

Washington Pork Producers Newsletter Winter 2012

Have You Sent In Your Registration For Washington Swine Information Day??

The Washington Swine Information Day will be held on February 3, 2012 from 8:30 am until 5:15 pm at the Pillar Rock Restaurant/Moses Lake Golf & Country Club in Moses Lake, Washington. The educational seminar is designed for progressive pork producers and stakeholders; addressing critical and emerging swine production issues in the Pacific Northwest. Swine producers of all sizes; 4-H/FFA

youth producers; agency representatives; agriculture educators; and fair/show representatives are invited to participate. The event has been organized and sponsored by Washington Pork Producers, National Pork Board, and

Washington State University Extension.

The 2012 Washington Swine Information Day features an array of presentations that have been organized to meet the diverse and unique needs of the Pacific Northwest swine producer. Topics at the day's events include balancing profitable swine rations for the Pacific Northwest, managing risk through livestock price protection insurance programs, animal disease traceability, and pork checkoff requirements for commercial, niche and youth producers.

The morning featured topic will be factors influencing pork quality and taste for the pork consumer. Mr. John Green, National Pork Board Director of Strategic Marketing, will present on the demographics and demands of both the U.S. and Export consumer. Dr. Jan Busboom, WSU Extension Meat Specialist, will follow with a presentation on management and production factors that influence the quality and taste of pork. Following the presentation, Dr. Busboom will conduct a taste test for participants showcasing pork raised under different production systems and different processing methods.

The afternoon session has been organized to feature topics of interest to the growing show pig interest in the PNW. Show pig topics include information on rules and requirements for importing and instate movement of pigs into Washington state, and transport, receiving and housing requirements of show pigs. The day will conclude with featured show pig speaker Jamey Albrecht, regionally recognized swine judge and past National Jr. Swine Association Vice President, speaking on how to train, prepare, and show a champion show pig.

The all-day registration fee of \$40 includes the seminar, WPP membership, break, lunch, and handouts. An all-day youth registration, \$20, is also available to 4-H and FFA members. Individuals may also attend just the afternoon session. Additional funding for this event was made available by Pork Checkoff funding. For complete agenda and registration information visit, www.animalag.wsu.edu or contact the WSU Extension Office—Grant/Adams, Sarah M. Smith, at 509-754-2011, Ext. 413 or by email at smithsm@wsu.edu.

Swine Industry Asked To Participate In Feed Efficiency Survey

Kansas State University swine nutritionists are teaming up with their Iowa State University counterparts in asking swine producers, industry consultants and advisors to the pork industry to participate in an online survey about swine feed efficiency. The survey answers will help guide research direction and educational programs to improve feed efficiency and lower feed costs.

The survey, which can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/swinesurvey>, aims to identify gaps in current industry knowledge to help researchers better prepare educational materials and plan on-farm commercial research over the next four years, as part of an Agricultural and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) USDA grant, said Joel DeRouchey, livestock specialist with K-State Research and Extension.

The survey should take less than 15 minutes to complete. No responses will be individually identified – all responses will be summarized

together, DeRouchey said. Survey participants are not required to give contact information, although if they choose to do so, the research team will provide feed efficiency project updates,



including research results and publications as they become available.

“Names and contact information of individuals completing the survey will be collected separately from their survey responses and will not be associated in any way with submitted answers,” he said. “Respondents’ names and contact information will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than to provide them with the latest feed efficiency research updates.”

The deadline to take the survey is Feb. 20, 2012. Questions can be directed to DeRouchey at jderouch@ksu.edu or 785-532-2280.

Source: Kansas State University .

