamation*

*(continued on page 11)*



# Pork Checkoff Challenges Eating Less Meat Article

When a cookbook author recently claimed that America's "collective hankering for meat has left us with some expensive problems," including human health issues and environmental degradation, the Pork Checkoff set the record straight.

"We want to make sure that people have correct information and understand that nutrient-rich pork can be an important part of a healthy diet," says Adria Sheil-Brown, a registered dietitian and manager of nutrition communications and research for the Pork Checkoff.

At issue is the article "Eating Less Meat: Signs of a Growing Trend" by Tara Mataraza Desmond, which appeared in the January 2010 edition of the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP)'s Frontburner e-newsletter. The author stated that "meat-heavy diets have been consistently linked to increased risk of cancer, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and osteoporosis." She also cited Mark Bittman's book "Food Matters," which claims that that global livestock production is responsible for "about one-fifth of all greenhouse gases-more than transportation."

In response to this feature, the Pork Checkoff reached out to Frontburner editors to share the most current, science-based information on pork and pork production with IACP, which boasts nearly 3,000 members from more than 32 countries.

"IACP is very influential in the food industry, so we were very pleased to get our letter published in the February Frontburner," says Sheil-Brown, who wrote that:

- The National Pork Board believes that the healthiest diets consist of a balance of fruits and vegetables as well as nutrient-dense red meat-a position consistent with the nutrition recommendations of many health organizations. Red meat provides many

under-consumed nutrients such as potassium, phosphorous and vitamin B12.


- Additionally, vital nutrients such as iron and zinc are more easily absorbed when they come from meat rather than vegetables. Vitamin B12 is only found in animal foods.

- Consumption data reveals an appropriate actual intake of nutrient-rich meats. The National Pork Board believes the current dietary guideline of an average of 5.5 ounce equivalents in the meat and beans group (based on a 2,000 calories/day diet) remains appropriate based on the preponderance of scientific evidence.

- Consumption survey analysis shows that despite an average amount of meat and meat equivalents of 5.3 ounces per day by Americans, only 44 percent of all individuals two years and older, 62 percent of men 20 years and older, and 37 percent of women 20 years and older, consume at least the minimum recommended amounts from the meat group. "Clearly, Ameri-

cans are not over-consuming meat," Sheil-Brown says.

- Animal agriculture creates only a small percent of the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the United States, and pork production contributes an even smaller percentage. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in 2007, only 2.8 percent of GHG emissions in the U.S. came from animal agriculture through a process called enteric fermentation (the digestion of feed by ruminant animals) and through manure management. Further, according to the EPA, pork production contributed only 0.33 percent of total U.S. emissions.

- Livestock-related GHG emissions have declined per unit of production. "At the practical level, every pound of pork produced in the U.S. today has a smaller carbon footprint compared to 20 years ago," says Sheil-Brown, who notes that pork producers are determined to lead in carbon-footprint knowledge. 


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## Meat-Out Day

*(continued from page 10)*

than she intended," said MPPA Executive Vice President Sam Hines. "The nation-wide media interest she generated by her ill-advised move gave us an opportunity to tell consumers why meat can, and should, be used in a healthy diet. It provided us a stage we wouldn't otherwise have had and we took advantage of it."

MPPA President Dennis DeYoung did a number of television and radio interviews both during "Ag Day at the

Capitol" on March 17 and in the days following; as did Hines and Executive Director Mary Kelpinski. George Hubka, a free-lance writer and farmer from Dowling, organized a barbecue on the Capitol Lawn on March 20 that also received a great deal of media attention. MPPA provided Mr. Hubka with pork barbecue aprons and recipe handouts for the event. The pictures on the previous page show a portion of the crowd that braved the weather to participate in the barbecue. 



# MSU announces new leadership for animal science department and new MSUE institute



*Dr. Janice Swanson*

Dean Jeffrey Armstrong announced on April 23 that Dr. Janice Swanson and Dr. Wendy Powers have been appointed to new roles within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Michigan State University Extension (MSUE). Swanson has been appointed acting chair of the Department of Animal Science at Michigan State University (MSU). Powers has been appointed as director of MSUE's new Institute for Enhancing Michigan's First Green Industry: Agriculture and Agribusiness.

Dr. Swanson will succeed Dr. Karen Plaut who has resigned her position as of May 15 to accept a position at Purdue University. Dr. Swanson will assume this role May 16, 2010, and serve as acting chair through a search process planned for 2011. She currently serves as director of animal welfare at MSU where she coordinates outreach, teaching and research in the area of farm animal behavior and well-being with a focus on social responsibility in the food system. She holds faculty appointments in the

Department of Animal Science in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Powers is a professor in the departments of Animal Science and Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering at MSU and is MSU's director of environmental stewardship for animal agriculture.

Powers will assume the directorship July 1, 2010. In the meantime, however, she will assist with the transition of MSUE's programs and institutes during the restructuring process. As institute director, she will oversee all Extension programming related to plant and animal agriculture that is conducted by MSU faculty members and Extension educators throughout the state.


She will remain director of environmental stewardship for animal agriculture and will continue to develop collaborative multidisciplinary research and Extension programming to enhance environmental stewardship in animal agriculture.

Powers joined Michigan State University in 2006. She has a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a master's degree and doctorate degree from the University of Florida. Prior to joining MSU, she was an associate professor with Iowa State University (ISU) where she received the ISU College of Agriculture Team Award, was named an American Dairy Science Association Production Foundation Scholar and was inducted into the Iowa Academy of Science as the youngest inductee. In 2006, the American Society of Agriculture and Biological Engineers honored her with their Standards Developer Award and the Presidential Citation for Service.

Dr. Swanson received a Ph.D. in applied animal ethology from the



*Dr. Wendy Powers*

University of Maryland and master's and baccalaureate degrees in animal science from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Swanson's professional employment includes five years as a technical information specialist with the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Welfare Information Center. In April of 1992, Dr. Swanson joined the Department of Animal Sciences and Industry at Kansas State University. While at Kansas State, she taught courses in domestic animal behavior and welfare, advanced techniques in animal behavior, and contemporary issues. In 2004, Swanson was awarded the Northcentral Region Award for Excellence in College and University Teaching in the Food and Agricultural Sciences by the Higher Education Programs of the United States Department of Agriculture. At Kansas State, Dr. Swanson was a member of the graduate faculty and the director of the department's international program until appointed as interim department head in August 2004. She joined the MSU faculty in July 2007. 

# MSU Animal Agriculture Initiative awards research dollars for 2010-2011

Six Michigan State University (MSU) animal agriculture research and Extension projects will share \$350,000 in funding awarded by the Animal Agriculture Initiative (AAI) Coalition for 2010-2011. A portion of this funding is also invested in a communications and marketing program and four species-specific quarterly newsletters.

Michigan agriculture is faced with numerous challenges – and opportunities. From implementing innovative means for educating consumers about air quality issues and animal agriculture to generating new and improved food safety measures to determining how irrigation practices affect forage production and guiding dairy producers on the path to managing financial risk, there is no shortage of industry research and outreach priorities in agriculture.

Dr. Karen Plaut, chairperson of the MSU Department of Animal Science and director of the AAI Coalition, believes the proposals funded for the upcoming 2010-2011 project year take an interdisciplinary approach to current and emerging issues affecting Michigan's \$1.7 billion livestock industry.

"Again this year, the AAI Coalition had the privilege of reviewing a number of research proposals, each of which could ultimately benefit the state's animal agriculture industry," Plaut said. "The AAI has a reputation for funding forward-thinking projects, and this year is no exception."

The six projects were selected from 22 preproposals submitted to the AAI Coalition requesting a total of more than \$485,000 in funding. Proposals were ranked on the basis of how well they addressed the issues identified as high priority by industry groups, MSU Extension program teams and the AAI Coalition.

Projects of interest to the pork in-

dustry funded for 2010-2011 are:

\*\* Estimation of Health Impacts of Livestock Production – Dr. Roy Black, MSU Department of Agriculture, Food and Resource Economics

\*\* Educating the General Public on Air Quality Issues and Animal Agriculture – Dr. Wendy Powers, MSU Department of Animal Science

The four quarterly species newsletters – "Cattle Call," the "Michigan Dairy Review," the "Michigan Pork Quarterly" and the "MSU Equine Program Newsletter" – will continue to provide their 12,000-plus total subscribers with feature research articles and notices of opportunities for continued education through MSU Extension programming. The "MSU Equine Program Newsletter" will experience a facelift and a shift towards streamlining some of its communications online.

The Animal Agriculture Initiative is Michigan's animal agriculture research, teaching and Extension initiative housed at MSU. It is a partnership between MSU, livestock producers

and industry organizations, and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Its objective is to address challenges facing Michigan animal-based agriculture through research and Extension projects.

The AAI Coalition is made up of representatives from the MSU departments of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics; Animal Science; Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering; Crop and Soil Sciences; Food Science and Human Nutrition; and Large Animal Clinical Sciences (College of Veterinary Medicine); the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and MSU Extension. The group provides program direction to research and Extension projects involving the state's beef, dairy, equine, poultry, sheep and swine industries, and works with various industry advisory committees to help establish research priorities for improving Michigan animal agriculture.

More than 200 research projects have been funded by the AAI since

*(continued on page 23)*

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## Have you contacted your local FSA Office?

ACRE/DCP Program Enrollment Deadline Rapidly Approaching

Christine White, executive director of USDA's Michigan Farm Service Agency (FSA) is asking Michigan producers "Have you contacted your local FSA Office?" The June 1, 2010, deadline for enrollment into the 2010 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program or the traditional Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) is rapidly approaching. This deadline is mandatory for all participants and USDA will not accept any late-file applications.

White explained that, "With the favorable spring weather conditions, it is critical for producers to begin the enrollment process as soon as possible". Over 50,000 farms were enrolled in DCP/ACRE Program during 2009. "To date, approximately less than 40 percent have been enrolled in 2010 DCP/ACRE Programs. At the current rate of enrollment, a significant number of farms eligible for 2010 DCP/ACRE will not be enrolled by the June 1, 2010, deadline."

All signatures of producers receiving a share in DCP/ACRE payments are required by the June 1, 2010, deadline. It is important producers contact their local office to set up appointments well before the June 1, 2010, deadline.

For more information about the DCP/ACRE programs please visit your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.





# WHAT IF U.S.-RAISED HOGS SIMPLY DIDN'T EXIST?

Who would step up to replace poultry and livestock producers as the number one customer for your soy?

Where would we get the meat that is responsible for providing most of the protein necessary to feed the world?

And how would we replace the millions of tax dollars that livestock and poultry producers generate to help create new roads, repair existing ones and build new schools and parks?

Animal agriculture helps your community thrive. That's why it's important that we continue to give livestock and poultry producers our support. Because a safe and secure food supply and a safe and secure rural community both come from the same place – inside the barns and out in the fields of America's farmers and producers.

*Soybean farmers helping livestock and poultry producers just makes sense.*

Our soybean checkoff.  
*Effective. Efficient. Farmer-Driven.*



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## As I see it


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hierarchy approved HSUS distributing its propaganda and that is even more “frustrating,” especially to those of us who grew-up participating in 4-H and believing it was a pretty top-notch organization for young people. I guess we shouldn’t be surprised, since 4-H membership and the management hierarchy is no longer made-up of only those with agricultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, it’s still disconcerting, “ah frustrating,” to those of us who have a fondness for this organization that it has been infiltrated by those with views very different from ours.

The CBS Evening News story on the use of antibiotics in livestock that aired last February is also discussed elsewhere in this issue and was another major source of “frustration.” Especially since it was blatantly obvious when the piece aired that reporter Couric and the segment’s producers had a pre-conceived point of view they wanted to convey and they presented the issue in a truly biased manner. To me, this simply further reinforced why I stopped watching television news reports quite a few years ago. I concluded a long time ago that if TV news could screw-up stories so badly and were so slanted in reporting things I knew something about, I simply couldn’t believe anything they reported when they addressed things with which I had no familiarity. So, I no longer subject myself to the “frustration” of watching network news shows.

By now you have probably concluded that I’m a pretty “frustrated” guy and you are right. However, I want to emphasize that I’m not cynical because I believe we have a great story to tell and the only way to fight this battle is to begin telling it and engaging the public in thoughtful debate on the attacks our antagonists have launched. The big question is how do we pursue such an enormous under-

taking? We’ve already begun with efforts like “Operation Main Street,” “We Care,” and “Farmers Feed Us,” to name a few, but the enormity of the task before us requires a much more comprehensive and focused assault if our message is going to get through. For too long, we have let our critics define us in a negative way to further their agendas. For example, when was the last time you heard the term CAFO, factory farm, or corporate agriculture used in a positive manner? Personally, I believe we need to commit to strategically developing a plan to get our message heard with the same degree of urgency and commitment that we did when we embarked on the effort to reposition pork as a white meat in the marketplace. If we don’t, we are all going to find ourselves more “frustrated” than we already are.

Recently, I was on a program in Calgary, Canada, with Bruce Vincent, a consultant and logging company owner from Montana. This was the second time I heard Mr. Vincent speak as he shared his views with pork producers at the 2009 Pork Industry Forum in Dallas. He is a phenomenal speaker who talks about the challenges the logging industry has faced from environmentalists and activists. “We need to lead-not fight-the discussion,” he said in Calgary. “The trap is to adopt a bunker mentality. What we need is dialogue direct with the public. If we speak openly and honestly and also listen, we can create our own future.” I think that’s pretty sage advice for the pork industry and agriculture; we just need to start heeding it. 

