

Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork

Slow Cooker Pork Delivers Budget-Friendly Meals

In today's economy, the slow cooker has become one of the hottest kitchen tools to help consumers make the most of their food, time and money. That's why pork is serving up favorite recipes in the recent "Slow and Steady for Delicious Dishes" e-mail campaign.

A recent Pork Checkoff's monthly e-mail campaign included a number of slow cooker recipes, including Barbecued Pork Sandwiches made with pork shoulder, Glazed Pork Loaf, Black Bean Pork Chili and other hearty meals. The e-mail, which was sent to nearly 24,000 consumers who signed up at TheOtherWhiteMeat.com to receive breaking news, also includes tips for slow-cooker success, from temperature settings to spice suggestions.

"We've surveyed our readers to determine what kind of e-newsletter content they want, and recipes are the clear winner," said Pamela Johnson director of consumer communications for the Pork Checkoff. "They've also asked for more information on slow cookers, so this was a good opportunity to remind consumers about the value pork offers."

Throughout the year, the Checkoff's monthly e-newsletters offer an excellent communication tool, Johnson adds.

For more information, contact Pamela Johnson, PJohnson@pork.org, 515-223-3528.

Pork Tenderloin Appears in "People's" Weight Loss Challenge

New research supports the benefits of eating lean pork when dieting, and pork tenderloin has earned recognition in *People* magazine's recent "Weight Loss Challenge Update."

"This series shows how real people are achieving their weight loss goals, and it was great to see pork mentioned as part of a healthy diet," says Ceci Snyder, assistant vice president of consumer marketing for the Pork Checkoff.

The *People* magazine article features Jamie Macaraeg, 29, a nurse's aide who has lost 10 pounds. Her biggest shock? This busy caregiver has to eat more, including healthy meal choices like pork tenderloin. According to her nutritionist, Macaraeg would go hours without food, causing her body to go into starvation mode and not burn calories effectively.

"Now, Macaraeg eats every three hours, swapping her old lunch of Doritos for pork tenderloin and steamed veggies," notes the article.

This story dovetails with a study published in 2009 in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, which revealed that eating a calorie-restricted diet with additional protein at breakfast, including Canadian bacon and eggs, led to increased feelings of fullness throughout the day. "This supports the ongoing body of research that shows how lean protein, including pork, can help people feel full while dieting," Snyder says. "This is important for those watching their weight, because it may lead to eating fewer excess calories later in the day."

In addition to publicizing this news in traditional media outlets, the Pork Checkoff maximized the power of the Internet by distributing a social media news release and video designed to catch the attention of bloggers. So far, the campaign has worked extremely well, exceeding the Checkoff's goals for marketing metrics, Snyder says.

For more information, contact Ceci Snyder, CSnyder@pork.org, 515-223-3526.

Addressing consumer demands for socially responsible pork production

Pork Forges Links with the Chain Gang

When a purchasing manager for a chain restaurant unexpectedly receives a call from an animal activist, it's challenging to be put on the spot and provide accurate answers about where the chain's meat comes from and how it was raised. That's why the Pork Checkoff works closely with a number of restaurant companies through the Chain Gang, a professional organization of nearly 200 executives and managers representing 145 chains.

"We regularly communicate with these folks to update them on the pork industry and inform them about pork producers' efforts to support animal well-being," says Paul Perfilio, a national foodservice marketing manager for the Pork Checkoff who also serves as a member of the Chain Gang's advisory board.

Founded in 2002 with nine members and eight chain restaurants, the Chain Gang now serves chain restaurant operators, food and equipment purchasing entities and the procurement community nationwide. The Pork Checkoff supports the organization by providing industry updates and data on the latest consumer eating trends, supplying articles for the Chain Gang's newsletter, and offering timely presentations about pork programs, products and services that are foodservice related.

In early 2009, representatives of the Pork Checkoff, including Erik Risa, education program manager, attended a meeting of the Chain Gang in Long Beach, Calif., to answer food buyers' questions and explain the Pork Quality Assurance Plus® and Transport Quality Assurance® certification programs. Participants included 27 chain restaurant companies representing more than 8,800 locations, including The Cheesecake Factory, Sizzler USA, Carl's Jr., Taco Bell, Baja Fresh and more.

"This meeting was great," says John Hogan, the founder and chief executive officer of the Chain Gang. "We appreciate the Pork Checkoff's efforts to keep purchasing managers up to date about current issues in the pork industry and support our pork marketing efforts. The Chain Gang's relationship with the Pork Checkoff is very positive, and they have supported us all the way through."

As special interest groups and consumers ask more questions about animal handling, welfare and rights, the timing was perfect to explain the Pork Checkoff's programs and initiatives, Perfilio adds. "Most importantly, we delivered a contact point, so Chain Gang members know who to call when they have questions about the pork industry."

For more information, contact Paul Perfilio, PPerfilio@pork.org, 850-650-5402.

PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Variety Meat Surge Helps February Pork Export Value Grow by Nearly 5 Percent over 2008

A 45 percent jump in pork variety meat exports in February helped overcome a slight decline in pork muscle cuts to power total pork exports to a 4.7 percent increase in value over February 2008, according to the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

Total U.S. pork exports in February were valued at \$368.2 million. Pork muscle cut exports, \$305.6 million, declined by about 1 percent compared to last year, but still remained 45 percent above the February 2007 value. In terms of volume, pork plus pork variety meat exports of 158,471 metric tons or 349.3 million pounds, represented an increase of 1 percent over February 2008 and 57 percent over February 2007. Through January and February, year-to-date pork plus pork variety meat exports increased 3 percent in volume over last year to 315,121 metric tons or 694.7 million pounds, and 6 percent in value to \$728.4 million.

Japan continues to be the top-performing value market for U.S. Pork. Its February total of 37,774 metric tons or 83.3 million pounds, valued at \$138.6 million outpaced February 2008 by 18 percent in volume and 32 percent in value. Mexico showed even more remarkable growth as its February volume, 42,458 metric tons or 93.6 million pounds, surged by 64 percent over last year and value, \$65.6 million, jumped by 60 percent.

Other markets showing excellent growth included Taiwan, where pork plus pork variety meat exports doubled in value compared to February 2008 and increased by 107 percent in volume. Exports to the ASEAN region climbed by 60 percent in volume and 80 percent in value, with the Philippines and Singapore leading this region's gains. Exports to Australia climbed by a similar percentage, increasing by 76 percent in both volume and value. Exports to the Caribbean jumped by 122 percent in volume and 114 percent in value over February of last year, led by a near-tripling of shipments to the Dominican Republic.

Global pork exports are proving to be very resilient, as these gains helped the U.S. pork industry weather steep declines in sales to Russia and China. Year-to-date pork plus pork variety meat exports to Russia have declined 49 percent in volume and 57 percent in value compared to January-February 2008. Exports to the China/Hong Kong region are down 46 percent in volume and 48 percent in value compared to 2008, with exports to China declining nearly 75 percent. These results are not particularly surprising, considering both countries' concerted efforts to increase domestic pork production and reduce their reliance on imports.

For more information, contact John Hinners, JHinners@usmef.org, 303-623-6328.