

July 5, 2010 - Volume 30, No 13

Topics This Issue:

- [Pork Industry Expansion Plans on Hold](#)
- [Adam Wells-Morgan Wins the National Taste of Elegance Competition](#)
- [Pork Quality Assurance Plus Momentum Continues](#)
- [Pork Checkoff Spotlight - Canadian FMD Scare Underscores Importance of Crisis Plan](#)

Adding measurable value to U.S. Pork

Pork Industry Expansion Plans on Hold

According to the latest U.S. Department of Agriculture's *Hogs and Pigs Report*, the March to May 2010 pig crop, at 28.2 million head, was down 3 percent from 2009. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.87 million head, down 5 percent from 2009. Pork producers intend to have 2.89 million sows farrow during the June to August 2010 quarter, down 2 percent from actual farrowings during the same period in 2009 and down 6 percent from 2008. Intended farrowings for September to November 2010, at 2.90 million sows, are down 1 percent from 2009 and down 4 percent from 2008.

Even though pork producers are enjoying a return to profitability, the industry has shown few signs of expansion so far. According to the *Hogs and Pigs Report*, which showed a drop in breeding herd numbers, North Carolina led the decline, followed by Minnesota, Nebraska and Iowa.

"North Carolina's pork industry saw such enormous growth in the early 1990s, but many of the hog buildings constructed in the late 1980s and early 1990s are 20-plus years old," said Dr. Chris Hurt, professor of agricultural economics at Purdue University. Hurt participated in the Pork Checkoff's news media conference call about the report. "There's a question of whether that capacity will or will not come back into production."

Expansion in breeding herds is not expected until early 2011. Operating loans remain the biggest limitation to the pork industry at this point, said John Nalivka, president of Sterling Marketing in Vale, Ore., who also participated in the Checkoff's news media conference call. Although profits should be strong for producers in 2010, bankers are looking for producers' balance sheets to improve before financing expansions, Hurt added.

For more information, contact Mike Wegner at MWegner@pork.org or at (515) 223-2638.

Adam Wells-Morgan Wins the National Taste of Elegance Competition

Adam Wells-Morgan, executive chef of The Club at Old Hawthorne in Columbia, Mo., won top honors in the 21st annual National Taste of Elegance™ contest June 14 in Baltimore, Md. The competition, sponsored by the Pork Checkoff, featured 18 chefs, all winners of state and regional Taste of Elegance culinary competitions. Wells-Morgan earned Chef Par Excellence honors for his winning entr?e of *Duo of Pork: Sumac and Rosemary Scented Pork Loin and Cider Braised Pork Shoulder*. He also was presented with the Media Choice Award, an honor given by foodservice media representatives to the chef with the most creative application of a pork dish.

"The National Taste of Elegance event brought some of the nation's best chefs together to share their talent using pork," said Tim Bierman, a pork producer from Iowa and National Pork Board member. "By reaching chefs through Checkoff programs like this, the goal is to increase the number of pork items on menus."

In the national contest, competing chefs from Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee and Wisconsin created original pork entrees that were judged on taste, appearance and originality. The Taste of Elegance competitions were created to highlight chefs' innovative use of pork and to encourage chefs to work with pork in creative, non-traditional ways.

Competing chefs also had the opportunity to attend an abridged version of Pork 101, a Checkoff-funded short course that focuses on pork quality, consistency and value. New to the Pork 101 program this year was a conversation with Bierman and California pork producer Steve Weaver about the industry and pork production.

The Checkoff partnered with Cargill, featuring Sysco Corporation's premium White Marble Farms, to provide pork for the competition. Other co-sponsors for the Checkoff-funded National Taste of Elegance event were Baltimore Renaissance Harborplace Hotel of Baltimore, Chefwear?, Steelite USA, Cutco Cutlery and Four Vines Vineyard.

For more information, contact Traci Rodemeyer at TRodemeyer@pork.org or at (515) 223-3529.

Addressing consumer demands for socially responsible pork production

Pork Quality Assurance Plus Momentum Continues

The Pork Checkoff hosted several Pork Quality Assurance Plus? (PQA Plus?) events and celebrations at this year's World Pork Expo in June. Many producers took advantage of the on-site PQA Plus training session, which was attended by a total of 50 adults who are all now PQA Plus certified. Also, 75 youth participated in the Youth PQA Plus program training session.

Also at Expo, the Checkoff celebrated the more than 46,800 producers who were certified and the more than 10,200 sites that had been assessed with a marching band and bacon-flavored ice cream at Expo. National Pork Board President Tim Bierman and Vice President Gene Nemechek noted that nearly 60 percent of the U.S. inventory is cared for on sites that have achieved PQA Plus site status. They challenged all other producers to

become certified in PQA Plus and to complete site assessments on their operations before the end of 2010.

"We've made great progress, but we need to keep the momentum going," Nemechek said. "We need to continue working toward getting all producers certified in the Checkoff program and reaching the our target date of December 31 for all site assessments."

For more information, contact Stacy Revels at SRevels@pork.org or at (515) 223-2795.

Pork Checkoff in the Spotlight

Canadian FMD Scare Underscores Importance of Crisis Plan

The U.S. pork industry has been building its Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) crisis plan for nearly 15 years. In late June, the industry was reminded about the importance of having a plan when a slaughter plant in Canada had a suspicious case of a vesicular disease in swine. It was later determined not to be FMD. But for a brief time, the National Pork Board and other industry organizations, including the National Pork Producers Council and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians, were on high alert. Although most of the 300 to 400 disease tests conducted annually never make the news, this situation, which occurred where animals are commingled, generated news coverage in both the United States and in Canada.

Would you have known where to get needed information had this been an actual case of FMD? As a pork producer, pork.org, the Checkoff-funded website, provides accurate, credible and timely information about any crisis impacting the pork industry. As was proven during last year's H1N1 outbreak, a crisis situation typically generates much media coverage, some of which may not accurately reflect the situation. We encourage you to rely on a trusted source like pork.org for your information. Also, the Pork Checkoff Service Center is always ready to answer your questions during a crisis time or anytime at (800) 456-7675.

FMD, other foreign animal diseases and emerging animal diseases all reinforce the need for appropriate biosecurity plans on your operation every single day. Also when you hear rumors about a potential foreign animal disease, review your biosecurity plans to ensure compliance and wait for information from a trusted source like the National Pork Board. If you see symptoms that indicate FMD or other diseases in your herd, immediately contact your herd veterinarian. Information on biosecurity and disease recognition is available on pork.org under the Resources tab.

Understanding that an FMD outbreak would rapidly impact all cloven-hoofed livestock, the pork industry works closely with the beef and dairy industries to ensure that the crisis plans are similar.

We hope to never need to fully implement the pork industry's FMD crisis plan, but knowing it is in place and what to do on your own operation is critical.

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

Pork Checkoff. Your Investment. Your Future.
Pork Checkoff Service Center . 800-456-7675

Reprinting of the Pork Leader is encouraged
Produced by: National Pork Board
Pork Leader . 1776 NW 114th St . Des Moines, Iowa 50306
515-223-2600

If you want to be removed from this e-mail newsletter distribution or if you know someone else who would like to receive Pork Leader, then please call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-7675 or contact the editor by phone at (515) 223-2616 or by e-mail to troof@pork.org