Your WPP Board Members

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EDITOR:

Sarah M. Smith,

WSU Animal Science Area Extension Educator

Washington Swine Information Day February 3, 2012

- 8:15 a.m. **Registration**
- 8:30 **Welcome— WSU Extension**
- 8:30 **News from WSU—**
Department of Animal Sciences Update,
Dr. Margaret Benson, Chair
WSU Swine Center Update,
Mr. Dean Peters, WSU Swine Center Manager
- 9:00 **Balancing Profitable Swine Rations For The PNW—**
Ms. Jaime Sackmann, Wolfkill Feed & Fertilizer, Othello
- 10:00 **Reducing Financial Risk Through Swine Insurance Program: A Program Small Producers Can Participate In Too—**
Ms. Jo Lynn Seufer, USDA Risk Management Agency, Spokane
- 10:30 **Break**
- 10:45 **Who Are & What Do Pork Consumers Want: U.S. & Export—**
Mr. John Green, Director of Strategic Marketing, National Pork Board, Des Moines, IA
- 11:30 **Factors Influencing Pork quality & Taste—AND Taste Panel—**
Dr. Jan Busboom, WSU Extension Meat Specialist, Pullman
- 12:30 pm **WPP Luncheon —National Pork Board and Pork Checkoff Update—**
Mr. John Green, Director of Strategic Marketing, National Pork Board, Des Moines, IA
- 1:30 **State Requirements for Import and Instate Swine Movement—Identification, Testing & Swine Exhibition —**
Dr. Leonard Eldridge, DVM, WSDA State Veterinarian, Olympia
- 2:30 **Break**
- 3:00 **Pork Checkoff Requirements For Commercial, Niche, and Youth Producers—**
Ms. Sarah M. Smith, Washington State University Extension Animal Scientist
- 3:30 **Transporting, Receiving, and Housing For Show Pigs—**
WSU Student Swine Coop, WSU Department of Animal Sciences, Pullman
- 4:15 **Training, Preparing and Showing A Champion Show Pig—**
Ms. Jamey Albrecht, PNW Swine Judge & Past National Jr. Swine Assoc. V. Pres.
- 5:15 **Adjourn**
- 6:00 **WPP Dinner and Annual Meeting—**
Scot Cocking, WPP President



NOTE LOCATION:
Pillar Rock Restaurant
(Moses Lake Golf & Country Club)
1373 Rd F.2 NE
Moses Lake, WA 98837

From I-90 West: Exit 174, right on Hansen, immediate left on N. Frontage Rd., right on Rd F.2 NE. Strait to Pillar Rock

From I-90 East: Exit 174, right on S. Frontage Rd, right on Hansen, left on N. Frontage Rd, right on Rd F.2 NE, Strait to Pillar Rock

Washington Swine Information Day
February 3, 2012
Pillar Rock Restaurant
Moses Lake , WA

Registration	Fee	Number	Amount
Includes: seminar, WPP dues, break, lunch, & handouts	\$40	X	= \$
Youth Registration	\$20	X	= \$
<i>Includes: seminar, handouts, break, lunch & handouts</i>			
Afternoon Session (1:00-5:15 PM)	\$10	X	= \$
<i>No Lunch—includes afternoon seminar, break & handouts</i>			
Additional Lunch	\$20	X	= \$
WPP Evening Dinner	\$25	X	= \$
Total Amount Enclosed \$			

Reminder: Registrations postmarked after January 27 will result in a \$15 late fee. DO NOT WAIT, get your registration in early!

Send completed form with check payable to **Washington Pork Producers**, WSU Grant/Adams Extension; Courthouse PO Box 37; Ephrata, WA 98823

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Do you have special needs?:
(WSU Extension will call to verify your request)

Moses Lake Lodging: Moses Lake has many convenient, quality lodging choices. Lodging information available at www.moses-lake.com or by calling the Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-992-6234

Cancellation Policy: If you cancel your registration by phone, 509-754-2011-Ext 413, or email, smithsm@wsu.edu, before January 25, you will receive your registration minus \$10 dues payment plus a \$15.00 cancellation fee.

Low Wheat Prices: Substituting Wheat In Swine Diets

Even as hogs prices reach record highs, producers are still faced with the challenge of recognizing increased profits. In 2012, livestock producers will likely have the opportunity to sell livestock at relatively high prices, but they will have to continue to manage input cost to take advantage of profit opportunities. Beginning in 2011 and continuing through the summer months, record feed prices had many livestock producers hesitant to expand or feed out animals. However, grain feed prices have changed considerably since the summer months, allowing producers to not only look at expansion but also at a alternative feed source not commonly utilized as livestock feed-- such as, WHEAT.

