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Doug Ford addresses the crowd at the 2018 International Plowing Match and Rural Expo held each year in Ontario in September. Photo courtesy Ernie Hardeman, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.



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**Canadian
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Message from the editor

Welcome to our winter edition and to the Banff Pork Seminar! For several years now, we have printed enough extra copies of the magazine to ensure that every single attendee receives one in their registration package. We are proud to be a sponsor of the seminar, which has become a destination event because of the beautiful scenery and the spectacular Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel.

There is always optimism in the New Year, and I think when BPS rolls around, people are still carrying some of the holiday spirit with them. The holidays are about generosity and kindness, and I encourage you to tap into those qualities whenever you're at a conference or public event. So many of us have social anxiety, and I am certainly one of them. I watch other people flit around like graceful social butterflies and I genuinely wonder how they do it. And I am in awe of public speakers. Even getting up on stage to introduce a speaker would be an incredibly difficult task for me. So, for those of you that are gifted with such traits, look for those in the crowd who aren't and start the conversation we don't know how to.

And of course, don't forget to visit the sponsor booths. Sponsors are so incredibly vital to events like these, and while they invest in these events because they see the value of them to the industry, they are also here to make new contacts and grow their business. They take time off work to be here, and then spend a lot of time setting up an attractive and eye-catching display. I've worked trade shows before, and it can be grueling, but pleasant conversations with great people make it all worthwhile.

I truly hope that 2019 will be a more stable year for our industry. With the new NAFTA signed, some of the uncertainty is over, hopefully creating more solid foundation from which to weather the highs and lows of the market.

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Sheri Monk

Editor, business manager



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OPINION The View from Grier

Export Value for Canada

Export values are a hot topic lately. That is in part due to the fact that producers think Canadian packers are getting more in the market than normal. That in turn is due to the fact that U.S. packers are in the middle of a trade dispute with Mexico and China. Producers believe Canadian packers



By Kevin Grier

are able to attain higher prices as a result. That is proving to be true, at least with Mexico, for now – but what about overall? Does Canadian pork get a premium in export markets because it is Canadian?

Over the course of 2017, Canadian pork exports of 1.1 billion kilograms on a payweight basis amounted to about C\$3.6 billion. That is a unit value of about C\$3.25/kg. Total U.S. exports of 1.9 billion kilograms last year amounted to US\$5.3 billion. That works out to US\$2.79/kg or C\$3.62/kg. The U.S. unit value was 10+-% more than the Canadian unit value in C\$.

On a country basis, the U.S. unit value was about 5-10 per cent more to Japan and well over 25 per cent more to Taiwan. The top volume countries all saw higher values going to the U.S. This does not mean that Canadian packers are receiving less for the same cut products exported to the same countries. It could just mean that our export product mix contains items of less value. That is not necessarily a negative. On the posi-

tive side it could simply mean that the more valuable cuts are staying in Canada or are sold to the United States. That would be more profitable, often. All products go to the market with the highest value, it is best if that is Canada or the United States given logistics.

Another reason U.S. values might be higher is that U.S. packers have advantages because they are much less export dependent. That is the export price is a higher hurdle for U.S. packers before it is worth moving product offshore. U.S. packers have the advantage of having a strong internal market (they export less than us in Canada). Some cuts are higher in the U.S., so they are less dependent on exports than we are. As an example, the retail loin market is a lot larger in the U.S. than in Canada.

With that noted, more specific items such as hams to Mexico also show the U.S. deriving more value. In 2017 the U.S. unit value of hams to Mexico was C\$2.12/kg while the Canadian value was C\$1.88/kg. That in turn is likely a reflection of the costs of doing business between Canada and Mexico versus the much lower costs between the U.S. and Mexico. In other words, there are a myriad of reasons for different export unit values.

Canadian packers add value

The data notwithstanding, there are times and cases where Canadian packers do attain higher prices than their U.S. counterparts. This is often the case in Japan and Korea, and

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to a lesser extent Taiwan, Philippines, Aust, and NZ, which are leading markets. The main reason for the higher prices is Canadian packers' adherence to specifications. That equates to better yield.

In other words, Canadian packers compete against their larger U.S. counterparts in the same way that smaller firms in all industries compete against larger firms – adherence to detail and service. This is nothing new. Another reason for an advantage in Japan is due to the western barley fed hogs which produces a darker pork with whiter fat which that market favors. Others in Canada have switched genetics to those more favored in Japan. Again, this is more of a customer focused approach which is text book business practices for smaller firms versus bigger firms.

The field is always changing though and the old formula may not hold. Many U.S. packers have been able to develop good markets with strong brand recognition/loyalty (Hormel, Smithfield, Hatfield, etc). The question for the future will be how do those new marketing efforts compare with Maple Leaf, Olymel or Hylife exporting chilled pork in Japan or other higher end markets? Will any Canadian advantage hold against these U.S. efforts?

Not a Canada-wide attribute

The bottom line is that Canadian packers are willing to accommodate export customers. This is often because of the smaller plants which facilitates this flexibility and accommodates the customer better than large plants. There is also the ractopamine-free issue or other protocols that the U.S. industry may be unwilling to accommodate.

