



Washington Pork Producers Newsletter Summer 2012



We Care

The We CareSM 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.

The pork industry already offers numerous programs, including Pork Quality Assurance Plus® (PQA Plus®) and Transport Quality Assurance® (TQASM), to support animal well-being and maintain a safe, high-quality supply of pork. The We Care initiative ties everything together to help the public view the pork industry as a self-regulated business that earns the trust of others.

Other programs that producers can take part in to support the We Care responsible pork initiative include Operation Main Street, Neighbor to Neighbor and NPPC's LEADR program.

You can learn more about We Care at www.porkcares.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Pork is the world's most consumed meat.** As popular as pork is in America, it is not the United States, but China, that is the number one producer and consumer of fresh pork in the world.
- **The pork industry is a major part of America's agriculture sector.**— At the beginning of 2009, there were nearly 67 million pigs in the U.S. herd. The majority of these were in Corn Belt states, where the pigs have access to the region's abundant supplies of feed grains and soybean meal. The largest pork-producing state is Iowa, with more than 19 million pigs statewide.
- **Today's pork is now leaner than the pork your parents grew up with.**—Today, pork is 75 percent leaner than in the 1950s. Pork producers have met consumer demand for leaner, more nutritious sources of protein by using new practices and better feed. The result? On average, the six most common cuts of pork are now 16 percent leaner than 19 years ago, and saturated fat has dropped 27 percent. Pork tenderloin — one of the most popular cuts of pork — has less fat and fewer calories than boneless, skinless chicken breast.
- **The U.S. is the world's largest pork-exporting country.**—Overall, pork exports increased to \$4.8 billion in 2008, with sales to Japan, the top importer of U.S. pork and pork variety meats.
- **Pork production is vital to the U.S. economy.** —There are nearly 35,000 direct, full-time equivalent pork producing jobs which help generate an additional 550,221 indirect jobs in the rest of the U.S. economy, according to industry statistics.

SAVE THE DATE WPP SUMMER MEETING

Date: July 6th, 2012
Time: 2:00-5:00 PM, hosted dinner to follow
Location: **Washington Assoc. of Wheat Growers**
109 East 1st Street
Ritzville, WA 99169

Topics will include: the budget, delegate selection for the 2013 Pork Forum, and Swine Information Day 2013

All Washington Pork Producers members are welcome and encouraged to attend

DRIVING DIRECTIONS: From I-90

- Take exit 220 Ritzville/Pasco Exit.
- Go north toward town of Ritzville
- Will be travelling on W 1st St.
- Continue to 109 East 1st Street.
- Washington Assoc. of Wheat Growers building will be located on your left.

PUBLIC NOTICE BY WASHINGTON STATE PORK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL PORK BOARD

The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 2013 National Pork Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body will take place at 2:00 p.m., Friday, July 6, 2012 in conjunction with a Board of Directors meeting of Washington State Pork Producers Association, in Room 1 of the Washington Assn. of Wheat Growers building, at 109 East 1st street, Ritzville, Washington, 99169. All Washington State pork producers are invited to attend.

Any producer, age 18 or older, 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 Washington State Pork Producers Association, 2001 VanTine Road, Garfield, Washington,

Your WPP Board Members

Scot Cocking , President	208-668-1149
Danny Belton , Vice President	253-847-9127
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EDITOR:

Sarah M. Smith,
WSU Animal Science Area Extension Educator

Ethical Principals of Pork Production

As a united group, pork producers adopted a formal set of ethical principles that outline the industry's values and define how producers represent the industry every day on farms across America. U.S. pork producers affirm an obligation to:

Produce Safe Food

- Use management practices consistent with producing safe food
- Manage the health of the herd to produce safe food
- Manage technology to produce safe food

Protect and Promote Animal Well-Being

- Provide feed, water and an environment that promotes the well-being of our animals
- Provide proper care, handling and transportation for pigs at each stage of life
- Protect pig health and provide appropriate treatment, including veterinary care when needed
- Use approved practices to euthanize, in a timely manner, those sick or injured pigs that fail to respond to care and treatment