## Symposium

(continued from page 7)

to boredom and frustration because they had to forage for food in the wild. Current research, however, says that pigs remain aggressive even when food is readily available. Therefore, the most successful housing units allow hogs to be housed in groups, but be fed as individuals with an electronic feeding system.


“Sows must have total security and not be bitten by other sows when being fed,” Brooks said.

Brooks also showed examples of housing units that created microenvironments where sows could move around a pen to find their own thermal comfort.

“It helps to let sows have control over their temperature—they want to be warm when open and cooler when pregnant,” he said.

Brooks said group housing like this also allows sows to form social groups—and that cuts down on aggression.

In addition to changes in housing, Brooks told producers to brace for the removal of antibiotics in hog feed.

“At the end of the day, there are only a tiny percentage of our animals that respond to antibiotic growth hormones anyway,” he said. “You’re still being told you can’t do without them. It’s a bit of rubbish. You can. Europeans have done it already.” 





## Wild Hog Removal Program Needs Citizen Help

The Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, a non-profit organization based in Bath, near Lansing, is asking citizens to help strike back against our state's growing population of wild hogs. The group has been educating people for several years about the threat posed by the estimated 3,000 to 5,000 wild hogs in Michigan, and now has an action program that goes far beyond simply encouraging sport hunters to shoot wild hogs.

Hundreds of wild boars, mostly of Eurasian stock, have escaped from hunting ranches and breeding/raising facilities in Michigan. Wild hogs have been confirmed in at least 69 of Michigan's 83 counties. Most are in bands of fewer than 20 animals, but are reproducing in the wild and spreading. The hogs are already causing crop and forest damage, and diseases that could devastate the domestic swine industry have been

found in free-roaming wild hogs shot in Michigan in two locations.

In 2008, the Wildlife Conservancy helped sponsor renowned wild hog expert, Dr. Jack Mayer, of South Carolina, who conducted several related seminars. Now the organization has developed *The Michigan Wild Hog Removal Program* in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services branch and many

(continued on page 20)



**Soybeans and Livestock: Together we feed you and the economy.**

**Good neighbors. Good practices.**

Brad Blonde, 31, always knew he'd be a farmer. "Since I was a kid it's all I ever wanted to do," he says.

After Brad graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in animal science, he joined his father, Keith, as a fifth-generation producer near Litchfield, Mich. It's a family affair nearly a century in the making. "This home farm was established 98 years ago," Brad explains.

Adding Brad to the farm was the impetus for a new swine finishing operation. "Dad has always had hogs," he says. Working as partners, the father-son pair built Precision Pork in 1999. "Today we finish out between 8,500 and 9,000 head of market hogs a year."

### Protein for pigs

Hogs arrive at the farm from a nearby farrower at two weeks of age and are fed to 260-265 pounds.

Because feed accounts for 55 to 70 percent of the cost of raising swine, cost-effective nutrition is important. Using soybean meal is not optional for the Blondes; as for many pork producers it's crucial. "You have to have it for the protein source," Brad explains.

Soybean meal is a high-quality protein source that provides pigs with essential amino acids. The Blondes feed 600 tons per year — the production of 583 acres of soybeans. Distillers grains from area ethanol plants also provide protein, and 90,000 bushels of homegrown corn is the primary energy source.

### Environmental assurance pioneers

Precision Pork was the eighth farm in the state to be environmentally verified by the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program. The Blondes achieved the status for their livestock systems — from careful manure handling to protective conservation practices — in 2002.



# Plaut will Become Director of Agricultural Research Programs in Purdue University's College of Agriculture

Karen Plaut, chair of the Department of Animal Science at Michigan State University, will become director of Agricultural Research Programs in Purdue University's College of Agriculture, effective June 1.

"Dr. Plaut's exceptional accomplishments as a research scientist and her proven record of academic leadership make her ideally suited for this position," said Jay Akridge, the Glenn W. Sample dean of the College of Agriculture. "I could not be more excited

about the potential for our College of Agriculture research enterprise with Dr. Plaut in the lead. I am very grateful to Dr. Mark Hermodson for his outstanding leadership as interim director of Agricultural Research Programs over the past several months."

As director, Plaut will be responsible for providing administrative support to departments and faculty in the College of Agriculture, Consumer and Family Sciences and the School of Veterinary Medicine. Agricultural

Research Programs encourages interdisciplinary research efforts, helps faculty find and compete for funding opportunities, and ensures the availability of infrastructure.

"What I'm really looking forward to is building on the research at Purdue," Plaut said. "I really think Purdue has the opportunity to be the leader in agriculture for the 21st century."

Plaut has served as chair and professor of Michigan State's Department

(continued on page 20)

## Producing quality pork

Brad cares about being a good neighbor in the community, as an active player in state agricultural groups, and as a producer of quality food. He participates in the PQA Plus (Pork Quality Assurance) certification program, which pledges safe, quality pork products from animals raised in ways that ensure their well-being.

Producing pork is Brad's business, and farming is the family legacy. Grandfather Charles can still sometimes be found at work on the home farm; mother Linda handles bookkeeping. And Brad and his wife, Michelle, are parents to young children ages 1, 3, and 5. Whether the sixth generation will want to follow the farming footsteps someday remains to be seen, but Brad's description of one of the children's interests leaves it a possibility. "All he'll do is play with tractors at night," he laughs.

***"The pork industry's doing everything they can to keep their product safe and keep the customer happy."***

***— Brad Blonde***

To learn more about good stewardship practices and the connection between crop production and animal agriculture, visit [www.animalag.org](http://www.animalag.org).

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## Animal agriculture — the soybean industry's number-one domestic customer

- Animal agriculture consumes 98 percent of domestically used soybean meal.
- Michigan hogs consume 153,000 tons of soybean meal annually – the meal from nearly 6.5 million bushels of soybeans. Nationally, hogs consume the meal from nearly 378 million bushels of soybeans.
- Michigan livestock and poultry producers purchase 428,000 tons of locally grown soybean meal to feed their dairy cows, beef cattle, chickens, turkeys, and hogs each year. That's the meal from 18 million bushels of soybeans.
- Animal agriculture provides more than 30,000 jobs statewide and generates \$190 million in tax revenue to Michigan.



[www.michigansoybean.org](http://www.michigansoybean.org)





## President's Page

*(continued from page 8)*

may be that not using modern agricultural practices would likely result in many more people going hungry. One only needs to look around the world to confirm this is already happening. At any rate, the speaker at the Legislative Conference provided some great food for thought. I believe that one can make a pretty solid argument that there is an ethical question related to not fully utilizing new technology or returning to the production methods used by earlier generations as many of the critics of modern agriculture are proposing that we do.

At our February Board of Directors meeting, your board members voted unanimously to retain the services of a lobbying firm. Governmental Consultant Services, Inc., one of the Lansing areas most highly rated multi-client lobbying firms, was retained for a two-year period to assist in representing the interests of pork producers at the State Capitol. The board took this action for several reasons, not the least of which is that term limits have made it very difficult to establish relationships with those in key leadership positions and, in fact, have made this nearly a fulltime effort. The timing of the decision was also pertinent in that we are expecting the greatest turn-over in leadership and in the make-up of state government that Michigan has ever experienced. We hope this will help us develop good working relationships with the newly-elected in Lansing. It is frequently said that if you don't tell your story nobody else will and in the legislative arena it is also said that "if you aren't at the table, you will likely be on the menu." I think both of these statements are pretty accurate. Sam Hines has done an excellent job in this area but, as you can well imagine, the issues and changes are coming too fast today for one person to monitor them on a less than fulltime basis. Our lobbying

firm has a presence at the Capitol on a daily basis and will work with Sam and Mary to make certain our interests are represented.

I would like to conclude by congratulating and thanking a few folks. Dr. Barb Straw, who was the Extension Swine Veterinarian for many years, has retired from Michigan State University. We need to thank her for the many years she served our industry in her role as swine veterinarian and professor of the MSU Ellis Chair in Swine Medicine. We wish you a happy and well-deserved retirement Barb! The board has had ongoing discussions with the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Chair of the Large Animal Clinical Sciences Department to make certain Barb's position is filled.

Dave Cheney and Mary Kelpinski received the Master Pork Producer Award and the Distinguished Service Award respectively, at the 2010 Professional Pork Producers Symposium in Lansing last February. I have had the pleasure to work with and get to know both Dave and Mary since I have been on the board. And, they are

both "the tops" as advocates for our industry and as individuals. Congratulations Dave and Mary! Also, we had two board members, Harlow Bailey and Tim Howell, which were up for re-election this year that chose not to run for another term. Harlow has been a board member for a lot of years and brought a wealth of experience with him. I always felt that when Harlow spoke, I had better listen. Tim has also served for several years, filling the contract grower position. Tim was well respected for his contributions to our discussions. I was always impressed that he would contribute his time and talents since the pigs he raises belong to others, but I know that he knew how important a viable industry was to his livelihood also. Thank you Harlow and Tim for the great contributions you both made to our industry and our organization!

Finally, spring is here, congratulations to all who survived the challenges of the last two years. Surely, the New Year will also have its own challenges but, hopefully, also some opportunities and PROFITS!



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

The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 2011 National Pork Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body will take place at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 16, 2010, in conjunction with a Board of Director's meeting of the Michigan Pork Producers Association in the Conference Room of the Michigan Pork Producers Association Office at 4801 Willoughby Road, Suite 5, Holt, Michigan 48842. All Michigan pork producers are invited to attend.

Any producer, who is a resident of the state and has paid all assessments due may be considered as a delegate candidate and/or participate in the election. All eligible producers are encouraged to bring with them a sales receipt proving that hogs were sold in their name and the checkoff deducted. For more information, contact Michigan Pork Producers Association at 4801 Willoughby Road, Suite 5, Holt, Michigan 48842, telephone 517/699-2145.

# Michigan Farmers Spring “Free Groceries for a Year!” on Three Michiganians

*Sweepstakes Winners Awarded \$5,000 Grocery Gift Cards During “National Agriculture Week”*

Even during tough economic times, Michigan’s farmers are thanking the consumers of the state for their support of agriculture by helping to pay their grocery bills. In fact, three Michigan consumers were the lucky winners of “Free Groceries for a Year!,” courtesy of Michigan’s farmers, following a 90-day sweepstakes.

The three winners, who were drawn at random from more than 200,000 Michigan consumer registrations, are:

- Ron Barnes, Detroit
- Twila Kock, Grand Rapids
- Greg Napolitan, Kalamazoo

During the week of March 14-20, in coordination with “National Agriculture Week”, groups of Michigan farmers presented each of the winners with their gift cards for \$5,000\* in free groceries, which can be redeemed at their preferred grocery retailer.

For three months, beginning in November 2009, residents from across the state were invited to visit [www.FarmersFeedUS.org](http://www.FarmersFeedUS.org) to register for a chance to win. While doing so, they also had the opportunity to meet 10 Michigan farmers, and take a video tour of their farms. Each video explained how they produce safe, nutritious and affordable food for Michigan consumers.

“Throughout the sweepstakes, it was great to see the support that consumers showed for the Michigan farmers who raise their food,” said Jennifer Lewis, a Jonesville dairy farmer featured on the Web site. “And as Michigan farmers, we’re proud to showcase our farms, sharing how we raise the food that consumers eat, while also introducing them to our families.”

Sweepstakes winner Ron Barnes was also in high spirits. “The economy has taken a toll on a lot of people in our state, myself included. So it’s great to win and be part of such a positive program,” said Barnes. “And


after meeting some of Michigan’s farmers online, I felt like I knew them personally. I’ve had farmers in my family – aunts and uncles – so I know how hard they work every day. And now, I’m even more appreciative of all farmers, and everything they do to get food to our table.”

And as the official retail partner of the sweepstakes, Grand Rapids-based Spartan Stores has helped connect their customers with the farmers of the state by promoting the chance to win in shopping circulars and online. “We were excited at the opportunity to help introduce our customers to the hard-working Michigan men and women who produce their food,” said Jeanne Norcross, vice president corporate affairs Spartan Stores. “And after visiting the site, we hope they have a better understanding of how that glass of milk, pork chop, carton of eggs, or bag of apples is produced.”

And while the sweepstakes registration period is now over, the Michigan

Farmers Feed US web site, featuring information about agriculture in the state, will remain live.

The Michigan Farmers Feed US program is supported by local farmers represented by the Michigan Ag Council, National Pork Board, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Beef Industry Commission, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee, Michigan Apple Committee, Dairy Farmers of America, Michigan Milk Producers Association, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Michigan Allied Poultry Industries, GreenStone Farm Credit Services, West Michigan Ag Alliance, Hamilton Farm Bureau, and 30 county Farm Bureaus from across the state. Further, Spartan Stores is the official retail partner, helping connect their customers with farmers from across the state.