Another important point is that the added value per kilo, if it does exist is specific to each market and each packer. It is not a Canadian value. It is not a Canada-wide attribute, and has more to do with what happens to the pork after it reaches the packer than what happens at the farm.

Under-utilized plants are costly

Western Canada has the capacity to slaughter about 200,000 head per week. On a typical week, the slaughter is about 163,000, for an 82 per cent plant capacity utilization rate. The utilization rate in the U.S. is around 95 per cent. Of course some plants, like HyLife are running full out while others like Maple Leaf Brandon and Olymel Red Deer are not.

Of course, plants that are not run at full capacity also costly. Money is not left on the table in terms of added payments to vendors, but it is lost nonetheless. It is lost in terms of higher kill costs per head and lost productivity.

Take for example a fictional plant on the prairies that is supposed to kill 45,000 head per week. That is about Red Deer's size. That fictional plant might have kill and cut costs of about \$55 per head. That would put weekly costs at about \$2.5 million of which about a third might be fixed overhead. The reality, however, is that much of the variable costs are also going to be fixed. Labour, a variable cost in theory, is not going to decrease if numbers are not where they should be. If, therefore, that plant is only running 38,000, like Red Deer has, the costs per head could easily go to \$62-\$65. Reduced kills add serious costs per head.

On the flip side, if the plant was at full capacity, any week that this fictional plant could run the odd half day on a Saturday would drive the entire week's average kills down by at least \$3/head.

Those numbers fit well with a rule of thumb that says for every increase or decrease in production by 10 per cent leads to a corresponding increase or decrease in costs by about 5-10 per cent.

The above example is a simplification but it does show the costs associated with under-utilized plants. These added costs take away competitiveness and drive down profits. ■

Kevin Grier Market Analysis and Consulting provides industry market reports and analysis, as well as consulting services and public event speaking. You can reach him at kevin@kevingrier.com to comment or to request a free two-month trial of the Canadian Pork Market Review.

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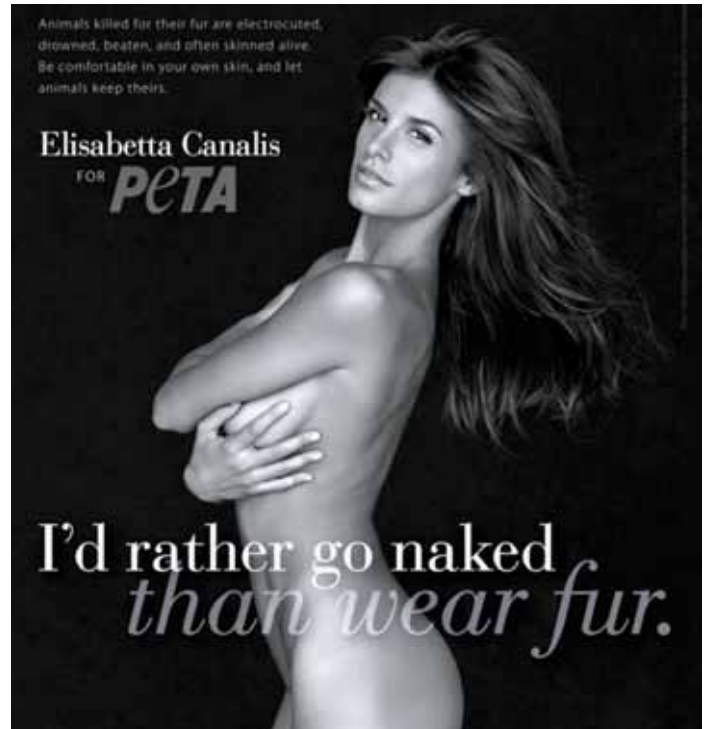
By Sheri Monk

Oh, PETA. I don't even know where to begin. For the (luckily) uninitiated, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) is an animal activist group that was started in 1980 in the United States, and became very well-known after its work resulted in a police raid of a research facility using primates. That ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Animal Welfare Act in 1985, and turned PETA into a household name.

The organization focuses on four major areas – factory farming, fur farming, animal testing and the use of animals in entertainment. PETA is known for its extreme messaging – and I think in some ways, that has been our saving grace. Maybe. With more than six million members worldwide, PETA has clout. And celebrity power. And real celebrities behind the cause – and posing naked in front of it, too.

PETA's "I'd rather go naked" campaign has been incredibly successful and the fur industry in the developed world has plummeted. The UK and Austria have banned fur farms entirely, and in the United States, the fur business is a shadow of what it once was. Emerging markets, however, have created a bit of a resurgence in fur demand as new economic prowess is displayed using old symbols of wealth.

PETA is very good at what it does – tapping into human empathy. And although we are not the only species to demonstrate empathy, we do seem to be both simultaneously the best (and sometimes the worst) at it. And yet, we aren't the only ones with empathy – many animals have demon-



The "I'd rather go naked" campaign had garnered a lot of attention over the years – especially for its celebrity appeal.

strated empathy, especially primates, but others have too. In biology, for many years it was a faux pas to pair the words "animal" and "emotion" but research has shown without a

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doubt that animals do feel emotion. My dog, for instance, if I talk to the birds, becomes instantly jealous and if I am hugging someone in front of him, he tries to interrupt, vying for my attention. And we know this, and this is why their campaigns are so successful.