Large grain crops in the rest of the world and weak export demand have resulted in strong supplies of U.S. wheat, and as a result wheat prices have decreased significantly from \$7.50/bushel (Portland Soft White Wheat) a year ago to about \$5.90/bushel recently . Even with the significant decrease in corn prices, about 23 %, from the high of almost \$8/bushel this late spring to about \$6/bushel in recent trading, low and competitive wheat prices are causing many livestock producers to consider substituting wheat for corn or other cereal grains. When wheat is competitively priced with corn and other cereal grain, it becomes attractive to swine producers, especially in the major wheat producing region of the Pacific Northwest. In addition, with the current and potential future prices of wheat and pigs, feeding wheat to pigs can be viewed as a grain marketing alternative by some wheat producers who also raise hogs.

Many different varieties of wheat are grown in the U.S, including hard red winter, hard red spring, soft red winter, hard white, soft white, and durum. Soft white, hard red spring, and hard red winter wheat are common wheat varieties grown in the Pacific Northwest. From an animal feed perspective, there are few differences between the red and white wheat, but some slight differences between hard and soft wheat. Hard red spring wheat has the highest protein and amino acid levels of all the wheat varieties. Even though there are differences between the varieties, growing and harvesting conditions can greatly influence the nutritional composition of wheat even within the same variety. Grain testing and balancing a ration for protein and lysine concentration is especially important for pigs, because improper protein supplementation can

greatly impact animal performance (growth, feed efficiency, reproduction, health, etc). If lysine concentration levels are unknown, substituting wheat for corn on an equal weight basis would be a conservative approach for balancing swine diets, but is not cost effective when considering potential excess of expensive protein and amino acids supplements in the diet.

In most cases, pigs fed well-balanced wheat diets will perform as well as pigs fed traditional corn-fed diets or other PNW swine diets containing barley or triticale. Nutritionally, wheat is similar to corn and barley in many aspects, but there are some differences to consider. Wheat is typically lower in energy than corn, but usually higher in crude protein and essential amino acids than corn. Compared to barley, depending on the variety of wheat; wheat will typically have a greater feed value because it will be higher in energy, protein, and essential amino acids. The presence of the hull on the barley kernel increases fiber content of barley compared to wheat, which is of limited value in swine diets. So depending upon the price differences between wheat and barley/ corn and the pigs' stage of production, it might make economic sense to feed wheat over barley/ corn even if it cost a bit more. Supplementation of protein and essential amino acids can become very expensive, especially in the PNW where we don't have the availability of various and competing protein sources like the Midwest. The relative feed value of wheat depends on the stage of production and the price of protein supplements. The relative value of wheat compared to corn and barley will typically be enhanced as the price of protein supplements increase or as more protein and essential amino acids are required in the pig's diet (i.e. young growing pig).

The amino acid lysine is typically the first limiting amino acid in swine diets. Usually if swine diets are balanced for lysine, the content of other essential amino acids will be met. Wheat, compared to corn, has approximately 30-50% more lysine. According to research from Iowa State University, the higher level of lysine in wheat compared to corn reduces the need for soybean meal in wheat finishing diets by about 100 lbs/ton, increasing the feed value of wheat relative to corn by 5 to 7%. It is important to remember that lysine levels can vary greatly with wheat and specific varieties, so it is important to have a feed analysis done to accurately and most profitably balance the diet.