*\*Based on Food Marketing Institute, a \$5,000 value.* 



Winner Greg Napolitan was awarded his grocery gift cards by a group of Kalamazoo-area farmers and commodity group representatives at his local D&W Fresh Market in Portage, also affiliated with Spartan Stores. The photo of the event features (l-r) Katie Croster, D&W customer service manager; Mary Kelpinski, Michigan Pork Producers Association; Ed Cagney, featured soybean farmer; Greg Napolitan, winner; Jennifer Bixby, featured apple farmer; Dave Rutten, Kalamazoo County Farm Bureau member; and Scott Oswalt, featured sheep farmer.

## Livestock farmers gain tool for achieving MAEAP verification

The evolution of the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) continues with the recent implementation of Livestock\*A\*Syst, the program's newest environmental risk assessment tool. Livestock\*A\*Syst offers livestock farms an alternative means of achieving MAEAP environmental verification. The rigorous environmental standards of MAEAP have not changed—but producers now have two options for how to go about achieving those standards and MAEAP verification. The farm may do so by completing Livestock\*A\*Syst or a CNMP.


Trained staff from Conserva-

tion Districts, Michigan Milk Producers, MSU Extension or a technical service provider can all walk farmers through Livestock\*A\*Syst to assess on-farm environmental risks and help develop a plan to address them. A Livestock\*A\*Syst scoring sheet helps farmers monitor their progress toward MAEAP livestock verification. Once the farmer addresses all the issues detailed on the scoring sheet, he/she can request third-party MAEAP verification.

Several farms from an initial Livestock\*A\*Syst pilot group will be among the first verified using the new tool. Pilot farmers felt Livestock\*A\*Syst helped them more

impartially evaluate their operations and helped improve their environmental management.

Livestock\*A\*Syst timelines for identified farm modifications are established following completion of the confidential risk assessment. All risks must be addressed prior to verification, similar to the Livestock Verification using the CNMP. Many livestock farms will still need a CNMP, particularly those seeking financial assistance for making nutrient management upgrades, such as improving manure storage.

MAEAP continues to help Michigan farmers protect the environment. For the past 10 years MAEAP has made it possible for farmers and agriculture professionals across the state to build a better understanding of the management and recordkeeping requirements necessary for sound environmental stewardship. MAEAP partners and supporters are excited about the program's continued advancement and are encouraged by the flexibility now available to livestock farmers. 

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## Wild Hog Removal Program Needs Citizen Help

*(Continued from page 16)*

other groups. The program aims to develop a network of trained volunteers who can work with biologists and technicians in a widespread hog elimination program. Volunteers will help find hogs and set and monitor corral-type traps provided through the program. Several traps have already been built with funds from the Conservancy and groups like the Michigan Pork Producers Association and Michigan Forest Association.

To succeed at controlling wild hogs the Wildlife Conservancy would like to build and deploy 100 corral traps around the state. Each trap costs \$450 for materials and labor, so \$45,000 is needed just for the traps. The Conservancy and USDA are calling on sportsmen's groups, conservation districts, farm organizations and all groups interested in wildlife and natural resources to sponsor a wild hog trap or host a fundraiser locally for the project.

"Wild hogs have gotten out of control in nearly 40 other states, causing an estimated \$1.5 billion in damage to forests, residential areas, crops, and livestock annually," said Conservancy President Bill Taylor, of Olivet. "We intend to make Michigan as inhospitable as possible for this exotic species, and need citizen help on many fronts—finding and reporting hogs, fund-raising, contacting legislators, and educating others about this menace."


The Wildlife Conservancy is asking citizens to report the presence of wild hogs to USDA Wildlife Services at 517-336-1928 or via email at [timothy.s.wilson@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:timothy.s.wilson@aphis.usda.gov). Wild hogs are nomadic, that is, they don't stay long in any location. So, it is important that citizens report wild hogs immediately when they spot animals or see hog signs. Citizens interested in possibly becoming volunteer trappers in the program should contact the Conservancy to obtain related information. The Conservancy will offer a group training session for such volunteers at its headquarters in Bath on Wednesday, May 12 from 6:00-9:30 p.m. For information about the session contact the Conservancy at 517-641-7677 or via email at [wildlife@miwildlife.org](mailto:wildlife@miwildlife.org). 

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## Plaut

*(Continued from page 17)*

of Animal Science since 2005. She held several positions at the University of Vermont starting in 1990, including: chair of the Department of Animal Science; assistant, associate and full professor of animal science; and associate director of the Vermont Space Grant Consortium. She was also the lead scientist for a biological research project for the International Space Station for the NASA Ames Research Center in California.

Plaut earned her bachelor's degree in animal science from the University of Vermont, a master's in animal nutrition from Penn State University and a doctoral in animal science from Cornell University. 



# Producers Want Trucking Issue With Mexico Resolved

With rumors that the Mexican government may update a trade retaliation list against U.S. products, the National Pork Producers Council and state pork producer organizations, including MPPA, urged the Obama administration to resolve a dispute with Mexico over allowing its trucks into the United States.

Last March, the Mexican government imposed higher tariffs on an estimated \$2.4 billion of U.S. goods after the U.S. Congress failed to renew a pilot program that allowed a limited number of Mexican trucking companies to work beyond the 25-mile commercial zone that was created in the United States.

NPPC, which worked to keep pork off that retaliation list, and 37 state producer associations in a letter to President Obama asked that the U.S. government live up to a provision in the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that allows Mexican trucks to haul freight into and out of the United States.


Mexican trucks had been operating in the United States under the Cross-Border Trucking Pilot Program, which was started by the U.S. Department of Transportation in September 2007 as a way to begin implementing the NAFTA trucking provision. That provision was supposed to begin in December 1995 and take full effect by Jan. 1, 2000.

Congress refused to renew the pilot program or to implement the NAFTA provision, citing concerns about the safety of Mexican trucks even though under the pilot program they were held to the same safety standards as U.S. trucks and were examined and cleared by U.S. inspectors. In February 2001, a NAFTA dispute-settlement panel ruled that the exclusion of Mexican trucks violated U.S. obligations under NAFTA. The ruling gave Mexico the right to retaliate against

U.S. products entering Mexico.

"We need to get this trucking issue resolved," said NPPC President Sam Carney, a pork producer from Adair, Iowa, "Mexico is an important market for U.S. pork, which right now isn't on the retaliation list, but it could be. More importantly, this needs to be

resolved so our trading partners have assurance that the United States will live up to its trade obligations."

In 2009, the United States exported to Mexico more than 503,000 metric tons of pork worth more than \$762 million, making it the No. 2 market for U.S. pork exports. 

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## China Lifts H1N1-Related Ban On U.S. Pork

The United States and China have reached an agreement to reopen the Chinese market to U.S. pork imports, action that should help struggling U.S. pork producers, said the National Pork Producers Council. Pork trade will resume immediately once both sides finalize export documentation.

The Asian nation closed its market to U.S. pork in late April of 2009 in the wake of an outbreak in humans of novel H1N1 influenza, which the media misnamed "swine" flu.


"This is great news for U.S. pork producers," said NPPC President Sam Carney, a pork producer from Adair, Iowa. "China is one of our biggest markets, so being able to ship pork there is extremely important to the U.S. pork industry, which has been hurting economically for more than two years now.

"With the lifting of the H1N1 ban on U.S. pork, we will focus on the remaining impediments to exporting U.S. pork to China," Carney said.

The U.S. pork industry shipped nearly 400,000 metric tons of pork worth nearly \$690 million to China/Hong Kong in 2008, making it the

No. 3 destination for U.S. pork. Last year, U.S. pork exports to China/Hong Kong were down by 38 percent, falling to just under \$427 million.

In October, at the conclusion of the annual U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade meeting, China announced that it would rescind its pork import ban. Since then, NPPC has worked closely with the Obama administration to pressure the Chinese to actually lift their ban and begin accepting U.S. pork imports.

NPPC is continuing to urge the administration to press China to address a number of other trade-related issues that limit U.S. pork imports. Among those issues are China's ban on U.S. pork produced with ractopamine – an FDA-approved feed additive that improves efficiency in pork production – subsidies China provides its domestic pork producers and a value-added tax it imposes on imports. 

# NPPC Hosts Spring Legislative Action Conference

MPPA President Dennis DeYoung, NPPC Board Member Bob Dykhuis, MPPA Vice President Ed Reed and Executive Vice President Sam Hines joined more than 100 pork producers from more than 20 states at NPPC's Spring Legislative Action Conference (LAC) in Washington, D.C., March 24-25. While in Washington, producers met with members of Congress to discuss important pork industry issues. U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack addressed the group on March 24th and discussed, among other issues, the agency's efforts to expand trade, livestock competition and the need to revitalize rural communities. Reps. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., and House Agriculture Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Chairman David Scott, D-Ga., spoke to producers during LAC breakfast sessions. Throughout their two days in Washington, producers received from NPPC staff updates on legislative issues, including the Child Nutrition Act, which recently passed the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; antibiotics; reauthorization of the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting Act, which requires packers, processors and importers to provide critical price, contracting, supply-and-demand information to the USDA; the renewable fuel standards; climate change legislation; and pending free trade agreements. Also in town during the week were 17 pork producers participating in NPPC's Public Policy Leadership Institute and 11 swine veterinarians attending NPPC's Swine Veterinarian Public Policy Advocacy Program. The conference wrapped up with the always well-attended "Rack of Pork" congressional reception on Capitol Hill for members of Congress, their staff and pork producers. Guests enjoyed pork dumplings, pulled pork, pork chops and spicy pork chili while talking with fellow producers and


the many members of Congress who came to enjoy pork products and good conversation.

## NPPC PPLI Members Visit with Colombian Ambassador

During the LAC, NPPC Vice President and Counsel for International Affairs Nick Giordano, along with NPPC Public Policy Leadership Institute (PPLI) members visited with Colombian Ambassador to the United States Carolina Barco and Director of the Colombian Trade Bureau Ricardo Triana, to discuss trade issues. Following the meeting, the PPLI members visited with their members of Congress on Capitol Hill to discuss the three separate pending free trade agreements America has with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. Negotiations on free trade agreements between the U.S. and the three countries were completed under the Bush administration, but the trade pacts have yet to be approved by the


U.S. Congress. Once implemented, the pending trade agreements will greatly boost the bottom line of U.S. pork producers. PPLI provides a carefully selected group of industry participants with advanced public-policy training that will prepare, motivate and engage pork producer leaders to represent the U.S. pork industry's public-policy initiatives at the state and national levels.

## NPPC Meets with Canadian Pork Counsel and Mexican Producers

Also during the conference, NPPC President Sam Carney, President-Elect Doug Wolf, Vice President R.C. Hunt, CEO Neil Dierks and Giordano attended meetings with staff and board leadership from the Canadian Pork Counsel and the Mexican Pork Producers in Quebec, Canada. Issues discussed included industry economics and grain availability; animal care; animal health and food safety; and trade. 

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## Despite Drop from 2008, Pork Exports in 2009 Added to Producers' Bottom Line

The U.S. pork industry exported its second-highest-ever total of pork in 2009, shipping nearly 1.9 billion metric tons of product worth more than \$4.3 billion to destinations around the world. While they fell 11 percent – more than \$550 million – from 2008's record \$4.88 billion, 2009 pork exports still topped 2007's previously second-highest total of \$3.2 billion. The 2009 exports added more than \$38 to the price pork producers received for each hog marketed, a significant amount given that, on average, they lost about \$24 a head in 2009. Japan continued to be the No. 1 importer of U.S. pork, taking more than \$1.5 billion of it last year, with Mexico, Canada, China and Russia rounding out the top five export markets. The decrease in pork exports was attributable to a worldwide economic recession, H1N1-related bans by some countries on U.S. pork and non-tariff barriers erected by some major U.S. trading partners. NPPC worked to address the latter two issues, as well as to advance free trade agreements that would increase U.S. pork exports. NPPC is continuing to ask the Obama administration to keep existing export markets open and to urge Congress to approve pending free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea, which combined would add more than \$11 to the price of each U.S. hog marketed. 

## Pass FTAs To Spur Job Growth, Says Coalition

Pointing out that exports generate 8,000 U.S. jobs for every \$1 billion of agricultural goods exported, an ad hoc coalition of food, feed and agricultural entities during March urged Congress to promptly pass several pending free trade agreements (FTAs).

Trade deals with Colombia, Panama and South Korea are awaiting congressional approval. Under each pact, many U.S. food and agricultural products would become eligible for duty-free treatment once the agreement is implemented and nearly all would receive duty-free treatment over specified phase-in periods.

In a letter signed by 57 companies and organizations, the coalition – led by the National Pork Producers Council – asked lawmakers to “heed the President’s call to aggressively expand

market access opportunities, as our competitors are doing.”


Congress must act on the pending agreements soon, said the coalition, because other countries are moving forward on a host of trade deals. South Korea, for example, has concluded, is negotiating, or is planning to enter talks on trade agreements with 11 countries, the European Union and blocs representing southeast Asian and South American nations.

In addition to adding to the bottom line of producers – U.S. pork producers, for example, would see hog prices rise by \$11 a head under the South Korea agreement – the trade pacts would generate thousands of U.S. jobs.

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture figures, 2008’s \$115.4

billion of U.S. agricultural exports supported 920,000 full-time civilian jobs, including 608,000 non-farm jobs. Those economic benefits, the coalition pointed out, flow not only to rural communities but also to people working in transportation, processing and at ports.