Creeping their social media pages, even as someone who has covered livestock agriculture for more than a decade, the posts about animal testing truly got to me. And I don't agree with animal testing for frivolous reasons – and PETA is literally the reason why most cosmetic and household product companies don't test on animals anymore.

In other words, it's a complex issue. The trouble is, PETA presents everything as very black and white, to the extreme. Never test on animals. Never eat meat. Never farm animals. Never wear fur. All suffering is equal. All pain is equal. These are their messages, and it doesn't leave a lot of room for discussion, or nuance. It garners a cult-like following or it alienates and the result is polarizing.

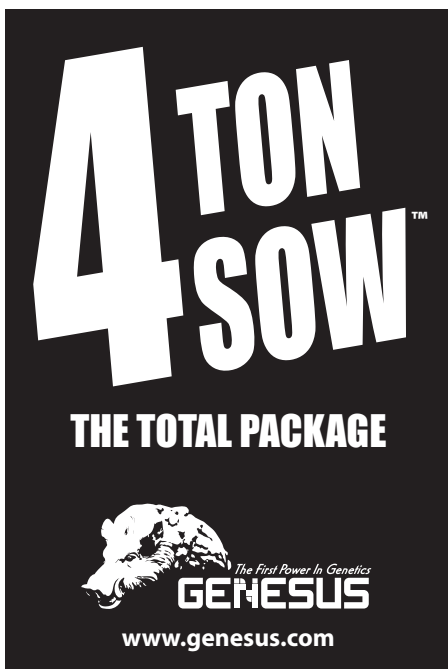
But PETA may have committed a marketing mistake with their latest campaign, "Bringing home the bagels". Centred around replacing language that implies harm to animals with other words, the marketing gimmick has been

Instead of:	Say:
"Kill two birds with one stone."	"Feed two birds with one scone."
"Be the guinea pig."	"Be the test tube."
"Beat a dead horse."	"Feed a fed horse."
"Bring home the bacon."	"Bring home the bagels."
"Take the bull by the horns."	"Take the flower by the thorns."

PETA



PETA's most recent campaign seeks to change our language to be kinder and gentler to animals.



laughed at and dismissed in almost every circle I've observed.

Here are some of the suggestions:

It will be interesting to see if the movement gains any traction – but I suspect even the most devout PETA member is just a little embarrassed right now. But there may be a lesson in this for us – as an industry – in terms of our own messaging to the public.

1. Don't sweat the small stuff. If PETA wants to stop animal suffering, they'd be best not to waste their energy and money on a language the animals can't even understand.

2. Keep your messaging on point and geared to your most pressing objectives.
3. Don't attack people's sentimental attachments. Language is a great example. People don't like to change, and they don't like to rewrite history.

Recently, I hung out at a meat counter. And believe me, I would feel silly telling this to anyone else, but I happen to know that anyone with a vested interest in the meat industry has this same hobby. Meat market means a whole different thing to us, and I think that's a good thing. Anyway, when I ask people what country they like to buy their beef

from, they generally answer with something like, “I only buy Canadian beef” and while they say this, their chest puffs out a little, the patriotism becomes almost palpable, and the air thickens, not unlike viscous maple syrup. And then I ask them where they buy their pork from, and things change. “Pork? I don’t know... is it Canada?”

We need to change this. We need to put our heads together, and put together a marketing campaign that will potentiate our pork patriotism in the same way. Of course, the loyalty to Canadian beef is much more a western phenomenon, thanks in part to the hugely successful Alberta Beef Producers campaigns, and also thanks to the BSE crisis. (For the record, and to not tempt fate, I am NOT advocating for any kind of similar crisis in our industry.)

And I think now is an excellent time to do it. Canadians are relieved we have a new NAFTA, but they haven’t forgotten the drama, and the sense of exploitation that Trump left us feeling. That means the Canadian market is already primed and ready to receive our message – we just need to package it in the right language, and that won’t include the word “bagel”. ■



The “I’d rather go naked” campaign had garnered a lot of attention over the years – especially for its celebrity appeal.



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Canadian Hog JOURNAL

HOT ISSUES

Looking at the promises and potential impact of Premier Doug Ford's reign

Support from the new Ontario government for the pork industry and other ag sectors

By Treena Hein

All Ontario premiers are always sure to attend the 'International Plowing Match and Rural Expo' held each year in the province. After all, it's a very high-exposure opportunity to be associated with farming.

This September however, during their visit to the event, both Premier Doug Ford and new Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Ernie Hardeman met with representatives from various ag groups at a roundtable, discussing the challenges currently faced by farmers and ways in which Ontario agriculture can grow and diversify in the global market. Stakeholders at the event included Ontario Pork, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), Grain

Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Chicken Farmers of Ontario and the Ontario Agri Business Association.

