

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

Strategies to Improve Production Costs and Efficiencies

While you can't control the rising cost of feed or energy, you can go back to the basics to maximize your resources and improve your operation's efficiency.

"The little things you do daily all add up," says Dr. Mike Brumm of Brumm Swine Consulting Inc., who spoke at the Pork Checkoff's PORK Academy at the 2008 World Pork Expo. He offered the following tips:

- **Cut feed waste.** Make sure that your employees are adjusting feeders properly, with 40 percent pan coverage.
- **Evaluate feed milling and delivery fees.** Negotiate for a Tuesday-Thursday discount if you can. "Suppliers will talk to you on \$3 to \$5 a ton, and this is serious money," Brumm says.
- **Order full loads of feed.** Fees are increasing for partial loads, so plan ahead and only order full loads, if possible.
- **Control out-of-feed events.** Human error—not the bridging of feed or equipment failure—is the number-one cause of feed outages.
- **Conduct an energy walk-through in your barns.** With propane prices expected to rise by 25 percent this fall, an energy audit can help you cut your power bills. "Also, you need to learn how your barn's electronic controller works so you can get it set correctly," says Brumm, who added that keeping your fans fixed will also maximize efficiency and control electrical costs.
- **Be more aggressive with cooling.** Simply blowing air over pigs won't help if the air temperature is greater than the pigs' temperature. In fact, higher air speeds will make pigs more heat stressed, says Brumm, who advises producers to start sprinkling pigs with water when the temperature hits 80°F. "Cooling happens as the pigs dry, not when they are wet," says Brumm, who recommends leaving the water on for two minutes at a time.
- **Consider an aggressive euthanasia policy.** Since crowding always reduces daily gain, try limiting sick pens and making better use of your barn space so all pigs can grow faster.

For more information, contact Mark Boggess, MBoggess@pork.org, 515-223-2606.

U.S. Hog Inventory Rises 6 Percent

Although the numbers in the late June USDA Hogs and Pigs Report were larger than expected, farrowing intentions offered a bright spot.

"The farrowing intentions for the next two quarters are the most friendly numbers we've seen," says Darrell Mark, a University of Nebraska Extension livestock marketing specialist who participated in a Pork Checkoff news media conference call following the release of the report.

The U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on June 1, 2008 totaled 67.7 million head, up 6 percent from June 1, 2007, and up 1 percent from March 1, 2008. However, U.S. hog producers intend to have 3.07 million sows farrow during the June-August 2008 quarter, down 2 percent from the actual farrowings during the same period in 2007. Intended farrowings for September-November 2008, at 3.05 million sows, are down 4 percent from 2007.

"It also helps that we're doing fabulous on U.S. pork exports," adds Ron Plain, a University of Missouri Extension livestock economist, who notes that exports rose 52 percent in the first quarter of 2008.

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Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork

Pork Checkoff Launches Foodservice Web site

In an effort to reach foodservice personnel, the Pork Checkoff has launched a new Web site, www.porkfoodservice.com. The site contains all things pork for individuals in the foodservice arena.

It is designed to be a working resource for foodservice operators. For example, the recipe section provides drop down menus to search by preparation method, cut, type of food, or

chef. There also are school recipes that include pork. The site also provides nutrient values, buying and preparation tips, and color and marbling standards.

In addition, the site provides updates on ongoing foodservice initiatives like the Pork Checkoff's Celebrated Chef and Taste of Elegance Chef programs. Foodservice professionals can also find out about consumer efforts like The Other White Meat® Tour - the Pork Checkoff's mobile experiential marketing initiative.

The site will be linked to other frequently visited foodservice sites, and a public relations campaign geared toward industry trade publications will help build awareness of the website.

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Pork Saddled Up for Greeley Stampede

Pork rode high in Greeley, Colo., at the world's largest 4th of July rodeo. "This was a great event for pork," says Rick O'Fallon, retail marketing manager, western division, for the Pork Checkoff. "Rodeo fans tend to include meat in their meals, and the Greeley Stampede offered a timely way to keep pork top of mind for the 4th of July holiday."

For the sixth consecutive year, the Pork Checkoff sponsored pork promotions during the week-long Greeley Stampede, the largest cash event rodeo in Colorado. The Checkoff also partnered with King Soopers supermarkets of Denver, along with Swift and Company and the Colorado Pork Producers Council, which are both based in Greeley. Through this year's promotion, consumers registered at King Soopers to win a set of VIP seats to the Greeley Stampede Rodeo finals on July 4. VIP tickets included limo transportation to and from the rodeo grounds. The lucky winners also enjoyed dinner in Denver, complete with limo transportation to the restaurant.

"King Soopers featured pork—especially ribs and chops—in its circulars every week in June," says O'Fallon, who notes that the promotion has been supported with radio remotes from the supermarkets.

For more information, contact Rick O'Fallon, ROfallon@pork.org, 209-847-7337.

PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

New Database Promotes a Safer Workplace

You want each of your employees to go home whole and healthy every day, and the Pork Checkoff's new Safety Reporting Database can help.

"The Safety Reporting Database provides a unique opportunity to share safety precaution suggestions with fellow pork producers while maintaining the confidentiality of your own business practices," says Ann Beacom, an associate consultant with the Organizational Effectiveness Research Group at Minnesota State University, which is assisting with the project. "The whole industry can benefit by promoting farm safety and communication between safety professionals."

There is no charge to use the new database, which is found at <https://safetydata.pork.org>. This easy-to-navigate, online resource stems from the Pork Checkoff's annual Worker Safety Roundtable, where producers, safety professionals, human resources personnel and researchers learn about potential hazards and focus on improving the pork industry's safety record.

"These folks were facing many of the same safety issues, and they agreed it would be useful to have a way to discuss the types of accidents that were occurring and how these issues were being addressed," Beacom says. "The more people who use the database, the more valuable it becomes."

To use the database, request an online account. When you register, you will be asked to describe the type of operation and the geographical area in which the farm is located (eastern, central or western). Information regarding specific farms will be kept confidential.

After you log in, you can use the database for your own personal recordkeeping by providing information on accidents that have occurred at your business. Also, you can learn how other operations have found ways to limit worker injuries.

"This database takes a preventative approach by highlighting safety practices that have been effective at reducing the number of safety incidents," says Beacom, who encourages you to share your feedback on the new database.

For more information, contact Liz Wagstrom, LWagstrom@pork.org, 515-223-2633.