In its letter, the coalition said it “strongly supports” President Obama’s pledge, made in his Jan. 27 State of the Union address, to double U.S. exports within five years as a way to create millions of new jobs.

The coalition also expressed concern about legislation (H.R. 3012 and S. 2821) that would require the administration to demand the re-negotiation of all current or pending trade agreements. 

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## USDA Enhances Integrity and Defensibility of Farm Programs and Streamlines Payment Limits for Family Farmers

Christine White, Executive Director of USDA’s Farm Service Agency in Michigan announced that USDA is partnering with the Internal Revenue Service to reduce fraud in farm programs and streamlining payment limits for family farmers.

“This new USDA-IRS partnership is intended to help USDA participants meet the requirements in the 2008 Farm Bill,” said White. “This new policy will protect USDA participants and ensure overall program integrity.”

USDA has finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

This agreement will ensure that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.


White also reminds producers the 2010 DCP/ACRE signup is underway and will end June 1, 2010, late file provisions do not apply. Please contact your local county FSA office for more details. 

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## MSU Animal Agriculture Initiative

*(continued from page 13)*

the initiative was established in 1996 as part of the grass-roots-driven Revitalization of Animal Agriculture in Michigan Initiative.

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



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

## **CHILD NUTRITION ACT PASSES SENATE COMMITTEE**

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry has approved the \$4.5 billion Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, sponsored by committee Chairwoman Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark. The bill, also known as the Child Nutrition Act, reauthorizes child nutrition programs over the next 10 years. The bill will give the U.S. Department of Agriculture authority to establish national nutrition standards for all foods sold in school cafeterias and establish nutrition requirements for child care providers. Some of the programs funded through the Child Nutrition Act include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Supplemental Program for Women Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. It also would cut funding from the Conservation Security Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, which NPPC has concerns about, and give higher reimbursement rates to schools for the free meals they provide some children. NPPC will be analyzing the effects this would have on purchases of pork for food programs under the act. The Child Nutrition Act was enacted under President Lyndon Johnson in 1966 and requires reauthorization every five years.

## **WHOLESALE PORK REPORTING STUDY COMPLETED**

USDA has released the long-awaited Wholesale Pork Reporting Analysis, which was authorized under the 2008 Farm Bill. It looks at the effects of requiring packers and processors to report information on wholesale pork cuts, including price and volume information, to determine the economic impact on producers and consumers. NPPC will be studying the result of the analysis in the coming weeks and, based on that analysis, may ask that wholesale pork reporting be added to the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting Act. The law expires Sept. 30 and is expected to be reauthorized. NPPC will review this analysis carefully as it moves forward with reauthorization.

## **MEAT SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT INTRODUCED**

Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., has introduced a bill that would mandate more extensive actions by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors to trace meat products back to their points of origin when they are either adulterated or contaminated with pathogens such as E. coli and salmonella. The Meat Safety and Accountability Act would require USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service to create and implement an initiative to trace tainted meat back to the original source of contamination and would also expand testing at meat suppliers and individual meat processors in the case of an outbreak.

## **HOUSE BILL TO EXTEND ETHANOL TAX CREDITS INTRODUCED**

Reps. John Shimkus, R-Ill., and Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., have introduced H.R. 4940, a bill to extend certain tax incentives for corn ethanol production and to extend duties on the importation of ethanol. Under current law, the subsidies to the ethanol industry are set to expire at the end of the year. NPPC supports allowing these market distorting subsidies to expire and will be tracking the legislation.

## **FDA ANNOUNCES ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has announced an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking to solicit comments from the public about potential changes to its current regulation relating to veterinary feed directive (VFD) drugs. VFDs were created in 2000 as part of the Animal Drug Availability Act and established requirements relating to the distribution and use of VFD drugs and animal feeds containing these drugs. FDA is reviewing these requirements to identify possible changes to improve efficiency. The agency is requesting public comment on all aspects of the VFD regulation, particularly suggestions relating to improving efficiency. Swine veterinarians use two VFD feed additives: Pulmotil and Nuflor. There will be a 90-day comment period in which NPPC will be working closely with the National Pork Board and American Association of Swine Veterinarians.

## **EPA ACTION ON FUEL PUMP LABEL PRECURSOR TO INCREASING ETHANOL BELND RATE?**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is set to “develop a pump label to prevent misfueling of vehicles and engines not authorized to use E15 fuel and to provide manufacturer certification to sell E15,” according to the publication InsideEPA. That seems to indicate that the agency will raise to 15 percent from the current 10 percent the amount of ethanol that can be blended into gasoline. Such a move would increase corn usage by the ethanol industry. NPPC has insisted that the Obama administration and EPA study the impact that ethanol production has on feed prices for livestock producers. While the U.S. pork industry has not opposed the use of ethanol and the country’s goal of reducing its dependence on foreign oil, U.S. pork producers have paid a price, literally, in the form of much higher feed costs. Due mostly to those higher costs, pork producers since October 2007 have lost nearly \$24 on each hog marketed, and the pork industry has lost more than \$6 billion.

## **TRANS PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP TRADE NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY**

Officials from eight countries, including the United States, met during March in Melbourne, Australia, to begin talks on expanding the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact. The U.S., Australia, Peru and Vietnam are seeking to join the TPP, which

currently includes Chile, Singapore, New Zealand and Brunei – known as the P4. The move by the U.S. to seek partnership in the TPP is not new. In March of 2008, the U.S. began talks with the P4 countries on investment and financial services as a precursor to possible U.S. membership in the regional free trade agreement. The move would help President Obama reach his goal of doubling U.S. exports over the next five years as he stated he would do in his State of the Union address in January. NPPC has been a strong advocate of the TPP since its inception and was the only agriculture organization to publicly push the U.S. to begin talks to enter the pact. Many hope that the Trans-Pacific arrangement will be the foundation upon which an Asia-Pacific free trade region can be built. The plan is to have three more negotiating sessions this year.

## **PEW HOLDS BRIEFING ON ALTERNATIVES TO ANTIBIOTIC USE IN FOOD ANIMAL PRODUCTION**

The Pew Campaign on Human Health and Industrial Farming hosted a briefing recently for House and Senate staff, discussing antibiotic usage in animal production. Panelists from the hearing included Stephen Jay, MD, professor of Medicine and Public Health at Indiana University School of Medicine; Bill Niman, owner of BN Ranch and founder of Niman Ranch, Inc.; Andrew Carlson, owner and CEO of Central Coast Farms and Fulton Valley Farms; Steve Ells, chairman and CEO of Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc.; and Linda Boardman, president of Applegate Farms. A segment of the CBS Nightly News

story that ran February 9 on antibiotic usage in livestock was played at the hearing. Panelists cited 75 percent of antibiotics being used by industrial farms on healthy animals as a platform to call for passage of the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA), sponsored by the late Senator Edward Kennedy, D-Mass. Members of the panel argued that many of the antibiotics used on livestock are in the same class as human antibiotics and overuse of them has led to the spread of drug-resistant bacteria in humans. NPPC participated in Congressional briefings during which Pew’s argument was debunked.

## **USDA VET BLOWS WHISTLE ON ENFORCEMENT OF SLAUGHTERHOUSES**

The House Domestic Policy Subcommittee of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing in March in response to a Government Accountability Office report that criticized what Chairman Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio, deemed a lack of reporting and enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. The report suggested U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors have been inconsistent in their reporting of humane handling violations. During the hearing, Wayne Pacelle, president of the Humane Society of the United States, showed video of an HSUS undercover visit to Bushway Packing Inc., which was shut down last year over alleged inhumane treatment of calves. A USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service



veterinarian blew the whistle on the USDA, telling lawmakers at the hearing that USDA officials did not heed his warnings about unsafe slaughterhouses he felt presented public health risks. Members of the panel called for ensuring proper treatment of animals and the safety of the food supply.

## **POLL SHOWS PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT HSUS**

A poll commissioned by the nonprofit Center for Consumer Freedom and conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, shows 59 percent of those polled believe that the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) contributes most of its money to local organizations that care for cats and dogs. However, HSUS does not run a single shelter for dogs or cats. The poll also found that 71 percent of the participants believe HSUS is an umbrella group for America's local humane societies, and 63 percent think their local humane society is affiliated with HSUS. According to the federal income tax return filed by HSUS for the tax year 2008, less than one-half of 1 percent of the organization's budget consisted of grants to hands-on pet shelters. The poll sampled the opinions of 1,008 Americans.

## **HSUS GETS SOME BAD PRESS**

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has recently come under fire from the Sportsmen's and Animal Owners' Voting Alliance (SAOVA), which says that HSUS's lobbying on national and state levels

likely surpasses the boundaries set by its nonprofit status under the IRS code. SAOVA also cites a "conflict of interest" by Michael Markarian, who serves as HSUS's chief operating officer as well as president of an affiliated lobbying charity, the Humane Society Legislative Fund. HSUS reported that it spent about \$4.2 million on lobbying out of a total budget of nearly \$100 million in 2008. The independent nonprofit charity watchdog group American Institute of Philanthropy in December gave HSUS a C- grade based on the percentage of money the organization spent actually running its programs. The group also penalized HSUS for paying excessive salaries to its top executive – as much as \$250,000 – and for ending 2008 with cash reserves of \$187 million in assets. Using HSUS's 2008 federal 990 Form, another group, the Center for Consumer Freedom, found that HSUS took in more than \$86 million; and spent \$31 million on salaries, \$24 million on fund raising, \$23 million on "campaigns and legislation" and \$4.2 million for a lockbox company to count its donations. Money given to organizations that actually worked with animals totaled just \$450,000. That's half of 1 percent.

## **USDA AND DOJ HOLD WORKSHOP ON COMPETITION ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE**

NPPC President Sam Carney, President-elect Doug Wolf and CEO Neil Dierks participated on March 12 in the first of a series of joint public workshops on competition and regulatory issues affecting the agriculture industry. The workshop, held in Ankeny, Iowa, was hosted by the U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, Attorney General Eric Holder, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, Rep. Leonard Boswell, D-Iowa, Iowa Lt. Gov. Patty Judge, Iowa Agriculture Sec. Bill Northey and the attorney general from Iowa - Tom Miller - and several states as well as a number of academics participated in the workshop. Several more workshops will be held in the coming months to continue discussion on competition in agriculture issues.

## **HOG ODOR PLAINTIFFS AWARDED \$11 MILLION**

A judge in Jackson County, Mo., awarded \$11 million to 15 people who claimed that the odor coming from a hog operation owned by Premium Standard Farms kept them indoors and nauseous. The group won a \$5.2 million lawsuit against Premium Standard Farms in 1999 for the same odor issues they claim have not been addressed. John Harmon, the attorney presenting the corporation's case with Jean Paul Bradshaw of Kansas City, argued that Premium Standard had spent \$39 million to fix the odors. Officials for Premium Standard Farms said in a prepared statement that they were disappointed by the verdict and would appeal.

## **GIPSA TO SWINE GROWERS: CONTRACTS MUST COMPLY WITH FARM BILL REQUIREMENTS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued a press release announcing that the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) is increasing its audits of swine production contracts to ensure their compliance with 2008 Farm Bill requirements. The 2008 Farm Bill amended the Packers and Stockyard Act to require that swine contracts: allow swine growers to cancel growing or production contracts for up to three days after signing or up to any date specified in the contract or growing arrangement; include a disclosure statement on the first page that clearly states whether additional large capital investments may be required of the grower during the term of the contract; and allow growers to opt out of arbitration provisions before entering a contract. GIPSA is seeking civil penalties of up to \$11,000 per violation if swine contractors have not complied with Farm Bill requirements. Two pork operations have been fined so far. GIPSA says that the requirements became effective when the Farm Bill was signed into law in June 2008, but the agency never issued guidance on them to producers. Other provisions of the Farm Bill also are still awaiting implementing regulations. Producers should consult with their attorney on contract matters.

## **EPA MAY REQUIRE CAFOS TO REPORT HYDROGEN SULFIDE EMISSIONS**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in an announcement published in the Federal Register said it is considering requiring industrial facilities, including concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), to report releases of hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S). The agency says that H<sub>2</sub>S is harmful to human health and the environment and must be reported to the Toxics Release Inventory under the Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The reporting requirement could lead to stricter regulations on H<sub>2</sub>S releases under the Clean Air Act, including a mandate that facilities adopt new emissions mitigation technologies. NPPC has challenged in a suit filed in a U.S. District Court in Wisconsin an EPA rule requiring some pork producers to report air emissions from their farms under EPCRA, which has an exemption for "agriculture." NPPC contends that EPA has failed to set up an adequate system to take emissions reports from producers. The pork industry also is waiting for the results of a National Air Emissions Monitoring study of emissions from farms.

## **RUSSIA TO RE-OPEN MARKET TO U.S. PORK**

The United States and Russia have reached an agreement to re-open the Russian market to U.S. pork and pork products, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced in March. By the end of last year, Russia had delisted nearly all U.S. pork facilities, prohibiting them from shipping pork to Russia. USDA and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative had been in negotiations with the Russian Veterinary Service since December 2009. The negotiations led to the development of a new veterinary certificate to ensure that pork exports from the United States meet specific Russian microbiological and tetracycline-group antibiotic residue requirements. The next step is for U.S. plants that want to export to Russia to apply for approval with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. AMS, in collaboration with the Food Safety and Inspection Service, has developed an Export Verification (EV) program for pork to Russia to address specific product requirements. Russia imported \$289 million worth of U.S. pork and pork variety meat exports last year. NPPC worked with USDA and USTR in urging Russia to re-open its market to U.S. pork.