Calcium and Phosphorus content of wheat is also typically higher than corn. Wheat contains approximately .05 % calcium and .38%

	Corn	Soft White Wheat	Hard Red Spring Wheat (DNS)	Hard Red Winter Wheat	Barley	Triticale
Dry Matter (%)	89.0	89.0	88.0	88	89.0	90.0
Crude Protein (%)	10.5	11.8	14.1	13.5	10.5	12.5
Lysine (%)	.26	.33	.38	.34	.36	.39
Methionine (%)	.17	.20	.23	.20	.17	.20
Threonine (%)	.29	.35	.41	.37	.34	.36
Tryptophan (%)	.06	.15	.16	.15	.13	.14
ME (kcal/kg)	3,420	3,285	3,250	3,210	2,910	3,180
NDF (%)	9.6	12		13.5	18.6	12.7
ADF (%)	2.8	3.7		4.0	7.0	3.8
Calcium (%)	.03	.05	.05	.06	.06	.05
Phosphorus (%)	.28	.35	.36	.37	.36	.33
Bioavailability of Phos (%)	14			50.0	30	46

Low Wheat Prices: Substituting Wheat In Swine Diets—*con't from page 3*

phosphorus, compared to corn at .03% and .28%, respectively. The majority of phosphorus in cereal grains is chemically bonded to phytate. Pigs do not produce sufficient phytase enzyme to effectively utilize all the phosphorus available in cereal grains. However, according to Stein et. al only about 43% of the phosphorus in wheat is digestible, which is still better than corn at 24% of phosphorus digestible for pigs. Most of the phosphorus is tied up in phytate and is excreted in the manure. Depending upon your soil profile and your current crop needs, this excreted phosphorus could be a benefit or a liability. It has been reported by Stein et. al that supplementation of wheat-based pig diets with microbial phytase will improve phosphorus digestibility and is recommended.

Wheat is **slightly** lower in energy than corn as a result of **slightly** lower crude fat and higher fiber content. However, in most studies where corn replaced 100% of the corn used in the control diets there was no difference in average daily gains when fed in finishing diets. According to multiple research studies reported by Stein et al., pigs fed wheat-based diets can gain as quickly and as efficiently as pigs fed corn-based diets. In addition, wheat can be used in diets for young pigs without affecting subsequent performance and from the starter to the finisher phase without affecting carcass quality, fatty acid characteristics of pork fat, or meat color; provided that diets are formulated to meet the animals' necessary requirements at specific stages of production. Wheat can replace corn entirely in diets for all categories of pigs, as long as ration is also formulated for protein, amino acid and mineral content. However, a wheat-based diet can cause digestive problems in some pigs. Researchers out of Iowa State University recommend that wheat can replace up to 100% of corn in growing and finishing diets, no more than 85-90% of the diet for the breeding herd and up to 45% in small pig diets.

As expected, grinding wheat improves digestibility of both energy and amino acids. Stein et al. recommends grinding wheat to an average particle size of 500 to 1000 micrometers. Wheat diets that are ground too fine may increase gastroesophageal lesions, dustiness, and reduced feed intake. Mycotoxins, such as deoxynivalenol and zearalenone, can also be present in wheat that has been harvested and/or stored at too high of moisture contents. According to Stein et al. mycotoxin infection can occur when wheat contains 20% moisture or more and at a storage temperature of 70 to 85°F. Wheat should not contain more than 5 ppm deoxynivalenol if fed to pigs, and contaminated wheat should not exceed 20% of the dieted.

Wheat prices have dropped 25% this year, which is the biggest annual drop in 3 years. These changes in grain prices and the availability of wheat in the Pacific Northwest have swine producers and other livestock producers evaluating the possibilities of substituting wheat for corn, barley, or triticale in livestock diets. The increased levels of protein and essential amino acids of wheat compared to corn and barley also makes it an attractive alternative because less protein supplementation may be necessary. To help producers and swine diet consultants evaluate the cost benefits of replacing wheat in corn based diets Drs., Beob Kim and Hans Stein from University of Illinois have developed wheat replacement estimator, which can be found at <http://nutrition.ansci.illinois.edu/feed> ingredients.

—Sarah M. Smith, WSU Grant/Adams Extension Animal

WSU Extension To Host BEEF, LAMB, PORK AND POULTRY 100 Short-Courses In Spokane

Washington State University Extension and Department of Animal Sciences are excited to announce the first *WSU BEEF, LAMB, Pork and Poultry 100* short-courses in Eastern Washington. The BEEF and PORK 100 course will be offered on March 9, 2012 at the WSU Spokane Extension Office, and the LAMB 100 and POULTRY 100 courses will be offered on March 10, 2012 at Spokane Conservation District Office.

