

*Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork***Baby Back Ribs Go Crispy**

Damon's Grill restaurants are serving baby back ribs with a crunchy, flavorful twist –crispy and saucy. The restaurant chain is introducing the newly developed Crispy Baby Back Rib appetizer on Aug. 8. The pork dish is lightly fried and basted in one of three different sauce flavors.

Damon's Grill, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, partnered with the Ohio Pork Producers Association to kick off the new pork menu item. Other partners in this promotion are Samuel Adams, Brown Foreman and Finest Call. Damon's Grill, a full-service casual dining restaurant, has more than 80 locations worldwide and is famous for serving delicious ribs.

The pork logo will be featured on Damon's Grill menu inserts, lobby banners, guest check inserts, newspaper ads and local marketing fliers. The logo will also appear on NTN Buzztime ad screens, the restaurant's television network. Promotional items will also bear the phrase 'Brought to you by America's Pork Producers' to help tie in the partnership with the Ohio Pork Producers Association.

In addition to seeing the pork logo, consumers will receive bounce back coupons while dining during the Labor Day holiday. Consumers who carry out or eat in Damon's Grill restaurants during the holiday will receive a coupon for the Crispy Baby Back Rib appetizer to be used on their next visit, after the big holiday weekend.

For more information, contact Howard Greenblatt, HGreenblatt@pork.org, 410-484-0818.

Bonefish Grill Reels in Customers with Pork

While Bonefish Grill is fueled by a passion for fresh seafood and a desire to take the mystery out of fish, the chain has cast a wider net by featuring pork specials this summer.

With 131 locations in 31 states, Bonefish Grill featured a two-for-one mailed and Internet coupon from early June through early July. Featured dishes included Icelandic Arctic Charr and the Fontina Chop, a thick, boneless pork chop topped with Fontina cheese, roasted garlic, crispy prosciutto and mushroom marsala wine sauce. In addition to the Fontina Chop on Bonefish Grill's Steaks and Chops menu, the chain's Specialties menu featured the Tenderloin Portabella Piccata, a wood-grilled, garlic crumb-dusted pork tenderloin topped with a flavorful, portabella piccata sauce.

For more information, contact Stephen Gerike, SGerike@pork.org, 410-271-1398.

*Promoting teamwork within the pork industry***Pork Checkoff applauds USDA renewal of PRRS CAP**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced it is renewing its funding of the Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). The USDA will invest \$4.8 million over the next four years to reduce the animal and economic losses associated with the disease.

PRRS CAP was funded in 2004 and led by the University of Minnesota. The program brought together a community of scientists, veterinarians, pork producers, represented by the Pork Checkoff, and industry to develop innovative strategies to lessen the impact of PRRS and work toward the virus' eradication. The program is now led by Bob Rowland of Kansas State University.

Some of the successes of the effort include the development of vaccines; understanding how the virus spreads and the development of successful biosecurity practices to control infection and reinfection. Recent findings now provide guidelines for maintenance of PRRS-free herds without the use of vaccination.

The Pork Checkoff represents the industry on the PRRS CAP stakeholder board and Lisa Becton, director of swine health research and information, is project co-director of the program. Among other things, Becton helps coordinate program goals, research calls and research findings through the pork.org and prrs.org Web sites.

Requests for PRRS research proposal-funding through PRRS CAP are due Aug. 20. Information on funding and applying for funding can be found online at prrs.org. Also online is information on the upcoming International PRRS Symposium to be held in Chicago, Ill., on Dec. 5-6.

For more information, Lisa Becton, LBecton@pork.org, 515-223-2791.

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

Risk Management Webinars Focus on Feed, Grain

With today's price volatility and global concerns about adequate grain supplies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Aug. 12 Crop Production report may have a dramatic impact on your hog operation. In anticipation of this report, CME Group, the Pork Checkoff and your local state pork association designed two free webinars to keep you updated.

These interactive webinars were held Aug. 5 and 6. They are now available for free in an archived format online at www.cmegroup.com/porkwebinars.

The first webinar was entitled "What Is Expected from the August 12 USDA Crop Production Report." In this webinar, David Hightower, principal and founder of The Hightower Report, leads a discussion on current grain and oilseed market issues and outlook, including observations on crop production expectations, perspectives on domestic and export demand, and possible wildcard factors.

The other webinar was entitled "A Strategic Approach to Hedging Your Hog Operation's Input Costs." The speaker for this discussion is a leading industry risk management consultant. The discussion was about how pork producers can use risk management tools, including input cost hedging strategies, to prepare and protect their operations from pending adverse market movements.

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PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Back in the Black by 2009?

Although the U.S. swine industry will be up 7 percent on total slaughter levels for 2008, economists expect hog prices to move up strongly by the summer of 2009, due to lower farrowing intentions this fall, strong exports and substantially lower hog imports from Canada.

"I think we could see record high hog prices by late next summer," says Steve Meyer, president of Paragon Economics in Adel, Iowa. "While it's 100 percent a weather market now, if we have good growing conditions for the rest of the season and an average to late frost, things will look a lot better for producers."

Exports, which marked huge increases in April and May, have remained one of the brightest spots in 2008 for U.S. pork producers. "China/Hong Kong remains the big driver, although demand from Japan has grown, and Russia's imports of U.S. pork are up," Meyer says. "It doesn't look like there will be any reason for export demand to slow, especially since the weak U.S. dollar makes U.S. pork competitively priced."

As you weather the profitability challenge, continue to watch what the hog futures market is offering, relative to your costs, in the coming weeks, and look for selling opportunities, Meyer says.

"Pay attention to seasonal pricing patterns, and take advantage of them. There traditionally have been opportunities for February-April hogs in September and opportunities for fall hogs in August. To learn about these patterns, log onto the CME Group's Web site at www.cmegroup.com/moore. Also, take a very critical look at your costs, and put a lid on your feed costs and a floor on your hog prices."

Finally, work closely with your banker, and give him or her a maximum loan amount you'll need in the coming months. Bankers would much rather see you put a fence around your losses instead of saying you need \$100,000 now but may need more after that, Meyer says.

For more information, contact Cindy Cunningham, CCunningham@pork.org, 515-223-2643.