## Pork Industry Coalition Sends Letter to CBS News President Regarding Couric Piece on Antibiotics in Livestock

After the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric ran a piece on antibiotics in livestock last February, several agricultural groups, including the National Pork Board, submitted a letter to the president of CBS News regarding the inaccuracies. Couric interviewed Dr. Liz Wagstrom of the Pork Board at length on the topic, but only used a few seconds of the interview in the segment. The coalition letter to the CBS News President follows:

Dear Mr. McManus:

We were extremely disappointed with CBS's recent Evening News story on antibiotic use in the livestock industry. The story lacked any attempt at balance and largely accepted the arguments of opponents of conventional agriculture that drugs are overused in livestock and are a major cause of antibiotic resistance.

In fact, antibiotics are given to livestock strategically, when animals are sick, susceptible or exposed to illness. Modern livestock production facilities provide animals with an environment designed to keep them safe, healthy and comfortable. Also, there's no proof that antibiotic use on farms significantly increases resistant bacteria in humans. Since antibiotics have been used in livestock for half a century, if there was going to be an epidemic of resistance related to antibiotic use in agriculture, it would have occurred by now. The fact that it has not means that antibiotic use in animals is not a major risk to human health.

CBS glossed over the impact of over prescription in human medicine and instead focused on Denmark's ban on antibiotic "growth promoters" in hogs. Supporters of that ban used data very selectively to suggest antibiotic use has declined under the ban, and CBS's producers used that "fact" despite being given the raw data that showed the contrary. Also left out of the report were the views of a U.S. House delegation that visited Denmark recently to learn first-hand how successful the Danish ban has been. For the record: After Denmark put its ban in place, previously controlled swine diseases reemerged, pig deaths went up, therapeutic antibiotics used in pigs by veterinarians increased and pork production costs rose—all with no measurable positive effects on human health.

Also false was CBS's statement that "no one is really monitoring" antibiotic resistance in livestock. That statement ignores the existence of the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System, or NARMS, conducted jointly by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Agriculture. NARMS data show that resistance in animal products has been either steady or declining in recent years.

CBS's linking of antibiotic use in pigs to the human threat of MRSA-Methicillin Resistant Staph aureus—was particularly irresponsible and could alarm viewers needlessly. For starters, CBS failed to distinguish between the different categories of MRSA, some of which can cause very serious illness and death and are most often found in health care facilities. There is no data suggesting that antibiotic use in pigs is responsible for the more virulent form of MRSA. The form discovered on pig farms is much less serious than the hospital-acquired—and even the community-acquired—human forms of MRSA. It does not cause illness in pigs and antibiotics are not used to treat it. Further, this strain of MRSA has not been found in human disease surveillance by either the CDC or the University of Iowa hospitals. Also, there is no indication that pork farmers have a higher rate of MRSA-associated illness than the general population, and the CDC has concluded that the vast majority of community-related MRSA infections result from person-to-person contact. None of these points was made by CBS, which chose instead to interview two pork farm workers who blame antibiotic use in pigs for contracting MRSA. Since the strain of MRSA associated with livestock, called strain 398, has not been found in human disease surveillance, it is likely that these individuals contracted MRSA from contact with people, not pigs.

CBS made much of a study of farms in Iowa and Illinois, claiming that it found no MRSA infections on farms that did not use antibiotics. The full story is much more complicated. As Scott Hurd, former deputy undersecretary for food safety at the USDA and now professor at Iowa State University, explains: "First, this was a very small pilot study, which sampled fewer than 300 pigs. In it, only six farms used antibiotic-free production methods. The implication that this type of production is always free of MRSA is not true as there have been organic farms in other countries that have been found to be 100 percent positive for MRSA. On the other hand, in this Iowa study, some of the conventional farms that did use antibiotics were 100 percent free of MRSA. Secondly, there were two studies by the University of Iowa on MRSA in swine. The study that went unreported by CBS found conventional farms with

## Antibiotic Issue Takes Center Stage

While Katie Couric, anchor of CBS Evening News, may have sparked more debate on antibiotic use in food animals, it's hardly the first salvo in this long-term debate, and it won't be

the last. That's why the National Pork Board recognizes the importance of getting the facts out about this important issue and fostering open, honest dialog about why producers need tools

such as antibiotics to keep animals healthy and the food supply safe.

"We welcome a fact-based discussion about this issue, because we know that science tells us we're doing the right thing for animal health and food safety," said Liz Wagstrom, assistant vice president of science and technology for the National Pork Board. "Producers care about their animals and the safety of the food they produce. That's really the bottom line that should be understood by everyone."

With that big-picture perspective in mind, the National Pork Board has continued to work on this vital issue from multiple angles, including:

- **Partner communications.** The Pork Checkoff is working closely with the National Pork Producers Council, the American Association of Swine Veterinarians and the U.S. Meat Export Federation to ensure that each group pursues tactics best suited to its expertise and particular sphere of influence. Also, the Checkoff's domestic marketing team continues to lead in communicating this issue with key retail and food service stakeholders.

- **State communications.** Multiple nationwide conference calls and e-mails have helped inform and engage state pork association staff since early January and will continue as needed to inform and assist all producer organizations at the state level.

- **Industry communications.** The Checkoff communications team has reached out to more than 20 agricultural-rated organizations, including the beef, dairy, poultry and meat-processing industries. This has helped ensure all relevant groups were joined in this important dialog and has helped foster a more unified voice.

- **Behind-the-scenes communications.** The Checkoff's communication team has made numerous calls and e-mails to media working on the antibiotic story, including to CBS in New

MRSA rates in pigs of 23 percent, not 70 percent."

Also disturbing was your use of the pejorative terms "factory farming" and "industrial farming." These are anti-agriculture activist terms, and for CBS to embrace them gives them credibility they do not deserve. Modern farms are bio-secure to protect against disease and provide climate controlled environments. It's easy to select images of pens of animals without giving the context for why those animals are inside and in pens. Iowa in the winter can be a very cold place. Would Ms. Couric have preferred to see these animals standing unprotected in open fields?

There were numerous additional errors in the story that we don't have space to correct in this letter. We encourage you, however, to read a critique by Dr. Hurd. It is available at <http://vetmed.iastate.edu/news/isu-associate-professor-and-former-usda-deputy-undersecretary-food-safety-responds-cbs-news-seg>.

Conventional farmers would welcome a constructive discussion of all their production practices, including the use of antibiotics in livestock. But that requires a commitment to facts that the CBS story clearly lacked. It was sad to see that CBS could be so reckless and one-sided, and disappointing to find that it would take such a simplistic look at such a complex issue. As anti-meat and anti-agriculture advocates continue to push for legislation limiting the use of antibiotics in food animals, CBS may have the opportunity to revisit this subject. We hope future coverage will be more balanced.

Sincerely,

American Association of Bovine Practitioners  
American Association of Swine Veterinarians  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Meat Institute  
Association of Veterinary Biologics Companies  
Association of Veterinarians in Turkey Production  
Livestock Marketing Association  
National Aquaculture Association  
National Chicken Council  
National Pork Board  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Institute for Animal Agriculture  
National Renderers Association  
National Turkey Federation



York. While it's not always evident, this work has yielded more positive, or less-negative, stories than would otherwise have been reported.

- **Media training.** This ongoing effort has included training of producers, as well as internal and third-party experts to help them field media questions on antibiotics more precisely and in a way that's best understood by the audience.

- **Talking points.** These are being updated as needed and geared toward specific users and audiences.

- **Letter to the editor.** A template has been created and sent to state associations. It could easily be adapted for use in many contexts regarding false information about antibiotics.

- **Op-Ed.** Dr. Scott Hurd, Iowa State University associate professor and former USDA deputy undersecretary for food safety, has written an op-ed piece that has been submitted to the Des Moines Register and other large dailies. Excerpts also can be repurposed for additional op-eds.

- **Factsaboutpork.com.** This existing Web site, which has been a one-stop-shop for consumers to learn the facts about the 2009 H1N1 virus, now offers visitors all the facts about how antibiotics are strategically used on swine farms.

- **Social media.** Pork Checkoff is monitoring and participating in social media such as Twitter and YouTube.

## **New Message Points Under-score Producers' Responsible Antibiotic Use**

With input from top experts in consumer media, the Checkoff communications team created four main talking points, with supporting subcomponents, to help head-off misunderstanding of the antibiotic issue and frame the discussion with facts.

- **Antibiotics are given strategically** – administered when pigs are sick, susceptible or exposed to illness.

- **Antibiotic use is not routine,** but

targeted when pigs are exposed to illness or are sick.

- **Modern pork-production facilities** provide animals with an environment designed to keep them safe, healthy and comfortable.

- **Using antibiotics strategically** ensures that the safest meat in the world ends up on America's dinner tables.

- **Danish government reports** show an increase in a variety of human, antibiotic-resistant illnesses, including a 10-fold increase in MRSA since the ban was put in place. (Source: DAN-MAP)

- **A U.S. congressional fact-finding mission** to Denmark last September found no scientific evidence that reducing antibiotic use in agriculture resulted in public health benefits in that country.

- **Denmark recently experienced** one of the worst salmonella outbreaks in Danish history.

- **Only antibiotics approved** by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are used to treat pigs.

- **Farmers work closely** with veterinarians to decide which antibiotics to use.

- **Post-approval monitoring programs** by the FDA are in place to ensure antibiotic use is not harming public health.

- **There is no conclusive scientific evidence** that antibiotics used in food animals have a significant impact on the effectiveness of antibiotics in people. In fact, peer-reviewed studies suggest that over 95 percent of antibiotic-resistance concerns in human medicine are unrelated to animal uses of antibiotics.

- **Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), FDA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** known as the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System, or NARMS, shows that resistance in animal products and foodborne diseases is steady or declining over the past several years.

- **We have a 20-year history** of con-

tinuous improvement working with modern farm production to make pork better, healthier and safer to eat.

- **The Pork Quality Assurance Plus® program,** started by farmers in 1989, reinforces good on-farm practices that help produce healthy, well-cared-for animals that yield safe food. This national program, taught by veterinarians, university experts and other swine experts, emphasizes the judicious, strategic use of antibiotics.

## **Veterinarian Sets Record Straight on Misinformation: Science Should Guide Discussion of Antibiotic Use in Livestock**

*By H. Scott Hurd DVM, PhD - Associate Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Production Animal Medicine, Iowa State University*

As former USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Food Safety and a scientist who has actively researched food safety for over 20 years, I'm disappointed by recent media reports that blame antibiotic use in livestock for most antibiotic resistance in humans.

The heart of the issue concerns the growing incidence of Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA) in people.

Consumers should know that MRSA mentioned in these reports is not a food-borne disease, and the strain found in pigs is different than that found in humans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has concluded that after investigating numerous human outbreaks of MRSA infections in the United States, none of these investigations has found animal exposure to be a risk factor for infection. The CDC concluded that the vast majority of infections result from person-to-person transmission of MRSA in the community.

In my opinion, the national lawmakers who are pursuing a misguided blanket ban on certain antibiotics used

in livestock haven't considered sound science.

As President Obama said last year, "We must make scientific decisions based on facts, not ideology." I fully agree. Bacteria are nonpartisan. Salmonella and Streptococcus don't vote and don't watch TV. The basics of microbiology, animal disease prevention, food production and risk assessment apply equally to us all. If new policies are not built on accurate science, they won't work; they won't make the world a safer place. This issue impacts me not just as a scientist, but also as the father of eight children.

It is critically important to my family and yours to understand that meat consumed in America is to be free from antibiotic residues. The presence of residues is illegal. As a former leader in the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service, I can assure you that the system checks carefully for the presence of this stuff in meat. Today's concern is about the possibility of resistant bacteria.

My years of experience and research in the food safety field have led me to the following conclusion: The published scientific risk assessments done to date on antibiotic use in livestock demonstrate an extremely low to nonexistent human health risk from resistant bacteria. Therefore, the public health and political benefit of antibiotic bans will be low, nonexistent or even contrary to public health. As a veterinarian of over 25 years, I believe antibiotic bans will lead to secondary public health consequences from the consumption of unhealthy animals, not to mention added suffering of sick animals. Experience teaches that evaluation of human health risk and the value of banning certain antibiotics must be made on a case-by-case basis; blanket bans are not effective.

The effects of such blanket bans are apparent in Denmark. After Denmark passed their ban on preventive antibiotics in 2000, the World Health Organization found no measurable public

health benefit, partly because farmers were forced to use more antibiotics to treat sick pigs – 100 percent more! These secondary health impacts of the ban and the costs to producers haven't been covered in recent media reports.

If you truly value food safety for your family as much as I do, you'll realize that an antibiotic ban will actually decrease the health of meat animals entering the food chain. Science shows us, the continued safety of our food supply depends on allowing responsible farmers, with veterinary direction, to continue making decisions based on best science and experience. The choice is ours. Let's base it on sound science, which is best for us all.