The WSU BEEF, LAMB, PORK and POULTRY 100 short courses are designed for beginning farmers, but are also excellent energizers for experienced food animal producers to expand opportunities and sustainability of their current livestock operation. The 100 programs have been developed to address needs identified at successful BEEF and LAMB 300/200 programs. The one-day species specific program will help livestock producers increase their knowledge on how to produce safe, high-quality food animals profitably; while producing the animals in an environmentally and animal care conscious manner. The short courses will address opportunities and issues to enhance the production, safety and quality of beef, lamb pork and poultry production from the farm to the plate. These programs will increase one's understanding of food animal production, quality and marketing; enabling participants to make informed decisions to improve profitability, quality, and wholesomeness of the food animals they are producing.

The registration fee for *WSU BEEF, LAMB PORK, or POULTRY 100* is \$65 per participant, which covers lunch, materials, and notebook. Registration for individuals or farms that would like to attend two classes, same species or different, is \$100. Registration after February 22nd, will increase to \$75 per person per class. For additional information on *WSU LAMB 100*, contact: Jan Busboom, WSU Meat Specialist, (509)335-2880 or busboom@wsu.edu; or Sarah M. Smith, Area Animal Science Educator, (509)754-2011, Ext 413 or smithsm@wsu.edu. More information and registration forms are available on the WSU Animal Agriculture web page at <http://animalag.wsu.edu> under "Upcoming Events".

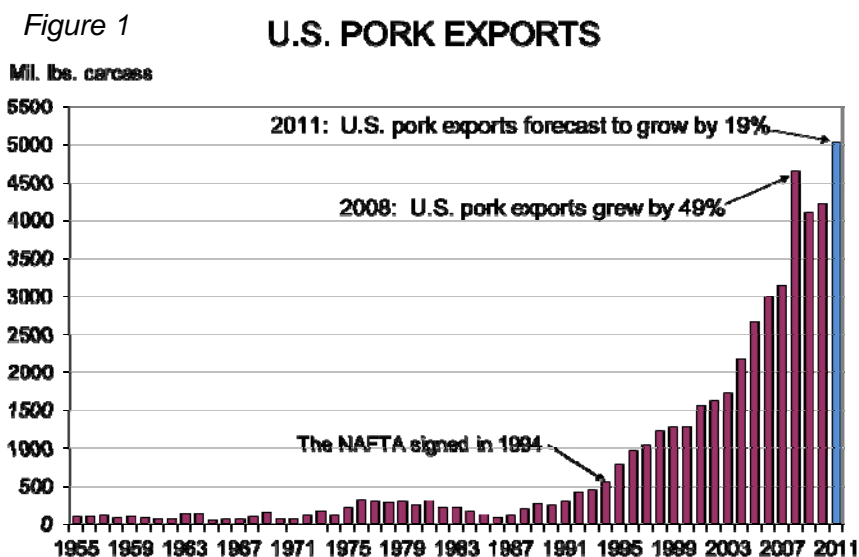
Sarah M. Smith Elected To Serve on NPB's Swine Educators Executive Committee

This past fall Sarah M. Smith, WSU Extension Area Animal Scientist, was elected to serve on the National Pork Board's Swine Educators Executive Committee. The Committee serves as a liaison among the large group (Swine Extension and Adult Ag Educators), National Pork Board's Producer Services Committee, and the U.S. Pork Center of Excellence. This Executive Committee will serve to represent the Swine Extension and Adult Ag Educators and plan educational programming, and resource information and distribution to this group.

The Executive Committee is accountable to the Pork Checkoff's Producer & State Services Committee. All Executive Committee formal motions and recommendations will be passed along to the Producers & State Services Committee for consideration. Each Executive Committee member represents the Swine Extension/Educators in his /her home state and all other Swine Extension/Educators from across the country.

