

*Addressing consumer demands for socially responsible pork production***Pork Producers Celebrated Earth Day**

In celebration of Earth Day, April 22, pork producers showcased some of their environmental efforts online at www.pork.org.

“Pork producers can be proud of their environmental record,” said Lynn Harrison, a pork producer from Elk Mound, Wis. “We strive to make our environment a good place for our families, our communities and our animals. As an industry, we work hard to protect the Earth’s natural resources and wildlife.”

Harrison and several other producers will be featured in the Pork Checkoff’s campaign to promote its environmental message and efforts. “We hope to reach audiences outside of the industry. Other industries can learn from our efforts and customers and consumers can learn more about how we protect the land, water and air while we produce a safe and nutritious product,” he said.

The Pork Checkoff offers many tools, in print and online, for producers to learn about air quality, odor, water quality, manure application, etc.

Four brochures on mitigating odor from pork production are available at no cost to producers from the Pork Store, <http://porkstore.pork.org/producer>, including:

- Basic Management Practices to Mitigate and Control Odors from Swine Operations
- Swine Manure Storage and Handling Practices to Minimize Odors
- Swine Manure Land Application Practices to Minimize Odors
- Siting and Building Considerations to Reduce Odor Potential from Swine Facilities

A fifth brochure, Feed Management Practices to Minimize Odors from Swine Operations, is currently under development.

An Air Quality Assessment Tool is also available to help producers identify ways to reduce air emissions and odor from animal housing structures, manure storage systems and nutrient land application. The tool is available here: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/airquality/practices/homepage.html>.

Through the Pork Checkoff’s Web site, producers, researchers, students and others can access a database of research related to environment and swine production.

For more information, contact Allan Stokes, AStokes@pork.org, 515-223-3447.

*Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork***Pork Checkoff Retail Activities in Full Swing**

Across the nation, 42 retail promotions are planned for the first two quarters of 2008. From in-store cooking demonstrations to consumer sweepstakes to meat manager incentive sales contests, the Checkoff is working with America’s retailers to move pork.

Publix, Safeway, Kroger, Winn-Dixie, Sam’s Club and SuperValu are only a few of the retail partners the Checkoff is utilizing to move an estimated 162 million lbs. of pork during the first two quarters of 2008.

“This will result in an estimated 16 percent increase in incremental tonnage for the first two quarters,” said Jarrod Sutton, Pork Checkoff’s director of retail marketing. “We are in the process of working with retailers to solidify activities for the remainder of the year with the goal to increase incremental pork tonnage by 200 million lbs.”

For more information, contact Jarrod Sutton, JSutton@pork.org, 515-223-2766.

*Providing the scientific research that allows pork production to be measured objectively and that maintains U.S. Pork as a safe, high-quality and high-value product***Producer volunteers needed to complete group sow housing survey**

If your operation produces more than 10,000 pigs per year, houses gestating sows in groups and has done so for at least 12 months, and keeps accurate production records, you can help the industry. The Pork Checkoff is looking for producer volunteers to complete a survey of production systems with group housing of gestating sows. The objectives of the survey are:

1. To understand the factors that contribute to successful group housing systems from an economic, production, health, well-being, and worker safety perspective, and
2. To gain a better understanding of sow housing systems currently in use throughout the industry.

For more information, contact Sherrie Neikamp, SNeikamp@pork.org, 515-223-3533.

PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

U.S. Pork Exports Continue to Break Records

U.S. pork exports in February reached 346 million pounds, or 156,969 metric tons, a 55 percent jump over export totals from February 2007, according to statistics compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). The February results helped the U.S. pork industry achieve its fifth consecutive month of record-breaking exports, including variety meats.

For January and February 2008, pork and pork variety meat exports are up 41 percent, totaling 671.6 million pounds, or 304,651 metric tons, valued at \$685 million.

“One in every five pigs, about 20 percent, produced in the U.S. was exported during these two months,” said Tim Bierman, a producer from Larrabee, Iowa.

On a volume basis China/Hong Kong was the largest market for U.S. Pork and pork variety meats for January and February 2008 with 164.7 million pounds or 74,745 metric tons. That is a 287 percent increase over the same time period in 2007. However, Japan remains No. 1 on a value basis at \$210.9 million, or 31 percent of total pork and pork variety meat export value.

Among other highlights from the two-month period for pork plus pork variety meat exports:

- **Japan:** up 4 percent to 143 million pounds or 64,927 metric tons.
- **Mexico:** up 2 percent to 122 million pounds or 55,384 metric tons, but still trailing the record export volumes of 2006.
- **Canada:** up 28 percent to 59.4 million pounds or 26,955 metric tons. Exports were basically on track with the strong volumes recorded during the final quarter of 2007, reflecting large live hog imports from Canada.
- **Russia** continues to be a tremendous growth market: 164 percent growth to 58.9 million pounds or 26,716 metric tons, including 21,812 metric tons of muscle cuts and 4,904 metric tons of variety meats. February exports at 34.8 million pounds or 15,786 metric tons were nearly equal to the monthly record of 35.1 million pounds set in November 2007.
- **South Korea:** down 2 percent to 53 million pounds or 24,051 metric tons, but February exports were larger than any monthly volume last year with the exception of December. Also note that South Korean import statistics show imports from the United States up 10 percent while imports from the EU are down 16 percent and those from Canada are down 10 percent.
- **ASEAN:** exports to the Philippines increased 141 percent to 7.6 million pounds or 3,470 metric tons and exports to Vietnam grew from essentially zero to 2.4 million pounds or 1,099 metric tons. Total exports to the region in February, nearly 6.7 million pounds, surpassed the monthly record set in December 2007.
- **EU:** exports were up 83 percent to 11.6 million pounds or 5,275 metric tons, primarily destined for France at 4.4 million pounds, Germany at 1.8 million pounds and Italy at 1.3 million pounds. However, USMEF notes that U.S. exports, reported by the Department of Commerce, are significantly larger than EU imports, reported by the European Commission. For example, Department of Commerce pork export stats for January 2008 show 3.8 million pounds while EU stats show 2.0 million pounds of pork imports from the United States.
- **Caribbean:** up 42 percent to 8.3 million pounds or 3,780 metric tons, including exports to the Dominican Republic up 200 percent to nearly 2.8 million pounds.
- **Central and South America:** up 4 percent to 11.7 million pounds or 5,337 metric tons led by Honduras up 3 percent to 3.5 million pounds.
- **Oceania:** down 16 percent to 14.6 million pounds or 6,635 metric tons, but Daley notes the good news that the Australian Productivity Commission released its final report and did not recommend safeguard action against pork exports to Australia. Therefore, the United States can continue to export pork to Australia duty-free.
- **Taiwan:** down 19 percent to 5.1 million pounds or 2,341 metric tons as market access issues continue to impede U.S. pork exports.

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