## **Iowa Producer Welcomes Antibiotic Discussion**

For Heidi Vittetoe, talking about misunderstood issues such as antibiotics is not a new thing—she's been doing it for years near and far from her family's farm in Washington, Iowa. When members of the Pork Checkoff communications team paid her a visit recently, an open and honest discussion about antibiotics came quite naturally.

"Consumers need to realize as pork producers that it's our goal to provide a safe, healthy food supply for their families and ours," said Vittetoe.

"And it's important to underscore our commitment to providing a good work environment for those who work with us and to safeguard the environment."

When it comes to using antibiotics specifically, Vittetoe has plenty to share.

"We don't overuse antibiotics. In fact, we seek to use them as little as possible. When we do use them, we use them for a targeted set of circumstances. However, they're a really important tool in providing for the well-being of pigs and provide protection against bacterial growth during certain times of stress for the animals."

One of the things Vittetoe takes

pride in is working closely with their herd veterinarian to pinpoint when medication is needed, what type and how much. "We know there are certain times when pigs become stressed and susceptible to certain diseases. That's why we put the right antibiotic at the right dose in the feed. And of course, we strictly observe proper handling and withdrawal times."

To make her point about the minimal amount of antibiotics used on their farm, Vittetoe uses her hand to make a major point. "Less than a handful of antibiotics is what an entire barn of 1,200 pigs gets each day when it's used in the feed. This isn't typically understood by consumers and I think we need to make that point."

Over the last five years, Vittetoe noted that her farm has spent less and less on feed antibiotics—going from about \$3 per head, down to \$1.

"As a mother and a consumer I know how important safe food is. And as a pork producer, I know how hard we work to provide exactly that—a safe and nutritious food supply."



**pork  
checkoff**



## National Pork Board Honors Producers during Annual Meeting

The National Pork Board honored three retiring producer members and its outgoing president during the National Pork Industry Forum last March in Kansas City, Mo.

Tim Bierman, a pork producer from Larrabee, Iowa, was recognized for serving as president of the National Pork Board. Bierman's term as president and his second three-year term as a board member end in August. As past president, he will remain on the board an additional year in an advisory capacity.

"Few National Pork Board presidents have faced the challenges that confronted Tim: U.S. producers were mired in one of the worst profitability challenges ever; the voices of opponents of modern production practices have grown louder and more strident; the H1N1 flu outbreak and its misnaming by media added pressure at home and abroad," said Gene Nemechek of Springdale, Ark., and National Pork Board vice president. "Through it all, working with his board of directors, he helped create a steady and consistent response to each challenge."

In addition to serving as president, Bierman serves on the Compensation Committee, Domestic Marketing Committee, Administration Committee and Trade Committee. He also had served on the Animal Welfare Committee, Budget Committee, Audit Committee and Resolutions Committee.

Bruce Samson, a pork producer from Three Forks, Mont., and Steve Weaver, a pork producer from Elk Grove, Calif., were honored for six years of service to the National Pork Board. Jeff Galle, a pork producer from Pittsfield, Ill., was honored for

three years of service to the National Pork Board.

Samson, a producer who has 300 sows and markets 5,500 pigs annually, serves on the Audit Committee, Niche Marketing Committee, Nutrition Committee, Swine Health Committee and Animal Science Committee. He had also served on the Administrative Committee, Budget Committee and Resolutions Committee.

Weaver, a producer who has 60 sows and markets 1,000 pigs annually, is the immediate past president of the National Pork Board. He serves on the Compensation Committee, Domestic Marketing Committee, Audit Committee, Pork Safety and the National Pork Board Plan of Work and Budget Task Force. He had also served on the Animal Welfare Committee, Administrative Committee, Budget Committee, Niche Marketing Committee, Producer and State Relations Committee, Producer Services and Swine Health Committee.

Galle, the director of the agricultural and horticultural sciences programs for John Wood Community

College and owner/president of GPPE Ltd., serves on the Domestic Marketing Committee and Producer Services Committee. He also had served on the Administrative Committee, Budget Committee, Audit Committee, Nominating Committee, Producer and State Relations Committee, Resolutions Committee and Swine Health Committee.

The National Pork Board consists of 15 members, each serving a maximum of two three-year terms. The Pork Act requires that no fewer than 12 states be represented by the 15 Pork Board members.

## Pork Checkoff Honors Dale Miller with Distinguished Service Award

The Pork Checkoff honored Dale Miller, editor of National Hog Farmer, as the winner of its Distinguished Service Award during the National Pork Industry Forum. The Distinguished Service Award is given annually to recognize the lifelong contribution to



*National Pork Board president Tim Bierman, left, presented Dale Miller, editor of National Hog Farmer with the Distinguished Service Award during the National Pork Industry Forum.*

the pork industry of an outstanding leader.

“Dale’s passion for helping producers understand and adopt changing production practices have benefited pork producers for the past 38 years,” said Tim Bierman, a pork producer from Larrabee, Iowa, and National Pork Board president. “As an example, Dale was at the forefront of delivering vital information on artificial insemination technologies as they first offered promise to U.S. pork producers in the early 1970s, through the time when they became common practice.”

Dale also highly values and takes the time to honor the excellence of others. Through the Environmental Stewards program he has championed, more than 65 producers have been recognized. Dale’s 50th anniversary National Hog Farmer magazine paid tribute to 50 of the most influential people of the industry.

“To Dale it’s all about the people,” said Bierman. “He values all the producers and the people in the pork industry that he interacts with on a daily basis to report the accurate facts



*National Pork Board CEO Chris Novak gave an update from the National Pork Board during the Pork Industry Forum*

to help pork producers.”

## **Pork Checkoff Sets Direction to Lead a World-Class Food Industry**

“Leading a world-class food industry - Responsible. Sustainable. Professional. Profitable.” This is the new vision for the National Pork Board that was introduced to Pork Act Delegates at the National Pork Industry Forum.

The vision statement comes from a strategic five-year plan developed by the National Pork Board.

“This new plan for the future of our pork industry was built by pork producers, for pork producers,” said Tim Bierman, a Larrabee, Iowa, pork producer and president of the National Pork Board. “Work on this plan began last year during some of the darkest days for U.S. pork producers since 1998, but the producer task force remained committed to building a plan that could help ensure a successful future.”

Part of what it means to be a world-class pork industry includes:

- Being socially responsible in the production of food that feeds the world;
- Adopting production practices consistent with the pork industry’s ethical principles that can be sustained long term;
- Demonstrating the industry’s We Care philosophy by acting in a professional and competent manner at every level of the industry, from top meat-company executives to workers in the hog barns across America;
- Providing top-quality food products for consumers at a reasonable price that enables all industry participants to be profitable on a consistent basis.

“These points describe core industry values that all members of our industry should strive to implement on a daily basis,” said Bierman.

Pork Act Delegates also received a preview of new efforts aimed to reposition pork with today’s consumers.

“Since 1987, The Other White Meat? campaign has been effective in changing consumers’ perception of pork as a leaner choice,” said Bierman. “During 2010, the Pork Board will be testing potential new brand positions for pork that may be more effective in reaching today’s consumers.”

To assist the National Pork Board in



*Pat Hunter, Vicksburg, left, and Ed Reed, Marcellus, represented Michigan as delegates at the National Pork Industry Forum. Not pictured is Fred Walcott, Allendale, who was also a delegate.*



evaluating their brand position, Schaffer Condon Carter, an agency with meat and commodity experience, has been hired following a competitive review of brand agencies.

In other business, the Pork Act Delegates voted on candidates for the National Pork Board to be forwarded for approval to the Secretary of Agriculture. In July, five Pork Board members will be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from the list of eight nominees elected by the delegates to serve 3-year terms. The delegates ranked the candidates in the following order:

- Julie Maschhoff, Carlyle, Ill.
- Everett Forkner, Richards, Mo.
- Henry Moore, Clinton, N.C.
- Derrick Sleezer, Cherokee, Iowa
- Craig Mensink, Preston, Minn.
- Wathina Luthi, Gage, Okla.
- Gregg Hora, Fort Dodge, Iowa
- Steve Wuerbler, Drain, Ore.

Jim Fisher, a pork producer from Middletown, Mo.; and Kim Balfe, a pork producer from Waseca, Minn.; were elected to the Pork Board Nominating Committee.

## NPPC Elects New Officers, Board Members

At its annual business meeting during the National Pork Industry Forum, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) elected new officers and members to its board of directors.

Taking over as president of the organization is Sam Carney, a producer from Adair, Iowa. Doug Wolf, owner of Wolf L & G Farms LLC in Lancaster, Wis., was elevated to president-elect; R.C. Hunt, a producer from Wilson, N.C., was elected to the vice president's position.

Re-elected to the board for three-year terms in the producer category were Hunt; Larry Liepold from Okabena, Minn.; and Randy Spronk

from Edgerton, Minn. Dr. Ron Prestage, DVM, from South Carolina was elected to a three-year term. Al Deutsch, with AP Division of Grain Systems Inc., was elected as NPPC's allied industry representative.

"We have excellent leadership in Sam, Doug and R.C. and quality, dedicated industry representatives in the new board members who were elected," said NPPC CEO Neil Dierks. "I know that all of them will work diligently and tirelessly on behalf of America's pork producers."

In addition to the newly elected and re-elected officers and board members, continuing as NPPC directors are: Gary Asay, from Osco, Ill.; Robert Dykhuis from Holland, Mich.; Howard Hill from Cambridge, Iowa; Mark Legan, from Coatesville, Ind.; and Bill Luckey, from Columbus, Neb. Todd Neff, with Tyson Fresh Meats, remains as the representative on NPPC's Packer-Processor Industry Council. Don Butler, a pork producer from Clinton, N.C., and director of government relations and public affairs for Murphy-Brown LLC – the livestock production subsidiary of Smithfield Foods – will serve on the board as immediate past president.

Producers Phil Borgic from Illinois and Ray Summerlin from North Carolina were elected for one-year terms to NPPC's Nominating Committee, which reviews the credentials of candidates for the organization's board of directors.

## Carney Named 2010 NPPC President

Sam Carney, a pork producer from Adair, Iowa, was named NPPC president. He was elected to the post for a one-year term.

Carney is owner and operator of Carney Farms Inc., which he runs with his son Randy. They market about 4,000 hogs annually from their wean-

to-finish operation. They also have a cow-calf herd and raise corn, soybeans and hay.

For more than 20 years, Carney has served in various pork industry leadership positions, including as president of the Iowa Pork Producers Association. He has served on the NPPC board of directors for the past four years. Carney is a member of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, Iowa Cattlemen's Association, Iowa Corn Growers Association and the Iowa Soybean Association. He also has served on his local school board, Farm Service board and county extension council.

"Sam has been a long-time leader in the U.S. pork industry and brings that leadership and knowledge of pork industry issues to his new position as president of NPPC," said NPPC CEO Neil Dierks. "He will be a valuable asset to U.S. pork producers."

## Wolf New NPPC President-Elect

Doug Wolf, a producer from Lancaster, Wis., was named NPPC president-elect.

Wolf is a partner in Wolf L & G Farms LLC, with his wife Kris and son Shannon. They run a 1,200-sow farrow-to-finish operation, which markets 24,000 hogs annually. The farm also includes a cow-calf herd, feedlot and 1,200 crop acres on which corn, soybeans and alfalfa are raised.

Wolf has served on the NPPC board of directors for the past four years. He has been involved with the Wisconsin Pork Association, the Grant County (Wis.) Pork Producers, the Wisconsin Farm Bureau and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

## Hunt New NPPC Vice President

R.C. Hunt, a pork producer from Wilson, N.C., was elected to the post of NPPC vice president.

Hunt owns Andrews Hunt Farms LLC, which consists of 3,800 sows and which markets about 75,000 feeder pigs annually. The business also includes cattle production and tilapia fish as well as 1,000 crop acres on which corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and coastal Berumda grass are raised.

Hunt has served on the NPPC board of directors for the past three years and has served on a number of committees. He is chairman of NPPC's We Care Advisory Committee. Hunt is a past president of the North Carolina Pork Council and also has affiliations with the North Carolina Agribusiness Council, North Carolina Meat Processors, North Carolina Cattleman's Association, Wilson County (N.C.) Livestock Association, Wilson County Agribusiness and the Fish-Keepers Fish Co-op. He's on the board of trustees of Louisburg College in Louisburg, N.C., and is past president of the Wide Awake Kiwanis Club and past chairman of the board of the Rocky Mount-Wilson Airport.

## NPPC Inducts Two Into Hall of Fame

Agriculture economist Glenn Grimes, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, and former Iowa state senator and "Master Pork Producer" John Soorholtz were inducted into the National Pork Producers Council Hall of Fame for their outstanding contributions to the pork industry at the National Pork Industry Forum.

Grimes was honored for pioneering pork industry economic outlooks, the pork demand index and practical application of gilt data. In 1983, he

began a 20-year consulting relationship with NPPC. Grimes, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture economics from the University of Missouri, worked for the school for more than 58 years. He has been honored by many state and national organizations for his impact on the industry, providing expertise to dozens of pork-industry and agricultural partners.