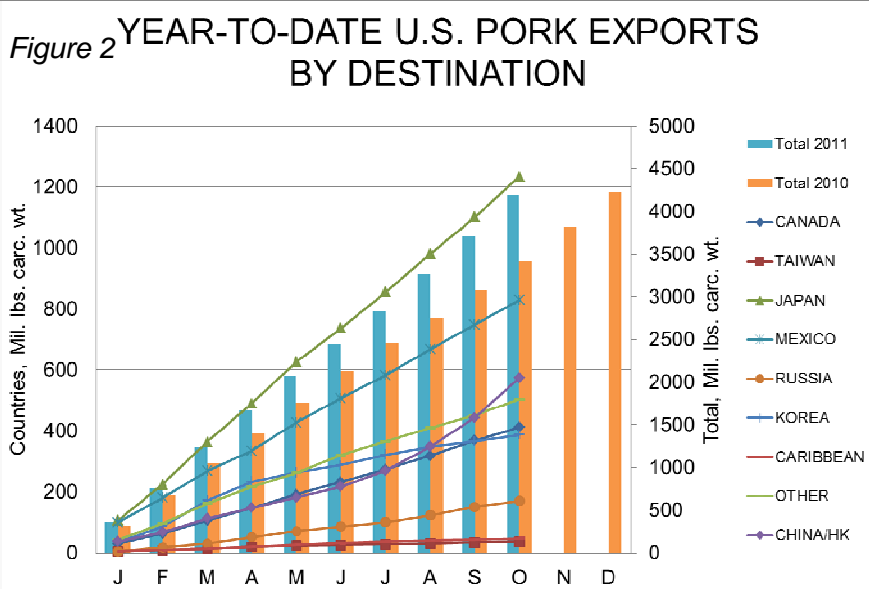
Export Driven Demand Likely The Best Ever For Pork

If I had to pick one word to describe the pork industry in 2011 – it would be "exports"! While a lot of other words come to mind, exports have been as huge this year as they were in 2008, when record exports simultaneously bailed the industry out of a porcine circovirus vaccine-driven supply glut and an ethanol-driven cost increase (Figure 1).



The Livestock Marketing Information Center's forecast for 2011 pork exports currently stands at 5.022 billion pounds, carcass weight equivalent. That would be a 19% increase from last year and set a new annual record by over 350 million pounds. The 19% increase pales in comparison to 2008's 49% growth, but we must realize that large percentage increases become less and less likely as the absolute level of exports grow. In fact, the 19% figure is larger than I ever expect to see again.

What is more shocking is that the 5.022 billion pounds forecast could be low, given the performance of U.S. exports in September and October (Figure 2). As of October, U.S. exports stand at 4.195 billion pounds, carcass weight equivalent. Looking back to last year, pork exports in November and December 2010 totaled 806.9 million pounds, so duplicating those levels would put us right at the 5.022-billion-pound level. But September and October shipments this year totaled



9.242 billion pounds. Duplicating those sales would put the 2011 total firmly above 5.1 billion pounds, which is just over 22% of currently projected pork production for 2011.

Figure 2 also demonstrates the role that China/Hong Kong have played in the U.S. market this year. Through October, the combination of those destinations ranked them as the third largest U.S. pork export market, behind only Japan and Mexico. We really must combine Hong Kong and China because of shipments from Hong Kong into mainland China.

