

NATIONAL PORK BOARD

Special Call – Sow Housing - 2012

DEADLINE: Friday, August 31, 2012 – 5:00 pm CST

*The Pork Checkoff Animal Welfare Committee is requesting proposals on issues impacting the welfare of swine. Specific research areas of interest are listed below. All proposals submitted **must** address at least one of the specific research subtopics of interest described below.*

All submitted projects should be multidisciplinary in their approach and should include neuroscience, performance, physiology, and behavior when applicable. Experimental designs must have all the appropriate controls to be considered for funding. Proposed methodologies need to be described in detail and behavioral methods and physiological assays used in the study need to be validated. Proposals need to also include power calculations to validate the proposed sample size. Projects that have cooperative arrangements with industry are strongly encouraged and will be prioritized. All approved projects using animals in research for any purpose must be reviewed by an Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) or equivalent. An ACUC approval is not only required for future publication of results in a peer reviewed journal, it also ensures a high standard of care of animals used in research in accordance with federal regulations and policies.

The Animal Welfare Committee has \$300,000 to fund swine welfare related research. There is no exact funding limit for submitted proposals but the budget request should be appropriate and justified for the work that is being proposed. Researchers are encouraged to find matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project.

Newly submitted multi-year proposals should provide a clear overall vision and objectives for the entire project with a detailed plan of work and budget outline for each of the proposed years. If proposed projects are seeking second-year funding of a previously funded project, the proposal must include a discussion of progress and accomplishments realized from the research efforts to date toward success of the overall research effort. This may be accomplished by including copies of interim or final reports from previously funded research efforts as appendices to the proposal submitted.

Proposals must be submitted in the attached format to be considered. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by a panel of peers for scientific soundness and validity. Final funding decisions will be made by the National Pork Board. Further enquiries regarding this solicitation can be directed to Sherrie Niekamp by email sniekamp@pork.org or by phone: 515/223-3533.

C. Sow Gestation Housing – Housing of gestating sows has been and continues to be an important question for the swine industry. Proposals for individual and group housing systems will be accepted in this section with less emphasis on comparing group housing to stall housing. Specific research topics of interest with regard to housing and management of gestating sows are described below (please note that these are **not** in priority order):

1. Compare of different space allowances within group housing systems to determine the minimum square footage needed for the design to be successful.
2. Determine the effect of group size on behavior, physiology, and production measures with emphasis on medium and large group sizes (medium >20, large >50).
3. Determine the interaction between space allowance and group size for different feeding systems? How can this interaction be optimized?
4. Evaluate the effect of diet formulation on satiety. Can roughage included in the diet substitute for manipulable materials in the environment?
5. Evaluate the impact of feeding area design on injury, physiology and productivity. This could include space and length of feeding stalls needed to separate the feeding area for individual feeding.

6. Determine the impact that weaning directly into groups will have on aggression, physiology and productivity.
7. Evaluate the sow's ability to remember cohorts when mixed prior to breeding, housed in breeding stalls for 28-45 days and then re-mixed into groups. What impact does this have on aggression, physiology and productivity?

To be considered for committee review, **all proposals must be submitted via the website by 5:00 p.m. CST on Friday, August 31, 2012.** See www.pork.org for links. Proposals will be reviewed by both technical advisors and pork producers prior to the committee selection meetings. Final funding is subject to approval by the National Pork Board and USDA.

For questions on the submission process, contact Bev Everitt at beveritt@pork.org or 515/223-2750.

NOTES:

Proposal selection and notification of funding will occur in early October 2012.

Project funding will begin November 1, 2012.