Ensure Practices to Protect Public Health

- Use management practices consistent with producing safe food
- Manage the use of animal health products to protect public health
- Manage manure and air quality to protect public health

Safeguard Natural Resources in All of Our Practices

- Manage manure as a valuable resource and use in a manner that safeguards air and water quality
- Manage air quality from production facilities to minimize the impact on neighbors and the community
- Manage our operations to protect the quality of natural resources

Provide a Work Environment That is Safe and Consistent With Our Other Ethical Principles

- Provide a work environment that promotes the health and safety of employees
- Educate employees on the Ethical Principles for U.S. Pork Producers and prepare them to meet their obligations consistent with these principles
- Provide a work environment where employees are treated fairly and with respect

Contribute to a Better Quality of Life in Our Communities

- Recognize that being welcomed and appreciated by the community is a privilege that must be earned and maintained
- Acknowledge that our practices affect the trust our community has in pork production and our operations
- Operate in a manner that protects the environment and public health
- Play an active role in helping to build a strong community
- Acknowledge community concerns and address them in an honest and sincere manner

New Study Shows Today's Pork Production More Sustainable than 50 Years Ago

Data reveal decades of continuous improvement

A new study finds that while pig farms of the 1950s may be remembered as idyllic, they were not as sustainable as those of today. This becomes clear as the metrics most associated with sustainability are revealed from their 1959 baseline – a 35 percent decrease in carbon footprint, a 41 percent reduction in water usage and a 78 percent drop in land needed to produce a pound of pork.

Garth Boyd, Ph.D., an environmental researcher and former university professor, led a team of university and industry scientists who conducted this Checkoff-funded study to look at how the industry's gains in production efficiency over the last 50 years have affected pork's environmental impact. Everything affecting pork's footprint at the farm level was included in the model, including feed, water, energy, land and crop-nutrient resources needed to produce pork.

"The study underscores just how much improvement farmers have made over the past half century," Boyd said. "The pork industry has been very successful in significantly reducing its environmental impact and use of natural resources by nearly 50 percent across the board per 1,000 pounds of pork produced, which is quite an accomplishment."

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

"This study shows how farmers today can

produce more pork with fewer resources than ever before," said Everett Forkner, a pork producer from Richards, Mo., and immediate past-president of the National Pork Board. "I'm not really surprised by this data either as I've seen a lot of change on my own



farm over the years as I've evaluated and implemented new technologies."

According to the study, when all of the findings on efficiency gains are totaled, the progress towards greater sustainability is clear with this example: Today's farms can produce 1,000 pounds of pork with only five pigs from breeding to market compared with eight pigs in 1959.

"As a pork producer, I'm proud of the accomplishments we've made as an industry," Forkner said. "But today's competitive market demands that we do even more to improve how we produce pork and I'm confident we can meet that challenge. We'll do it with more innovations, more Checkoff-funded research and our continued dedication to the We CareSM initiative's set of ethical principles." www.pork.org, 06/06.12

Hog Outlook: 17% of sows in open pens

Lately, there have been a few restaurant chains saying they will require, at some time in the future, all of their pork to come from farms that use open pen gestation facilities. At the request of the National Pork Producers Council, I have just completed a survey of 70 large hog firms which have 3.6 million sows (roughly 62.6% of all U.S. sows). The results indicate that 17% of their sows are currently housed in open pen gestation once confirmed pregnant. The group plans to increase this to 23% over the next two years. So, there are hogs available from open pen gestation facilities. The next question is how to track their pork all the way to retail.

USDA's Thursday afternoon calculated cutout value was \$83.86/cwt, up \$1.91 from the previous Thursday, but \$6.85 lower than on this week last year. The negotiated hog carcass price this morning is 104.4% of the pork cutout value. Over the last 10 years, the national base carcass hog price averaged 91.3% of the pork cutout value. Thus far this year, the average is close to 100%. There have been 11 weeks thus far this year in which the base hog price has been above the cutout value. Why so high? First, there is a lot of volatility in the relationship of hog prices to cutout value. The lowest annual average in the last decade was 2002 at 84.5% and the highest average was 2005 at 95.5%. Second, the byproduct has been adding to hog value lately. The ten-year average is byproduct equals 11.9% of hog value. This year's average is 13.6%. The high hog-price-to-cutout ratio is causing problems for packers. The packer gross margin (cutout value plus byproduct value minus hog price) averaged \$23/hog for 2002-2011. Thus far this year it has averaged \$17/head. Look for very low Saturday slaughter until packer margins improve.