In the event press release, Ford promised, "I will use every tool at my disposal to help the agri-food sector grow...Ontario is open for business, and I will not leave our farmers behind." Hardeman added that, "For too long rural Ontario was an afterthought. Our government is committed to listening to farmers...as we work to strengthen the agriculture industry."

Industry reaction

For his part, although he notes that "it's still early days," Ontario Pork Board Chair Eric Schwindt says Ontario Pork

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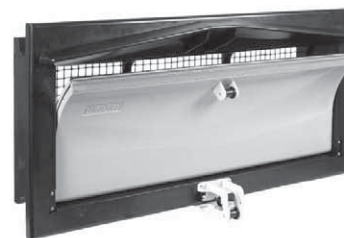
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is encouraged that Premier Ford wants to work for farmers. “Hardeman has also been a long-time supporter of agriculture,” Schwindt adds. “He’s been an MP in Oxford County for many years and he was Minister of Agriculture in the Mike Harris government, so he’s a good choice.”

Schwindt says Ontario Pork well understands the “serious fiscal situation in this province” and that the pork industry wants to be part of the solution. “But,” he asserts, “there has to be a conversation to which everyone can contribute,” and that “Ontario Pork certainly believes that all commodities should benefit equally.”

Commitments made

Among the current provincial government’s promises, one that particularly pleases Ontario Pork is an increase by 2020 in annual funding of \$50 million to the Risk Management Program. “As an industry, we can do a lot to prepare for ups and downs in the market, but this is the only effective program to deal with large fluctuations in market price,” Schwindt explains. “The extra funding is appreciated, but the devil is in the details and there must also be program design changes that better address farmers’ needs.” These include more response in times of need and the ability to carry-over unspent funds to make the program more like insurance.



Ontario Pork is also encouraged that the government has eliminated the provincial carbon cap and trade program, and is hopeful that going forward, there will be different ways to accomplish the same goal with less economic impact. “We compete in the world market and as we make changes to reduce global warming, we very much need to stay competitive with other jurisdictions,” Schwindt says. “We want to do our part, and we are encouraged that the provincial government isn’t going to impose taxes or regulations that would put us at risk of going out of business.”

From the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) perspective, President Keith Currie says his organization has had some positive conversations with the government about what the new carbon plan will look like, and like Schwindt, he’s confident agriculture’s needs relating to carbon emissions will be much better received than previously. A long-standing re-

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quest, for example, is moving forward to have natural gas used on farms and in greenhouses exempt or almost exempt from any future carbon tax plan.

Hardeman notes that in addition to this, his government is working with the private sector to expand natural gas and broadband networks to more communities, as well as reducing gasoline and hydro rates to make it more affordable to do business and live in Ontario. “We want to ensure policies and programs will help the agri-food sector grow their businesses and avoid additional regulatory burden or costs,” he says. “We have already taken some of the first steps to...promote economic growth. We’re also advocating for Ontario’s farmers and processors on a national level. These initiatives are all part of the province’s plan to make Ontario open for business, grow the economy and help protect and create good jobs across the province.”

It’s still early days, but we are encouraged that Premier Ford wants to work for farmers.
~ Ontario Pork Board Chair
Eric Schwindt

Currie notes that this all fits well with the ‘Producing Prosperity’ campaign that OFA introduced to politicians and would-be politicians over a year ago. Like the plan that Hardeman describes, it’s focussed on economic development for rural Ontario that will help farm businesses succeed, specifically through job creation, affordable housing and environmental sustainability and food security.

Cutting red tape

Ontario Pork hopes there are many avenues the provincial government could take to reduce compliance issues for pork farmers, including, says Schwindt, the reduction of “redundant paperwork related to nutrient management, without compromising any of the environmental integrity of the current rules and regulations.” Another opportunity for cutting red tap relates to pork industry worker shortages. “While we always look to hire locally first, many producers and processors need the help of temporary foreign workers to fill positions not wanted by locals,” Schwindt explains. “Current immigration rules make it really difficult for

these farm workers to stay and keep working beyond their temporary work permits, even if they decide they want to settle and build a family here in Ontario.”

At this point, OFA is encouraged at how the new provincial government – and in particular OMAFRA – is working to reduce regulatory burdens. “We are hopeful that we can continue to adjust and tweak regulations that are posing operational changes to our farm businesses,” says Currie, including changes to the employment standards act as another example.”

For his part, Hardeman acknowledges that he heard many concerns about red tape and the need for nimble, efficient

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regulations at the roundtable discussion, as well as “concerns about labour and the unique labour environment required for our farm and agri-food businesses to remain competitive. Some of those concerns are now being addressed through the Making Ontario Open for Business Act.”

Other issues and the big picture

Ontario Pork would also like the Ontario government to be involved with better prevention of animal disease from abroad, as well as better regulation of protests. “With protesters approaching trucks, especially in the winter, it’s dangerous because drivers can’t see them, and there are also food safety risks,” Schwindt says. “The rules of engagement should be that people have the right to protest and stay safe, but our transporter’s safety and that of our animals also needs to be protected.”



