

*Exceeding the expectations of its stakeholders***National Pork Board and National Pork Producers Council Reach Lease Agreement**

The National Pork Board and the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) have agreed on a new lease that allows the Pork Board to remain in its Des Moines, Iowa, headquarters building until 2037.

The building, at 1776 N.W. 114th St., is owned by NPPC and was the organization's headquarters until 2001, when a court-approved settlement ended NPPC's role as general contractor for the Pork Checkoff program. The National Pork Board has occupied the building since 2001.

The building was constructed in 1979, largely with contributions from thousands of pork producers from around the country.

"There is a strong emotional attachment between producers and this building," said Lynn Harrison, a pork producer from Elk Mound, Wis., and president of the National Pork Board. "The way it was built – with individual contributions – represents the way we continue to work today. We bring producers and their resources together to accomplish things they couldn't achieve on their own. The building is a powerful symbol of that philosophy."

As the National Pork Board's lease was coming due last year, staff and board members had begun to explore other possibilities for its headquarters. "It was clear almost immediately, that pork producers want to keep the building in the family," Harrison said. "This new lease, with the rent to be determined by third-party appraisals, assures that will happen."

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*Promoting teamwork within the pork industry***Pork Checkoff and Illinois Corn Growers Collaborate on Distillers Grains Research**

The National Pork Checkoff Board and the Illinois Pork Producers Association are excited to announce a collaborative programming agreement with the Illinois Corn Marketing Board. The agreement focuses on research that will result in improved utilization of nutrients by swine.

The partnership was developed from the common interest these organizations have in swine industry research related to distillers grains and other biofuel co-products. The Illinois Pork Producers Association was instrumental in developing this relationship and is a member of the Pork Checkoff's Nutritional Efficiency Consortium and a partner in the Illinois Corn Marketing Board's research efforts.

The Nutritional Efficiency Consortium sets research priorities and recommends funding for research projects that study ways to reduce feed costs and maximize production efficiencies. The consortium's 2008 budget is \$500,000. Also, the Illinois Corn Marketing Board has dedicated up to \$500,000 of its 2008 budget to research that will further develop and improve distillers grains for the pork and livestock industry.

Currently, the consortium and the Illinois Corn Marketing Board are in the process of reviewing 2008 research proposals. Funding decisions will be made in early March.

More information on the Illinois Corn Marketing Board can be found online at [www.ilcorn.org](http://www.ilcorn.org). Information on the nutritional efficiency consortium can be found online at [www.pork.org/PorkScience/NutritionalEfficiency/NutritionalEfficiency.aspx](http://www.pork.org/PorkScience/NutritionalEfficiency/NutritionalEfficiency.aspx).

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*Addressing consumer demands for socially responsible pork production***Checkoff Receiving Nominations/Applications for 2008 Pork Industry Environmental Steward Awards**

The Pork Checkoff is receiving applications/nominations for the 2008 Pork Industry Environmental Steward awards. Pork producers are invited to apply for the award or can be nominated by state associations and other parties. An application/nomination form is posted at [www.pork.org/Producers/Environmental%20Stewards/EnvironmentalStewards.aspx](http://www.pork.org/Producers/Environmental%20Stewards/EnvironmentalStewards.aspx).

Applications/nominations must be postmarked, or received by, March 31, 2008. Award winners will be contacted by June 2008. Winners are featured in an educational video and featured in the Pork Checkoff Report and National Hog Farmer magazines. Winners receive a recognition plaque and are invited to attend an awards ceremony at the 2009 Pork Industry Forum.

The 2007 Pork Industry Environmental Stewards video is now online at [www.pork.org/Video/ProducersVideo.aspx](http://www.pork.org/Video/ProducersVideo.aspx). Watch how the four award-winning operations care for the environment while conducting day-to-day business.

The Pork Industry Environmental Stewards program is co-sponsored by the Pork Checkoff and National Hog Farmer magazine.

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## PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### **National Pork Board CEO Steve Murphy Announces Resignation**

Steve Murphy, the chief executive officer of the National Pork Board since 2001, has submitted his resignation to the board.

Lynn Harrison, a pork producer from Elk Mound, Wis., and president of the 15-member National Pork Board, said the board reluctantly accepted the resignation but has asked Murphy to continue until the board can find a successor. That process could take up to a year, Harrison said.

“Over the last six years, Steve has built an organization that is the envy of agricultural commodity and other trade organizations,” Harrison said. “We admire the work he has done and thank him for helping us become a board that is now fully prepared to take charge of its destiny. He has melded pork producer leadership with a talented and dedicated staff to create an organization that is issues-driven and results oriented.

“If I had to sum it up, I’d say he has pushed us to be better than we thought we could be,” Harrison said. “At times, he was a step or two ahead of us, but I know that as volunteer board members who have our own businesses to run that we have learned to think more about strategic vision – to see beyond today’s challenges to tomorrow’s opportunities. That ability will be important as we search for a successor and as we continue to make decisions to improve profit opportunities for all U.S. pork producers. We have some difficult decisions ahead, including how we structure ourselves and our producer committees to continue our success.”

Murphy, a pharmacist by training, has extensive experience both in agricultural sales and marketing and in creating successful information technology businesses. It was that entrepreneurial experience that led to his hiring in 2001, Harrison said.

“You don’t get many opportunities to create new businesses or organizations,” Murphy said. “It takes a lot of committed people to share a vision, to challenge conventional wisdom, to look beyond today’s problems, to try new things. I think we, as a team and as an industry, have been very successful. But it also takes a lot of energy and it can take a lot out of people. I think that is why it makes sense now for the board to take stock of where it wants to go next, and then to determine how it wants to get there. I am happy to stay on until the board can do that assessment, but it’s time for new leadership.”

Harrison said a short list of some of the National Pork Board’s successes under Murphy’s leadership includes: Getting the organization to embrace anticipatory issues management; protecting the future of one of the most successful brands in the country – Pork. The Other White Meat; reconnecting producers with the idea of working together through shared contributions and shared vision to accomplish goals they could not achieve alone; developing a staff that is accountable to both producers and to sound business principles.

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