

*Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork***Ham Offers Great Value for the Holiday**

While ham is the perennial favorite for Easter feasts, with about 70 percent of Americans serving ham for their holiday dinner, the Pork Checkoff is offering new ideas to showcase this classic.

The Pork Checkoff's latest digital media kit, which has been distributed to editors nationwide, highlights trend research showing that exotic flavors and fruits will make a big impact in 2009. The media kit includes recipes and photographs of Baked Ham with Sweet 'n' Sour Plum Sauce, along with celebrity chef Rick Bayless' Chipotle-Glazed Ham with Cherry Jicama Salsa. While the Bayless recipe was created for a previous Pork Checkoff holiday promotion, it fits perfectly for Easter.

"Since we don't have to create a lot of new information, we can save time and money by adding a new twist on the recipes and material we already have," says Pamela Johnson, director of consumer communications for the Pork Checkoff.

The 2009 digital media kit promotes the budget-friendly bonus that both the Baked Ham and Glazed Ham recipes will yield plenty of leftovers. In addition to recipes for Ham Quesadillas and Ham & Rigatoni Casserole, consumers are encouraged to download the free "Celebrate Ham!" and "Ham: 365" brochures at the *TheOtherWhiteMeat.com*.

To help cooks make the most of their holiday ham, the media kit also encourages readers to view two videos on the site, including "How to Choose a Ham" and "Carving 101."

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*Addressing consumer demands for socially responsible pork production***Field Trip to the Farm Enhances Learning**

Although the Grandwood campus students in Iowa's Woodward-Granger school district are surrounded by agriculture, a recent visit to Rob Manning's swine finishing barn expanded the students' learning beyond the walls of their classroom into new territory.

"This was a very eye-opening, rewarding experience, because many of the kids had never been on a farm and hadn't seen live hogs before," says Manning, a fifth-generation farmer who filled his new swine barn for the first time in December of 2008. "I appreciated the opportunity to show the kids and teachers a modern livestock facility."

The hog farm, which is located in the Raccoon River watershed in western Dallas County, reflects Manning's efforts to exceed existing regulations to protect air and water quality. For example, Manning added a couple waterways to the property and plans to plant two rows of trees around the site.

After the 15 students, ages 11 to 18, and 15 instructors donned coveralls and plastic boot covers to ensure biosecurity, Manning guided the group through the 7,200-head building. As he showed how the hogs are fed, watered and loaded, Manning also explained why animal well-being is an important part of pork production.

"Open houses offer an important way to show people what goes on in a modern hog barn," says John Andersen, business development manager for Cargill Pork LLC, who provided the students with the Pork Checkoff's Youth Pork Quality Assurance™ Plus materials and informed the instructors about Youth PQA Plus lesson plans. "The kids asked good questions, and the visitors were impressed by the way the animals are cared for."

Based on the success of the field trip, more students are interested in touring local farms, says Barb Field, a special education teacher at the Grandwood campus. "We work with special-needs kids and try to expose them to a lot of learning opportunities. Our students really enjoyed the trip, their attention was very good, and it was very valuable to see how a local swine farm works."

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Promoting teamwork within the pork industry

National Pork Board Honors Producers during Annual Meeting

The National Pork Board honored two retiring producer members and its outgoing president during the National Pork Industry Forum March 5-7 in Dallas, Texas.

Steve Weaver, a pork producer from Elk Grove, Calif., was recognized for serving as president of the National Pork Board. Weaver will continue to serve through August, leading the nation's pork producers in overseeing Checkoff investments.

"As president, Steve led the industry during a particularly difficult time," said Tim Bierman, a pork producer from Larrabee, Iowa and National Pork Board vice president. "Steve brought the business perspective to the Board in a time when producers were struggling to remain profitable because of the highest feed costs in history; animal rights advocates took aim at production practices; the national economy presented the greatest challenges since the Great Depression. He never wavered from his belief that pork producers working together can surmount almost any challenge."

In addition to serving as president, Weaver serves on the Compensation Committee, and the Administrative Committee.

Dianne Bettin, a pork producer from Truman, Minn., and Dennis Michael, a pork producer from Yankton, S.D., were honored for six years of service to the National Pork Board.

Bettin, a producer who has 350 sows and markets 6,000 pigs annually, serves on the Demand Enhancement Committee, Nutrition Committee, Audit Committee, Pork Safety Committee and the Plan of Work and Budget Task Force.

Michael, a producer who operates a farrow-to-finish hog operation and is 50 percent partner of BPM Seedstock, a 250 sow, farrow-to-finish, seedstock operation, serves on the Producer Services Committee and the Administrative Committee. He also has served on the Audit Committee and the Demand Enhancement Committee.

The National Pork Board consists of 15 members, each serving a maximum of two three-year terms. The Pork Act requires that no fewer than 12 states be represented by the 15 Pork Board members.

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PORK CHECKOFF IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Pork Checkoff Honors Sam Hines with Distinguished Service Award

The Pork Checkoff honored Sam Hines of Holt, Mich., as the winner of its Distinguished Service Award. Hines is the executive vice president of the Michigan Pork Producers Association. He was recognized at the National Pork Industry Forum in Dallas, Texas, March 5-7, 2009. The Distinguished Service Award is given annually to recognize the lifelong contribution to the pork industry of an outstanding leader.

"Sam's hard work and passion for the pork industry benefited not only Michigan producers, but the industry as a whole," said Steve Weaver, a pork producer from Elk Grove, Calif., and National Pork Board president. "Sam has many accomplishments to his credit, including playing a role in pseudorabies eradication and being a member of the leadership group that established the National Pork Board's permanent office in Des Moines. He has always been there, leading the way, and using his gifts and knowledge to lead others to move the pork industry forward."

Another important accomplishment that many people credit Sam with is working to make the Pork Checkoff what it is today, even when circumstances arose that challenged it. Those circumstances included legal challenges to the constitutionality of the Pork Checkoff.

"The Checkoff could easily have ended through any one of those court decisions," said Jim Meimann, executive vice president, governance and operations for the Checkoff. "And yet Sam and the Michigan pork producers were always there making sure things were done right. I think without Sam's attention to this effort, we may not have a Checkoff today."

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