I will use every tool at my disposal to help the agri-food sector grow... Ontario is open for business, and I will not leave our farmers behind. ~ Premier Doug Ford

Currie notes that there have been some changes to predation regulations for livestock farming and that OFA is continuing to work on more changes to achieve better loss compensation through the Ontario Wildlife Predation Compensation Act. In

addition, since Doug Ford was elected, OFA has also been able (with OMAFRA’s help) to start the reversal process of an action by the previous government relating to rabies vaccinations. These regulations, Currie says, made it very difficult to take animals to shows and exhibits or hold farm tours without having to have all animals vaccinated.

In the end, Schwindt is of the view that no matter what issues should be addressed by the government, the most important thing is “to be in the room” – to be part of driving solutions and creating policy. “We continue to talk to Minister Hardeman, his staff and to our partners at OMAFRA. The pork industry has a reputation for being proactive and helpful in these conversations and we want to continue that. We’re excited about the opportunities to grow and become a larger part of the province’s economy.” ■

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Leveraging quality assurance for better pay

Alberta pork producers' resolution demands \$7 per head, and Olymel says it won't pay up

By Sarah Hoffmann

In their ongoing pursuit of better pork pricing, Alberta pork producers may have found a leverage point as a new quality assurance program is to be phased in across Canada.

Members of Alberta Pork passed a resolution at their November 20, 2018 annual general meeting saying they would only participate in the new Canadian Pork Excellence (CPE) program if packers agreed to pay an additional \$7 per head for CPE validated hogs. CPE was developed by the Canada Pork Council and is intended to replace the current quality assurance program over the next few years.

The resolution comes at a time when producers' profitability per head is low and they feel they are being asked to do too much for too little.

**Obviously somebody is making money.
It's just not the producer.**
~ Darcy Fitzgerald, Alberta Pork

According to Brent Bushell of the Western Hog Exchange, a non-profit organization that markets hogs for Alberta farmers, the accounting firm MNP has compared producer profitability over the first three quarters of the last five years and found that farrow-to-finish barns lose an average of \$1.05 per head and finishing barns have lost an average of \$22 per head.

Prices have been especially brutal since this summer when tariffs on U.S. pork into China and Mexico caused that country's cash prices to sink. The prices realized by Canadian pork producers went along for the ride because the formula Canadian packers use to pay producers is based on the U.S. cash

price – and likely the cheapest hogs sold on any given day.

However, there are no tariffs on Canadian pork into these markets and presumably packers are selling just as robustly, if not more so, considering the slow-down of U.S. supply. Producers just aren't seeing the benefit of this steady marketing environment.

"We don't have the same trade war going on with our customers that the U.S. has and there are some benefits coming to Canadian packers, but those benefits aren't coming to the producers," explained Ron Gietz, economics extension specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry.

Some packers have posted record profits recently. Olymel, for example, increased earnings over the last three years, with their highest profit ever in 2017. According to the website of La Coop fédérée, the parent company of Olymel, the packer earned a record \$290.4 million in 2017, which was a \$39 million increase over 2016 earnings.

Producers and their organizations are frustrated by the fact that they follow stringent quality parameters which allow packers to extract a premium in the world market, but producers do not share in the returns on this high-end pork.

Darcy Fitzgerald, executive director of Alberta Pork, pointed out that the top customer for Alberta pork is Japan, the highest paying buyer in the world. The original pork quality assurance program, known as CQA, was implemented in 1998, with updates since then. Canadian pork producers' attention to animal welfare, feed quality, and traceability grant access to world markets to the tune of \$4 billion annually. CPE, the new program, would require even more training and record-keeping.



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Fitzgerald said the resolution is not about anger at quality assurance programs themselves, but about the difficult financial situation faced by producers and the poor relationship they have with the packers.

“They are using this quality assurance program revision to say, ‘Enough. We need to start seeing money.’ That’s their frustration to say we are not seeing enough money for all the work we do to make this excellent pig.”

These programs come with a cost, not only in administration and training, but also in the finished product. In 2013, Canadian pork producers quit using a popular growth promotant called ractopamine, which is still used in the U.S. This allowed packers Olymel and Maple Leaf to sell pork into China, Russia and other countries that ban the feed additive, but producers that eschew ractopamine aren’t paid a premium for their sacrifice.

Richard Vigneault, spokesperson for Olymel, said the company neither requested the introduction of a new quality assurance program, nor are they willing to pay a flat rate per head for hogs produced under that program.

In Quebec, where pork producers collectively negotiate contracts with packers, they make an average of \$8-10 more per head than producers in Alberta.

I’m not prepared to give hogs to a packer because we’re friends. They have to work for them or not get them. ~ Brent Bushell, Western Hog Exchange

“I think Alberta producers would be really happy if we got paid the same as producers in Eastern Canada,” said Fitzgerald. “Our number one market in Alberta is Japan and it’s a premium market. They’re looking for more product from us and economics 101 would say short supply, large demand, then price should go up. Obviously somebody is making money. It’s just not the producer.”

So far, he does not see a will to move back towards single desk marketing in Alberta. However, some hog farmers

are taking a look at the Western Hog Exchange (WHE) as an option to block market hogs and leverage a better price from packers.