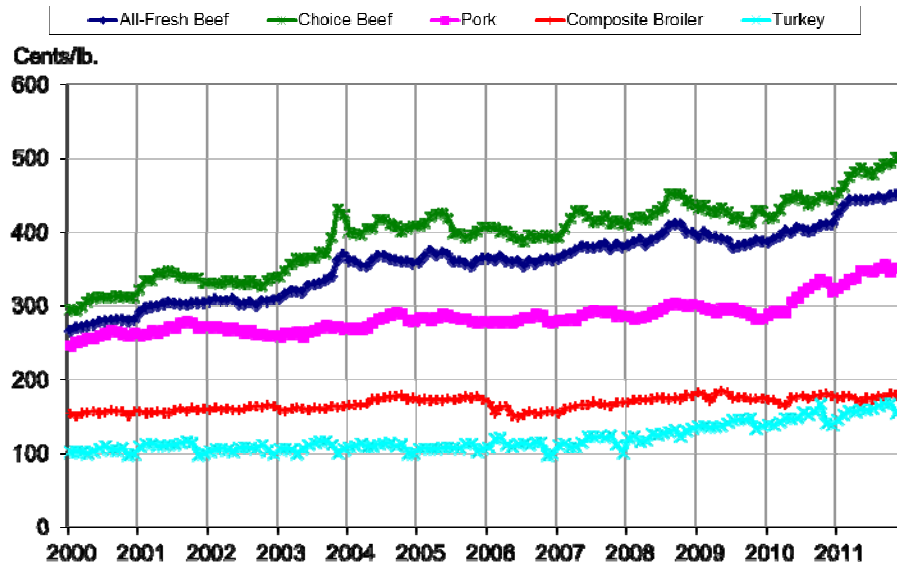
That is the good news. The bad news is that there is mounting anecdotal evidence that Chinese buyers may be backing away from U.S. markets as domestic Chinese pork prices fall. Last week's Iowa-Southern Minnesota direct hog prices were \$80.27/cwt., \$3.23/cwt. or 3.9% lower than one week earlier. The cutout value, though, gained slightly to close the week above \$90/cwt., so packer margins are strong.

Retail Prices Hold Strong

Weaker hog prices should be no surprise to anyone in early December. Last week's estimated 2.333 million head marked the 10th straight non-holiday week with 2.3 million head or more harvested. As I've pointed out before, it is not demand that fails us in the fall, it is simply the fact that more and bigger hogs come to market and the resulting pork supply overwhelms the level that we can move at steady or higher prices.

So why are retail prices still near record highs? Because of very natural price transmission time lags. November's average retail pork price of \$3.511/retail

Figure 3 RETAIL MEAT PRICES, USDA



pound was up slightly from October's \$3.468/lb., but was 5.8% higher than the price of last year (Figure 3).

The November price reflects supply and demand conditions over the past six to 12 months and actually represents a delayed "passing along" by retailers of record high cutout values last summer. I think these retail pork price increases will slow down or even disappear this coming year as cutout values stabilize and retail margins get back to more normal levels.

The time lags for higher retail prices in beef have been much shorter, due in part to there being much less processing of beef cuts. Beef cutout values began hitting record-highs in early 2011. Retailers have steadily pushed selling prices higher this year with Choice beef breaking the \$5/lb. level in November and setting another record. All-Fresh beef also hit a record high of \$4.504/lb. in November. Chicken prices remained near \$1.80/lb. in November, only 2% higher than a year ago. Aggressive reductions in output have yet to move chicken breast prices significantly higher.

—Steve Meyer, Paragon Economics, 12.19.11.
National Hog Farmer

Youth Swine Producers. . .

4-H/FFA Show Pig and Feed Prices For 2012

What is a feeder pig worth? For commercial purposes? For show?

Let's look at the facts. According to the USDA National Direct Delivered Feeder Pig Report, the average cash price paid for 40 pound commercial feeder pigs in the U.S. during the week ending December 16, 2011, was \$65.79 per head. This was for pigs expected to yield 50-54% lean value at base slaughter weights, usually 270-280 pounds. In other words, \$66 for just an average pig. This was also for pigs selling in lots of 250 head or more. With prices for slaughter pigs at near all-time highs and continued short supplies, demand and high prices for feeder pigs are expect to remain. Show pigs in the Pacific Northwest, pigs of the right age, genetics, and weight are even in greater demand and short supplies than in past years.