Soorholtz was part of the so-called Moline 90 group, which provided resources to hire the first full-time executive secretary for NPPC. He also was behind the "Nickels for Profit" program – a forerunner to the pork checkoff – that was piloted in Iowa and Illinois and focused on promoting pork while educating consumers. Soorholtz served as president of the Iowa Pork Producers Association in the '70s, and in 1983 he was elected to the Iowa Senate.

"Glenn Grimes and John Soorholtz are two of the giants of the U.S. pork industry," said NPPC President Sam Carney. "Their contributions to the industry have been invaluable."

## Michigan Producer Educates Children during Forum

The Pork Checkoff's Pork Leadership Academy (PLA), a group of 20 pork producers from across America, traveled to the National Pork Industry Forum in Kansas City, Mo., to meet with pork industry leaders and visited an after school program. Pork producers, including Andy White of Jones, Mich. used the *Producers, Pigs and Pork* materials created by the Pork Checkoff to teach children about modern pork production before graduating from the program.

"We have come along way since the first PLA meeting last June," said White. "The Pork Checkoff PLA program has allowed me to further develop my leadership skills and has shown me ways to get more actively




Andy White

involved in the pork industry to make a difference."

While in Kansas City, members of the Pork Leadership Academy visited an after school program to educate school-aged children on modern pork production.

"I enjoyed telling my story to these kids," said White. "I am doing my part to promote a positive image of pork production. I believe in living the ethical principles outlined in the We Care, responsible pork initiative."

The PLA members also were recognized for their achievements throughout the year during the Pork Act delegate session at the National Pork Industry Forum. Each PLA member was presented with a certificate on behalf of the Pork Checkoff in appreciation for their commitment to the pork industry by completing the PLA program.

"I am ready to make a difference in the pork industry," said White. "Whether it's sharing my time and talent at the local level or getting more involved on the national level, this program has prepared me for the challenge." 



## National Pork Board Continues to Support Swine- and Premises- Identification System

The announcement earlier this year by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) eliminating the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) does not change the objective pursued by the National Pork Board, which is for pork producers to have timely disease surveillance and protection for the U.S. swine herd.

“Premises identification is the cornerstone of animal health and disease surveillance,” said Dr. Paul Sundberg, vice president of science and technology at the National Pork Board. “This new direction does not change that fact and the pork industry remains committed to these critical efforts. The pork industry is committed to working collaboratively with USDA and state animal health officials to provide a sound system. Pork producers have demonstrated their confidence in premises identification through their participation and it is important that we maintain this voluntary cooperation.”

According to USDA data, the U.S. swine industry already has more than 90-percent of its farms identified through premises identification.

The Checkoff’s swine health committee, and the Committee’s Animal ID Working Group, had supported the NAIS and incorporated elements of the program as a requirement in the industry’s Pork Quality Assurance Plus® program. The announcement by USDA does not change the Checkoff’s reliance on a voluntary premises identification program as an integral part of our swine health initiatives. The Committee will work closely with USDA and state animal health officials in maintaining our progress toward improved swine disease surveillance.

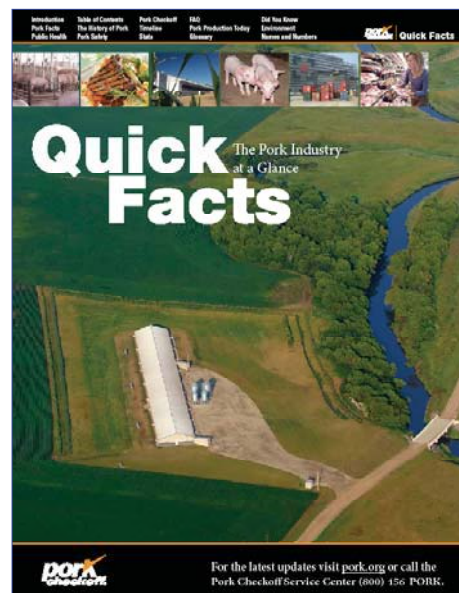


## Find Pork Answers Fast with Quick Facts

What’s the No. 1 pig-producing county in the nation? Want to know about the leading pork item on restaurant menus? Ever wondered about the carbon footprint of the U.S. pork industry?

You can find answers to these and many other pork questions in new Quick Facts: The Pork Industry at a Glance book. This user-friendly, 118-page guide offers accurate, informative updates on everything from how pigs are raised today through the We Care initiative to a breakdown of the industry’s latest pork stats.

“The story of pork production in America offers a unique and fascinating look at how modern livestock production has evolved,” says Chris Novak, CEO of the National Pork Board. “While the economies of scale are unlike those of past decades, the commitment of today’s pork producers remains unchanged-to provide their communities and the world with safe, wholesome and sustainable sources of high-quality pork.”



The Quick Facts book has been a year-long project, and the result includes a printed version of Quick Facts and an online version that includes a new, searchable format. The online version at [pork.org](http://www.pork.org/NewsAndInformation/QuickFacts/QuickFacts2010/index.html) (<http://www.pork.org/NewsAndInformation/QuickFacts/QuickFacts2010/index.html>) also includes the “Tell a Friend” option, which allows you to send a link to the Quick Facts book to the recipients of your choice.

Quick Facts offers a wealth of current information, including:

- The history of pork
- Pork production today
- The environment (including manure and nutrient management, water quality and odor management)
- Pork safety
- Frequently asked questions
- Statistics on the number of U.S. hog operations, market share, exports, Canadian statistics and more.

Because of printing costs, Quick Facts is printed in hard copy only once every three years to maximize the investment of Checkoff dollars. However, the latest Quick Facts version is always available online at [pork.org](http://pork.org). This year, the popular Quick Facts books are being distributed to National Pork Board members, Pork Forum delegates, state pork organizations, Operation Main Street speakers, university Extension educators and the media.

If you would like to receive a printed copy of Quick Facts please contact the Michigan Pork Producers Association Office at 517/699-2145 or visit <http://www.porkstore.pork.org/producer>.



## U.S. Hog Inventory Drops 3 Percent

It appears that a long streak of uneventful Hogs and Pigs reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture came to a screeching halt with the late March 2010 report.

“Everyone missed the estimates this time, as the numbers came in a lot tighter than expected,” says Len Steiner, president of Steiner Consulting Group in Manchester, N.H., who participated in the Pork Checkoff’s news media conference call following USDA’s Quarterly Hogs and Pigs Report. “This report is certainly not boring, and it could lead to some real fireworks in the hog market this summer.”

The U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on March 1, 2010, totaled 64 mil-


lion head, down 3 percent from March 1, 2009, and down 2 percent from December 1, 2009.

The breeding inventory, at 5.76 million head, plunged 4 percent from last year and dipped 2 percent from the previous quarter. The market hog inventory, at 58.2 million head, declined 3 percent from last year and dropped 2 percent from last quarter.

“The breeding herd and market hog numbers showed much bigger drops than expected,” says Dr. Darrell Mark, a University of Nebraska Extension livestock marketing specialist who participated in the news media conference. “In addition, the breeding herd inventory is the smallest number we’ve seen in years.”

The December 2009-February 2010 pig crop, at 27.9 million head, dipped 2 percent from 2009 and declined 2 percent from 2008. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.9 million head, down 4 percent from 2009 and down 6 percent from 2008. The average pigs saved per litter was a record high 9.61 for the December 2009-February 2010 period, compared to 9.48 last year.

Looking ahead, U.S. hog producers intend to have 2.9 million sows farrow during the March-May 2010 quarter, down 4 percent from the actual farrowings during the same period in 2009 and down 5 percent from 2008. Intended farrowings for June-August 2010, at 2.89 million sows, are down 2 percent from 2009 and down 6 percent from 2008.

“I think the sow culling is coming to an end, based on indications in this report and the potential for profitability, especially when you look at summer futures,” says Steiner, who used a lean hog carcass basis to predict second-quarter hog prices at \$78, third-quarter prices at \$79, fourth-quarter prices at \$69, and first-quarter 2011 prices at \$71. 

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## Researchers Look into Pit Fires and Explosions

Last fall’s record rain-delayed corn and soybean harvest caused major delays in manure pump-out and application, setting in motion a potentially dangerous situation on some pork operations.

“Unfortunately, several Midwestern swine facilities suffered flash fires and explosions related to liquid manure agitation and pumping from deep pit concrete storage,” said Allan Stokes, the Pork Checkoff’s director of environmental programs.

Due to the rash of incidents, the Checkoff’s Environmental Committee contracted with Iowa State University researchers to review literature on the known science related to the causes and possible factors and sources for explosions and flash fires.

The findings include:

- Explosions and flash fires related to deep-pit manure storage have been noted as early as 1969.
- Gases resulting from anaerobic decomposition of manure (methane, hydrogen sulfide and phosphine) are the likely source of most fires.
- Methane is the most likely source of barn fires since the lower explosive limits for both hydrogen sulfide are far above the toxic level for swine and humans. Animal death would likely occur before either reached combustible levels.
- Foaming may occur in anaerobic systems. This increases the potential hazard by trapping methane in the foam and releasing it during manure agitation. 

# Pork Checkoff

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

## Hy-Vee Sells More Than One Million Pork Tenderloins

While the Midwestern-based retailer Hy-Vee has created “millions” of unique promotions like the “million stem rose sale,” it turned its attention to pork recently with the successful “One Million Pork Tenderloins Sale.”

“It was all positive, and we had a lot of fun with it,” says Greg Frampton, assistant vice president of foodservice for Hy-Vee, which worked with the National Pork Board, Hormel Foods and the Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA) on the Pork Checkoff-supported promotion. “We surpassed our goal of selling one million tenderloins.”

Hy-Vee, which has more than 220 retail stores in the Midwest, sold pork tenderloins throughout January at all of its stores’ delis and meat cases. To give consumers an extra incentive to purchase the tenderloins, Hy-Vee donated a portion of the proceeds to support the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Custom point-of-sale materials and advertisements drew attention to the inaugural One Million Pork Tenderloin Sale, which generated a lot of positive feedback for Hy-Vee.

“Hy-Vee has become a great partner for the National Pork Board, the IPPA and our producers,” says Rob Kirchofer, retail marketing manager, central division, for the Pork Checkoff. “Their continued support of pork produc-

ers is recognized and appreciated.”

There’s a lot of potential for future partnerships between the pork industry and Hy-Vee’s foodservice division, Frampton adds. “We’re glad to help out pork producers, and we look forward to doing more promotions with the pork industry, especially for October Pork Month.”

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## Oklahoma Pork Supports Extreme Makeover Home Edition

With only four days to renovate a deserving Oklahoma family’s home, hundreds of crew members and volunteers who worked around the clock recently at the “Extreme Makeover Home Edition” site near Lexington, Okla., were able to recharge with a free pork dinner, thanks to Oklahoma Pork Council (OPC).

“The amount of food it takes to feed everyone involved in a project like this is out of this world, and we were glad to help,” says Roy Lee Lindsey, executive director of the OPC, which served 471 smoked pork loin sandwiches from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. one evening.

This fits with a guiding principle of the pork industry’s We Care program, which encourages producers to contribute to a better quality of life in our communities, Lindsey says. “Also, it was a privilege for us to assist a worthy Oklahoma family who has been involved in agriculture for a long time.”

The We Care responsible pork initiative is a joint effort of the Pork Checkoff through the National Pork Board, and the National Pork Producers Council, to help demonstrate that producers are accountable to established ethical principles and animal

well-being practices. We Care defines the industry’s core values and offers a way to build trust with consumers.

In addition to serving free pork sandwiches at a VIP tent in front of the house, the OPC was recognized as a project sponsor with Ideal Homes of Oklahoma, which played a key role in the renovation project. The extreme home makeover benefited Brian and Audra Skaggs, whose infant son required a heart transplant recently.

“This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and it couldn’t have happened to a better family,” says Mark McGinnis, OPC’s community outreach specialist.

Unfortunately, the renovation project was complicated by a severe winter storm that hit the area shortly before the work commenced. Then a rainstorm turned the Skaggs’ property into a muddy quagmire as the organized chaos of the extreme makeover process began.

“While it was raining the whole time we were serving the pork sandwiches, the electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other volunteers never quit working,” McGinnis says. “Although this was a very trying time for the crew, everyone was very appreciative of Oklahoma pork producers’ contribution.”

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## U.S. Pork Exports Gain Momentum

U.S. Pork exports finished 2009 on a positive note, which has helped jumpstart an upward trend in 2010.

U.S. Pork exports closed the year with an 8 percent jump in volume and 6 percent increase in value for December, compared to year-ago totals. For the calendar year, pork exports registered the second-highest total in history, according to statistics com-



piled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

Overall, U.S. Pork and pork variety meat exports equated to 22.5 percent of U.S. production in 2009. U.S. Pork outpaced the performance of global competitors, which slumped 15 percent in value in 2009, led by a 22 percent drop for European Union pork producers.

"It has been a challenging year for pork producers, but it's encouraging to see consumer confidence returning and very positive signs of growth," says Philip Seng, president and CEO of the USMEF, which is responsible for developing international markets for the U.S. red meat industry and is funded in part by the Pork Checkoff.

In 2009, U.S. Pork and pork variety meat exports exceeded 2007 levels by 43 percent in volume and 37 percent in value. Mexico was the volume leader with 503,503 metric tons (1.11 billion pounds) valued at \$762.35 million - an increase of 27 percent and 10 percent, respectively, compared to 2008. This record-breaking performance was particularly impressive considering the country's sluggish economy and a temporary midyear disruption in pork demand due to H1N1 influenza.