This past April the WHE began to focus on marketing groups of hogs that were coming off contracts with packers. In the past, WHE marketed most of the hogs they represented to Olymel, but that has changed under general manager Brent Bushell.

“We represent about 10,000 hogs per week right now. We had probably too close of a relationship with one packer. I came on three years ago and we decided that’s not what we wanted to do,” said Bushell. “I’m not prepared to give hogs to a packer because we’re friends. They have to work for them or not get them.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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The WHE tenders out amalgamated, un-contracted hogs to packers and chooses the best price. Speaking of the farmers he sells for, Bushell said, “They’re not prepared to sign long term contracts. They’re not prepared to sell hogs based on broken pricing. They’re prepared to use their strength in number to negotiate the best price.”

Sometimes the best price is found south of the border. Even with ongoing trade wars and transportation costs, producers can still fare better in the U.S. than in Canada.

“We’ve been able to ship hogs into the U.S. and be able to extract \$25-30 more per hog,” said Bushell. “I’m extremely embarrassed by our Canadian packers for making this happen.”

As a result of WHE’s recent activities, they are seeing increased interest from producers outside Alberta.

“In 2019 we will expand into Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I’ve been invited to a few meetings in Quebec,” said Bushell.

Fitzgerald pointed out that many weaner pigs leave western Canada to be finished in the U.S. This Canadian-born, U.S. finished pork still goes into premium markets -- only with an American sticker on it instead of a Canadian one.

“We’re competing against ourselves,” laments Fitzgerald.

I honestly believe we have a five-year window to change this. If we can't we may not even have a hog industry in Alberta. ~ Brent Bushell, Western Hog Exchange

Some are even ceasing production in existing barns before they wear out because they can’t afford to keep operating at a loss.

From the packer’s point of view, the current pricing system is a matter of competitiveness.

“We operate in a North American context and our goal is to remain competitive on the world market as well. This involves purchasing pork at the same price as our competitors in the USA. Our way to deal with the price is based on valuable market references,” said Vigneault.

But a packer needs animals to slaughter and Olymel has had to increase their swine herd to do so. Their subsidiary, OlySky, purchased a large farrow-to-finish operation in Saskatchewan in 2013 and recently added 20,000 sows to their Alberta herd, bringing their total western herd to about 60,000 sows.

“We are always looking to increase the number of market hogs for our Red Deer plant and in order to do so, we will be looking to develop partnerships with producers on how we finish more hogs which can include contract finishing,” said Vigneault. According to La Coop fédérée’s 2017 annual report, their western hog production sector lost money in both 2016 and 2017.

Ultimately, both Fitzgerald and Bushell believe that packers need to negotiate an equitable price with producers or the hog industry in Alberta may not recover.

“I think it’s a dangerous game [the packers] are playing to not sit down and negotiate something positive for everyone,” said Fitzgerald.

Bushell goes so far as to put a timeline on the necessary recovery.

“They’re choking out their own supply of hogs,” he said of packers. “I honestly believe we have a five-year window to change this. If we can’t we may not even have a hog industry in Alberta.” ■

Meanwhile, western Canadian packers are short 70,000-100,000 pigs a week to be slaughtering at full capacity, and production continues to decline in Western Canada, because producers cannot afford to build new barns.

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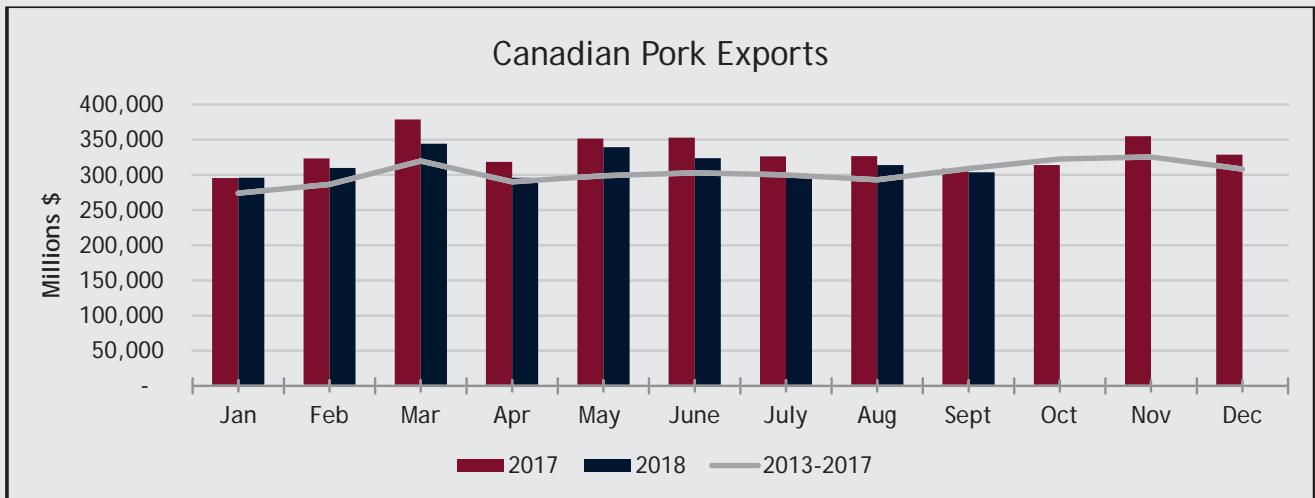
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Monthly Pork Exports by Value & Volume