The national average negotiated carcass price for direct delivered hogs on the morning report today was \$87.51/cwt, up \$6.15 from last Friday. The eastern corn belt averaged \$87.56/cwt this morning. The western corn belt had an average of \$86.32/cwt on the morning report. There were not enough early sales in Iowa-Minnesota for a price quote. Both Peoria and Zumbrota had a live top today of \$59/cwt. The top for interior Missouri live hogs Friday was \$63.75/cwt, up \$5.25 from the previous Friday.

Hog slaughter totaled 2.007 million head this week, up 9.7% from the week before (which was light due to the Memorial Day holiday last Monday) and up 0.2% compared to the same week last year. Barrow and gilt carcass weights for the week ending May 26 averaged 204 pounds, down 1 pound from the week before, but up 2 pounds from a year ago. The average barrow and gilt live weight in Iowa-Minnesota last week was 274.9 pounds, up 0.6 pounds from a week earlier, up 4.3 pounds from a year ago, and above a year earlier for the 28th consecutive week.

Friday's close for the June lean hog futures contract was \$93.02/cwt, up \$2.30 from the previous Friday. The July hog futures contract settled at \$92.92/cwt, up \$1.35 for the week. August ended the week at \$92.45. October settled at \$82.95/cwt.

Ron Plain and Scott Brown, University of Missouri, www.porknetwork.com, 06.08.12

Increase feed efficiency to maximize returns

Since feed costs represent the largest portion of cost of production, it also represents the greatest opportunity for reducing costs-- in particular the grow-finish barn. Feed efficiency can have the single biggest impact on feed cost per pig. With the current high feed costs, there has been a greater push toward managing feed efficiency within operations.

There are a number of considerations that play a role when examining feed efficiency in pork production, according to Ken Engele, information services manager, Prairie Swine Center. These are environmental (temperature, humidity, air circulation), social (space allocation, group size, re-grouping), immunological (disease, pathogen concentration), and management (particle size, feeder adjustment).

Engele provides the following factors that impact feed efficiency:

- Genetics: Are you feeding according to the maximum lean yield potential of your herd?
- Feed processing: Understanding the impact of pelleting and size of grind. Industry standard for particle size is 600-800 microns. Kansas State University demonstrated a 1.2 percent improvement in feed efficiency for every 100 micron reduction in particle size relative to the optimal range. Pigs fed pelleted diets vs. mash have 3 percent to 6 percent better feed efficiency.
- Management: Ensure feeders are checked daily and feeders are adjusted for 40 percent pan coverage to maximize feed efficiency, by maximizing performance and minimizing feed wastage. In addition, a 3 percent reduction in pen space translates to a 1 percent reduction in feed intake and growth rate.



- Dietary energy level: Use of alternative feed ingredients typically provides a lower energy density within the diet, thereby increasing the amount of feed required per pig. Pigs will typically compensate for the lower energy diets by increasing their intake, subsequently having a significant impact on feed efficiency. Poorer feed efficiency may be offset by cheaper diet cost. It is very important to monitor this relationship.
- Environmental temperature: Ensure pigs are kept within their thermal comfort zone. Cold temperatures increase feed intake while hot temperatures reduce feed intake
- Disease challenge: Healthy pigs grow faster. Pigs are able to utilize nutrients for growth rather than fight disease. Disease challenges can also increase mortality in the finishing herd and can have significant impact on whole herd efficiency.
- Breeding herd productivity: On average, a sow will consume approximately one ton of feed per year. The greater number of pigs produced per sow will improve whole herd feed efficiency.
- Market weight: Feed efficiency worsens as pigs get heavier. Ensure pigs are marketed at their optimal weight to minimize feed cost, maximizing profit potential.