So, what are project pigs of show quality worth? Significantly more than \$66 each! First, "average" pigs that yield 50-54% lean value might earn blue ribbons but would not be very competitive in very many shows. Most youth want a better quality pig than that and should be willing to pay more for it. Second, the cost of producing project pigs is at least 25-50% higher than for commercial feeder pigs and the breeder/producer deserves to be paid for that added cost. Show pig producers are usually small and do not benefit from economies of size like commercial feeder pig producers do. Show pig producers also spend more money on breeding stock, boar semen, feed, and/or management systems. They give considerable care and attention to each individual animal they raise. Show pig producers also usually work directly and personally with each young person who buys one or more of their pigs to help them achieve a successful project. Last, the price of a high-quality show pigs from outside of the Pacific Northwest would likely be even higher to cover transportation costs.

Now for the bottom line for the spring of 2012. No one should expect to purchase a good quality 40 pound show pig for less than \$100 per head. To do so would fail to adequately compensate the breeder for his/her costs of production and opportunity cost. Also remember, that most show pigs are sold between the weights of 60-80 pounds, not 40 pounds like the listed commercial feeder price. Producers selling below market price are not only failing to teach the youth the fair market price of an animal, but they are also undercutting the market of other producers. A price of \$125 to \$150 would be fair to both buyer and seller under current market conditions. Animals of excellent quality from a well-respected breeder could certainly be worth more than \$150 each.

Are most youth likely to earn a profit if they pay \$125 for their project animal? Maybe not! But, is that the primary purpose of a 4-H or FFA swine project? What are the other benefits youth receive from participating in a 4-H/FFA market animal project.

—S. M. Smith, WSU Extension

Is Feed Going to Cost More in 2012 ?

Just as you should expect to pay more for your show pig, you should also budget for higher feed prices in the coming year. Grain and hay supplies

are very tight and the demand is very high by not only livestock producers but also by other industries, i.e. corn for ethanol, and other consumers from around the world.

Livestock producers do not like to pay more for feed or other inputs, but we must remember that the cost to produce feed (seed, fertilizer, fuel, labor, etc) are all increasing. These agriculture producers need to receive increased prices to be profitable. Also, we (youth and adult pork producers) are expecting more money for our pigs than we did 5 years ago or even two years ago.

As feed prices continue to increase, youth livestock producers will need to find ways to improve production while keeping feed cost at a reasonable level. To follow are some tips to help improve feed cost:

1. Evaluate feeds based on the nutrients provided and balance diets to make sure you are feeding to the animals' level of production and/or growth. With pigs it is very important that you meet specific protein and amino acid requirement—not just any feed will do. Be sure to feed to the stage of production of your pigs, i.e. starters for pigs up to about 40 pounds, grower feeds for pigs between 40-150/180 pounds, and finisher for pigs above 180 pounds. Read the label of the specific feed you are using and select according to your pigs age and weight. Finishing feeds will be cheaper, but do not have the necessary amino acid requirements for young pigs and therefore will not grow normally. In addition, high performing animals (fast growing, heavily muscled, and exercised pigs) will need more protein and/or energy than the average animal or average pig feed provides.
2. Reduce feed waste by checking and repairing feed storage containers, covers, and feeders to prevent feed spoilage, rodent/insect damage, or animal waste.
3. Make sure pigs have fresh, clean, cool water. If pigs do not have adequate clean water they will consume less feed and grow slower.
4. Implement an effective health program to keep animals from becoming diseased or infected with internal or external parasites. Make sure animals have been vaccinated and are treated for health or parasite concerns appropriately and quickly.
5. Ensure the animal's facilities are clean, dry, and the temperature is comfortable.
6. Handle animals calmly and gently to prevent unnecessary stress.
7. Evaluate alternative feeds that are available locally. However, cheap feeds are not always the most economic solution. As stated earlier the type and amount of feed greatly impacts production level—you might save \$0.10 per pound on grain, but lose more than \$0.10 in decreased production or purchasing supplementation to support the alternative feed

During high feed prices I see many individuals pull back on the amount of feed they provide—However, if your pig does not make weight they don't sell in the 4-H/FFA Livestock Auction. One can expect to get 15-20 pounds of gain per 50 pound bag of high quality feed. If a average show pig sells for \$3-6 per pound, it makes no sense to not pay \$20-25 for that bag of show pig feed. Do the math—don't be stingy with the feed!

—S. M. Smith, WSU Extension