Exports	Millions (\$)				Tonnes			
	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average
Jan	295,457	295,943	0.16	274,038	95,306	98,605	3.46	93,044
Feb	323,474	310,037	-4.15	286,549	104,933	103,880	-1.00	99,373
Mar	378,985	344,513	-9.10	319,565	126,627	111,469	-11.97	107,633
Apr	318,440	296,091	-7.02	290,157	103,160	100,441	-2.64	99,618
May	351,859	339,255	-3.58	299,001	112,379	116,132	3.34	100,991
June	353,057	323,687	-8.32	302,898	110,220	104,989	-4.75	98,159
July	326,472	300,274	-8.02	299,850	97,746	93,274	-4.58	94,343
Aug	326,524	313,916	-3.86	293,243	101,149	102,258	1.10	94,987
Sept	308,986	303,540	-1.76	309,095	102,057	104,210	2.11	100,593
Oct	314,139			322,661	103,942			105,842
Nov	355,102			325,523	114,765			109,472
Dec	328,593			308,209	104,960			100,900
Total	3,981,088	2,827,256		3,630,791	1,277,244	935,258		1,204,955

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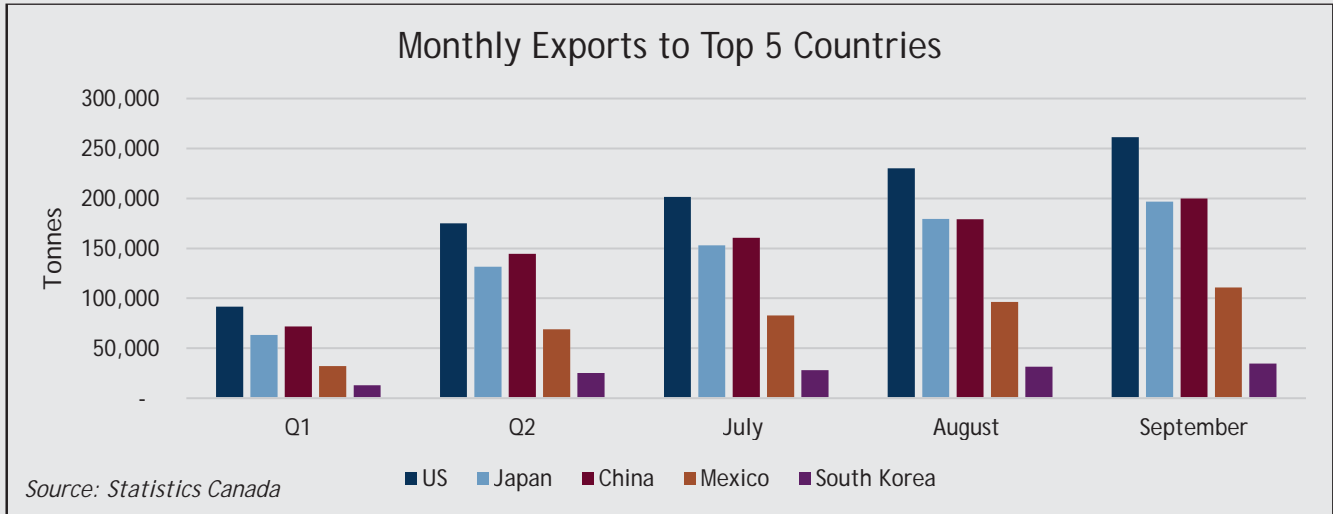
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2018 Top 10 Pork Markets - September								
	Tonnes				'000 CDN \$			
	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total
US	156,961 -17%	33,438 8%	45,100 16%	235,499 -9%	607,305 -22%	98,987 -2%	55,406 -2%	761,698 -19%
Japan	127,354 11%	22,846 -37%	23,850 2%	174,050 0%	705,774 11%	143,555 -15%	52,535 7%	901,864 5%
China	1,543 64%	152,135 -1%	44,091 -70%	197,775 -15%	2,220 76%	257,346 -9%	81,551 -44%	341,117 -21%
H. Kong	401 -32%	2,636 21%	1,796 -40%	4,833 -16%	2,216 4%	5,910 -8%	2,874 -44%	11,000 -20%
China / H. Kong	1,944 27%	154,771 -1%	45,893 -44%	202,608 -16%	4,436 4%	263,256 -8%	84,425 -44%	352,117 -20%
Mexico	61,577 21%	9,233 31%	34,048 12%	104,858 19%	106,086 21%	20,235 47%	38,096 -5%	164,417 20%
South Korea	7,850 45%	20,412 27%	6,296 -19%	34,558 18%	45,798 22%	62,199 38%	12,136 -11%	120,133 25%
Australia	71,298 0%	9,356 -24%	1,231 -7%	81,885 503%	279 0%	33,084 -27%	1,925 -9%	35,288 -25%
Philippines	714 0%	32,184 28%	5,831 -9%	38,735 22%	1,809 0%	72,632 22%	8,121 0%	82,568 20%
Taiwan	1,187 0%	24,646 8%	3,076 -31%	28,909 4%	2,878 0%	55,361 -3%	5,502 -25%	63,741 -4%
Chile	329 0%	3,692 -55%	373 -76%	4,394 -56%	777 0%	9,314 -60%	574 -81%	10,665 -60%
Cuba	588 76%	1,414 -20%	114 -80%	2,116 -21%	1,819 87%	4,440 -23%	241 -75%	6,500 -16%
Total Top 10	429,802 19%	311,992 -2%	165,818 -16%	907,612 4%	1,476,961 -5%	763,063 -5%	258,967 -21%	2,498,991 -7%
All Countries	361,626 -1%	347,122 1%	172,485 -16%	910,799 0%	1,484,840 -5%	821,902 -6%	270,760 -21%	2,577,502 -14%