Center Prairie Swine Center, www.porknetwork.com, 04.23.12

Youth Swine Producers. . .

Know Your Pig:

Everyone raising a pig for the fair would like to have their animal named "Grand Champion", however only a very few pigs and/or showman at the fair can be named champion. Remember what the purpose of the 4-H/FFA swine project is— In addition to developing life skills, such as responsibility, leadership, communication, etc; youth and their families will also learn about the swine industry, how to produce high-quality safe meat, and will make life-long friendships. Raising and showing a high-quality pig requires dedication, hard work and knowledge.

Raising a 4-H/FFA swine project is more than just showing and selling a pig. Youth and families involved with these projects need to remember that they are not only responsible for the care and well-being of an animal, but that they are also responsible for producing food for other human beings. Families that can't or don't have the time and resources to take on these responsibilities should not have a food animal project. However, for the youth and families that have accepted the responsibilities of raising market pigs, it is important to know more about your pig than the weight and how much are going to sell it for at the fair. Ensuring a high-quality pig starts way before you get your pig and continues through the sale and harvest of the pig.

Many swine judges in the showmanship competition are asking questions to ensure youth have a good understanding of raising a market swine and are good ambassadors for the swine industry and 4-H/FFA programs. There are many sources to research this information—other swine breeders, 4-H leader, FFA advisor, Extension office and many internet sites. Below are some questions swine judges might ask:

- What is the ear notch identification of your pig?
- What kind of feed did you feed?
- What was the cost of gain of your pig?
- How many nipples should a gilt have?
- Why do they dock a pig's tail?
- How much does your pig weigh?
- What breed is your pig?
- What are some of the good and bad points of your pig?
- What is PSE pork?
- What is a gilt and barrow?
- Where do you give vaccinations injections to market pigs?
- What is withdrawal time?
- What is the highest value retail cut of meat from a pork carcass?
- What is the average dressing percentage of a pork carcass?
- What is the body temperature of a healthy pig?
- Where should you measure back fat on a pork carcass?
- What is considered too lean for a pork carcass and why is this a problem?
- Can a pig have too much muscle?
- What is PQA and why is it important.?
- Why do we keep medication records?
- How long is a sows gestation length?
- What is the breakeven price for your swine project?
- What has 4-H/FFA taught your?
- Where does the bacon come from?

Test Your Knowledge

1. *What is the body temperature of a pig?*
 - A. 75-85 °F
 - B. 96-98 °F
 - C. 100-103 °F
 - D. 15-108 °F
2. *What does PSE stand for when discussing a swine carcass?*
 - A. Pale, soft, and exudative
 - B. Pink, straight, and extra fine
 - C. Pink, soft and extra fine
 - D. Pork standard evaluation
3. *What does LEA stand for when discussing a swine carcass?*
 - A. Lean eating quality
 - B. Large, excessive area
 - C. Loin eye area
 - D. Length evaluation analysis
4. *What is the average dressing percentage of a pork carcass?*
 - A. 50-55%
 - B. 60-64%
 - C. 70-74%
 - D. 84-88%
5. *Where should you give a intramuscular injection to a 220 pound pig?*
 - A. Neck area, behind ear
 - B. Loin area
 - C. Ham/rump area
 - D. Don't give an injection, too close to slaughter weight
6. *What does LEA stand for when discussing a swine carcass?*
 - A. Lean eating quality
 - B. Loin eye area
 - C. Large, excessive area
 - D. Length evaluation analysis
7. *Which breed of swine is best known for meat quality traits?*
 - A. Hampshire
 - B. Berkshire
 - C. Pietrain
 - D. Yorkshire
8. *How long is a sows gestation length?*
 - A. 9 months
 - B. 5 months + 5 day
 - C. 4 months + 4 weeks
 - D. 3 months + 3 weeks + 3 days
9. *What is an expected average daily gain of a 200 pig on a complete grain diet?*
 - A. 0.8-1.0 pounds/day
 - B. 1.7-2.0 pounds/day
 - C. 2.8-3.0 pounds/day
 - D. 4.5-5.0 pounds/day

Sarah M. Smith, Regional Extension Food Animal Specialist,
Washington State University