U.S. pork recorded another spectacular year in Japan, falling just short (\$1.54 billion versus \$1.545 billion) of the value record set in 2008. This was achieved despite an increase of about 5 percent in Japan's domestic pork production. The U.S. share of Japan's imported pork market also reached an all-time high of 46 percent.

"Through our partnership, the Pork Checkoff and USMEF are accomplishing goals that we couldn't do on our own," says Tim Bierman, a pork producer from Larrabee, Iowa, who serves as president of the National Pork Board.

In addition to Mexico, single-year pork/pork variety meat export records were established in 2009 in the following markets:

- Taiwan, up 35 percent in volume and 26 percent in value over 2008.
- The Philippines, up 44 percent in volume and 41 percent in value.
- Australia, up 10 percent in volume and 3 percent in value.
- New Zealand, up 11 percent in volume and 1 percent in value.
- Central and South America, up 12 percent in volume and 14 percent in value

Exports to the Caribbean also set a record, increasing 18 percent in volume and 10 percent in value over 2008, according to USMEF.

## Food Comes from Farms Debuts on YouTube

The Pork Checkoff has added 11 new videos to its YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/porkcheckoff](http://www.youtube.com/porkcheckoff). These videos are aimed at helping consumers understand that food does come from farms and deal with a wide variety of topics ranging from animal welfare to the environment to biosecurity.

"YouTube is a great way to reach consumers who are searching for this type of information," said Teresa Roof, manager of public relations for the Pork Checkoff. "If we do not tell our story, someone else will and it may not always be favorable."

Roof continued, "We titled the videos and tagged the videos in a way to grab viewers attention. Then they watch the videos and learn the facts about pork production."

## Pork's Real Green Story Clears the Air

Recently, there's been more negative environmental news in the media regarding livestock, and consequently, pork production, regarding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Most notably, this new round of misinformation has been quoted by Paul McCartney, which has garnered some wider media interest. However, the Pork Checkoff is prepared to share the real facts with producers and the public as it continues to take a leading role in making sure the industry stays on top of this issue.

"U.S. pork producers are among some of the most efficient and environmentally conscious food producers in the world," says Allan Stokes, director of environmental programs for the Pork Checkoff. "Producers have a long history and tradition of providing a high quality, safe and nutrition dense food source to help feed the world's population. The industry's carbon footprint initiative is actively researching ways to increase production efficiencies in environmentally sustainable ways essentially reducing GHG emissions per pound of food produced."

According to the 2008 United Nation's, Framework Convention on Climate Change November 2008 technical report on Challenges and opportunities for mitigation in the agricultural sector, agriculture contributes 10 to 12 percent of the total global man-made GHG emissions. On a global scale, the main sources of non-CO2 GHG emissions from

*(continued on page 42)*

# We are Listening

## Dear MPPA:

On behalf of those of us who organized and presented the "Ag Day Meat Cookout at the Capitol" on March 20th to respond to the governor's infamous "Michigan Meat Out Day", please accept a big THANK YOU for your organizations' contribution to the event.

The pork aprons provided by your group were proudly worn by those serving hot dogs and other individuals speaking to the media during the activity on the capitol lawn.

The brochures provided allowed the public to become more aware of the many and delicious methods of preparing pork products. A drawing held to give away a half pork loin drew many entries from those attending on that snowy, chilly Saturday.

Again, a big thank you for your effort in helping to make the event a huge success for Michigan's agriculture industry.

*George Hubka,*  
Meat Cookout at the Capitol organizer  
Dowling, Mich.

## Dear MPPA:

It's always great to hear from you and the members of the Michigan Pork Producers Association!

We are especially grateful for your commitment to supporting 4-H again this year with your increased gift of \$2,000 which represents \$1,500 to support the annual 4-H Beef, Sheep and Swine volunteer training programs and \$500 to fully sponsor the 2010 4-H State Swine Award for youth. Your gift will again qualify the Michigan Pork Producers Association for recognition as 4-H Corporate Clover Club members.

We don't speak often enough about the proven difference 4-H makes in the lives of young people, but I'm pleased to share what we've recently

learned through a national study on the impact of 4-H conducted by Tufts University.

- 4-H youth had higher school grades, greater emotional engagement in school and were more likely to see themselves as going to college compared with other out-of-school time youth development organizations.

- 4-H youth were 10 percent higher than comparison groups on contributions to community or voluntary community service.

- In Grade 8, the odds that 4-H youth expect to go to college are 1.6 times higher than the odds for comparison youth. We actually now know that 52.7 percent of Michigan 4-H seniors from 2004 to 2009 went to college!

- 4-H youth were 1.3 times more likely to be in the lowest risk/delinquent behavior path.

- o Tufts National 4-H Youth Development Study 2004-2008

Please know that 4-H can only be this difference in the lives of Michigan's young people because you say yes to this work with your support each year.

Thanks bunches!

*Cheryl D. Howell*  
Executive Director  
Michigan 4-H Foundation

## Dear MPPA:

I recently received acknowledgment from the Michigan 4-H Foundation of the Michigan Pork Producers continued and strong commitment to Michigan 4-H. I personally want to thank you and the entire organization for your generosity.

As was indicated in recent correspondence from Cheryl Howell, Executive Director, Michigan 4-H Foundation, the contribution from MPPA will be directed to sponsorship of the annual 4-H Beef, Sheep, and

Swine Teen and Adult Leader Training Workshop and the 2010 4-H State Swine Award program. As I have shared with you previously, the Teen & Adult Leader Workshop is one of the most highly attended programs that is held annually at Kettunen Center. This past February, there were approximately 175 attendees. The participants are always highly appreciative of the program offering as well as the generosity of sponsoring organizations such as the Michigan Pork Producers Association.

Please extend my appreciation to the Michigan Pork Producers Association Board of Directors, staff, and membership.

Best wishes.

*Kenneth Geuns*  
Extension Specialist – Livestock Youth  
Michigan State University

## Dear MPPA

The Oceana County Farm Bureau, in cooperation with the National Asparagus Festival, Oceana Dairy Committee and Oceana/Mason Pomesters would like to thank you for contributing promotional materials for the door prize "Goodie Bags" that were handed out during the Fifth Annual Oceana County Agricultural Banquet.

This year's banquet was another successful event and would not have been possible without the support of the local businesses. The Taste of Oceana reception had four different businesses and one organization setup to provide some tasty samples for the attendees. The program portion of the event included the presentation of the Friend of Oceana Agriculture Award to State Senator Gerald Van Woerkom. The entertainer, Jason Huneke provided an entertaining juggling routine for audience members. The Oceana Soil & Water Conserva-

## Youth Livestock Scholarships Deadline is approaching.

tion District included the presentation of their Cooperator of the Year to DeRuiter Farms. The evening was completed with the crowning of the 2010 Mrs. Asparagus and her runner-up, Kimberly Morden of New Era and Patrisha Danes of Hesperia, respectively.

All in all the evening was a great success and we appreciate your contribution to this event and hope your support will continue for many more years.

*Kathy Walicki*  
Promotion & Education Member  
Oceana County Farm Bureau

### Dear MPPA:

We'd like to say "thank you" for helping others facing a difficult time with your gift to the Food Bank Council of Michigan.

We appreciate your donation of \$2,000.00 through the Taste of Elegance event which will help us contribute to help the individuals and families who rely on the food bank network for emergency food assistance. Your gift will be used to assist in the purchase and transportation of food that will be delivered to our nine regional food banks.

Thank you for your generosity and your concern. You are truly making a difference in the lives of people throughout Michigan.

*Jane Marshall*  
Executive Director  
Food Bank Council of Michigan


Since 2000, the Michigan Youth Livestock Scholarship Fund (MYLSF) has awarded over \$61,000 in scholarships and \$201,000 in educational awards to outstanding youth who have exhibited at the premier livestock events in the state of Michigan.

To be eligible for either the MYLSF general scholarship or the state-wide scholarship the applicant must be a resident of Michigan and a graduating high school senior or a high school graduate continuing their education at an accredited institution in the year in which they are applying. For the general MYLSF scholarship the applicant must be a youth exhibitor at the Michigan State Fair, the Michigan Livestock Expo or the Michigan Dairy Expo for a minimum of three calendar years prior to the year of application. For the state-wide scholarship, applicant must be a youth exhibitor at a local, county, state-wide exhibition or state fair for a minimum of three years prior to the year of application.

The 2009 MYLSF general scholarship winners of \$1,500 are Shanna

Acker of Middleton; Aaron Balowski of Coldwater; Justin Kennedy of Nashville; Ryan Smoes of Hamilton; and Patricia Vaassen of Ann Arbor. While Emily Sovey of Fair Haven won the inaugural \$1,000 state wide scholarship.

Funding comes from specific proceeds from the Michigan State Fair Youth Livestock Auction and the Michigan Livestock Expo as well as charitable donations. The fund is governed by an eleven member board made-up of volunteers from the agricultural community with the majority of the fund being held at the Battle Creek Community Foundation.

Applications and qualification requirements for the MYLSF and the State-Wide scholarship can be obtained at [www.michigan.gov/mda-mylysf](http://www.michigan.gov/mda-mylysf). Please note the application submission deadline is June 18th. If you have any questions please contact Jeff Haarer at 517-241-2865 or Ernie Birchmeier at 517-323-7000. 

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## 2010 Michigan Livestock Expo in July

Youth and their families are encouraged to mark their calendars for the three-day livestock exhibition, July 16-18, and accompanying "Sale-abration" auction of award-winning animals and dairy products on July 20. Both events will take place this year at the Michigan State University Pavilion for Agriculture and Livestock Education.

Interested exhibitors should visit <http://www.milivestock.com> for more information, including updated participation requirements under the "Rules" tab.

Now in its second year, the Michigan Livestock Expo is a centrally located event that caters to youth exhibitors from across the state, ages 8 to 20, and features a variety of farm animals, including beef cattle, hogs, sheep and goats, as well as the state's dairy sector.

Earnings from the "Sale-abration" auction help youth with current and future college expenses. Proceeds above a sales cap support the Michigan Youth Livestock Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships and educational awards to youth involved in livestock exhibition activities.

The Expo complements existing county livestock exhibitions and coincides with the 2010 MSU Ag Expo and Michigan Dairy Expo.

Contact: Ernie Birchmeier, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2024





## Pork Medallions with Rosemary and Mushrooms



### Times:

10 minutes prep, 15 minutes cook

### Ingredients:

1 pound pork tenderloin, cut into 8 crosswise pieces  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced  
2 tablespoons onion, finely chopped  
1-3 teaspoons fresh rosemary, chopped OR 1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves, crushed  
1/4 teaspoon celery salt  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon sherry  
fresh rosemary sprigs, optional  
fresh mushrooms, optional

### Cooking Directions:

Press each pork tenderloin slice to 1-inch thickness. Heat margarine in large heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Brown pork quickly, about 1 minute on each side. Remove from heat. Place cooked pork slices on serving plate, reserving drippings. Keep warm. Add mushrooms, onion, rosemary, celery salt, pepper and garlic to reserved drippings in skillet. Cook over low heat about 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add sherry; stir to blend. Return pork slices to skillet; spoon mushroom mixture over slices. Cover and simmer 3-4 minutes. Place pork slices and mushrooms mixture on serving plate. Garnish with sprigs of fresh rosemary and fresh mushrooms caps, if desired.

Servings: 4

### Serving Suggestions:

This dish is easy but tastes impressive. You can also use apple juice instead of sherry. Serve with steamed snow peas and a rice pilaf.

## Pork's real green story

(continued from page 39)

agriculture are: soils, enteric fermentation, manure management and rice cultivation. Most notably, the report says GHGs from land-use change, including deforestation in tropical areas, are (in most countries) associated with agricultural activities and exceed emissions from all other agricultural sources.

Livestock is not a major contributor to GHG emissions. And more specifically, pork production's carbon footprint is a small fraction of U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, says Stokes. "Animal agriculture as a whole contributes a small part of U.S. GHG emissions. According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in 2007 only 2.8 percent of U.S. GHG emissions came from animal agriculture and pork production contributes even less--a mere one-third of one percent (0.33%) of total U.S. GHG emissions." 

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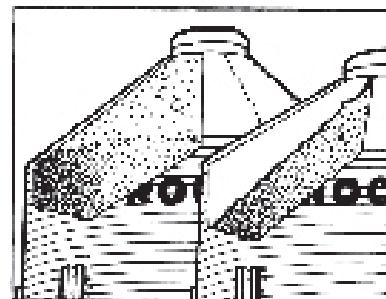
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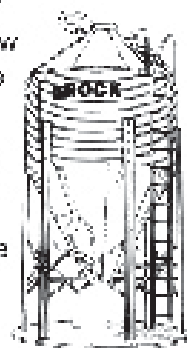


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Avg. number of pigs/litter	9.5 (gilt litters)
Avg. litter weight	134.25 lbs.
Age weaned	17 days
Avg. pig weight	14.13 lbs.

### 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 (Rough Pack)	0.56 in
Avg. yield	76.13%
No Paylean® used	

### 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

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



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