*Including Pig Fat



2017 Top 10 Pork Markets - September								
	Tonnes				'000 CDN \$			
	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total
US	188,460	31,040	38,788	258,288	782,373	101,312	56,502	940,187
Japan	114,542	36,450	23,390	174,382	637,395	169,390	49,077	855,862
China	939	154,286	78,789	234,014	1,264	281,848	146,397	429,509
H. Kong	592	2,172	3,007	5,771	2,989	4,850	5,355	13,194
China / H. Kong	1,531	156,458	81,796	239,785	4,253	286,698	151,752	442,703
Mexico	50,792	7,052	30,353	88,197	87,658	13,748	35,757	137,163
South Korea	5,419	16,073	7,741	29,233	37,590	45,046	13,659	96,295
Australia		12,249	1,322	13,571		45,163	2,121	47,284
Philippines	233	25,046	6,385	31,664	692	59,768	8,106	68,566
Taiwan	576	22,728	4,463	27,767	1,772	57,186	7,305	66,263
Chile	96	8,270	1,581	9,947	201	23,383	2,984	26,568
Cuba	334	1,777	583	2,694	972	5,764	957	7,693
Total Top 10	361,983	317,143	196,402	875,528	1,552,906	807,458	328,220	2,688,584
All Countries	364,164	342,444	204,191	910,799	1,558,789	877,170	342,553	2,983,254

*Including Pig Fat

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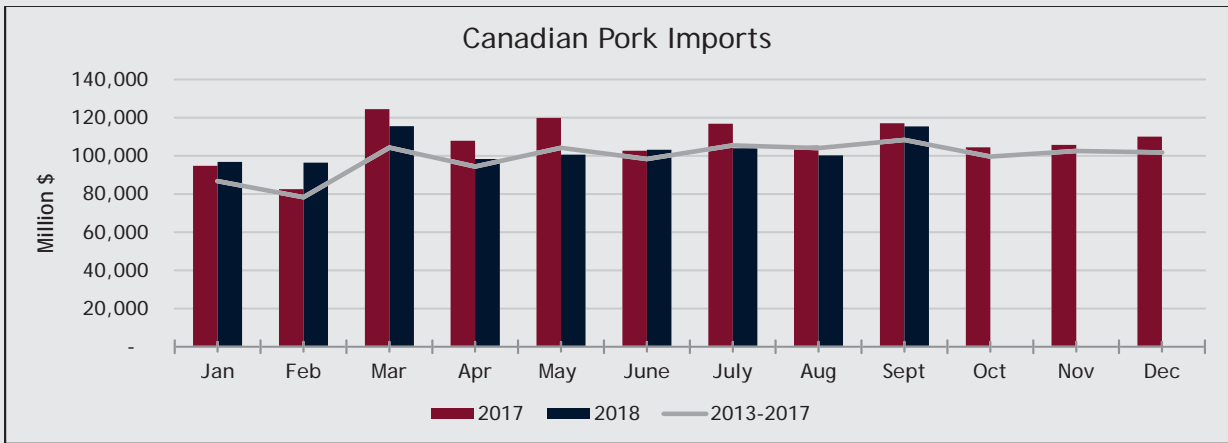
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Monthly Pork Imports by Value & Volume

Imports	Millions (\$)				Tonnes			
	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average
Jan	94,798	96,803	2.12	86,753	15,146	16,942	11.86	15,620
Feb	82,594	96,403	16.72	78,312	15,457	18,349	18.71	14,442
Mar	124,412	115,555	-7.12	104,292	21,292	20,286	-4.72	18,708
Apr	107,855	98,283	-8.87	94,391	18,316	17,654	-3.61	16,346
May	119,878	100,669	-16.02	104,182	18,638	17,730	-4.87	17,195
June	102,722	103,122	0.39	98,281	15,575	16,867	8.30	16,214
July	116,827	103,906	-11.06	105,425	17,638	16,992	-3.66	16,687
Aug	105,456	100,297	-4.89	104,122	16,963	18,566	9.45	16,942
Sept	117,080	115,447	-1.39	108,335	20,633	19,790	-4.09	18,704
Oct	104,444			99,607	18,138			16,936
Nov	105,679			102,598	18,623			17,924
Dec	109,999			101,734	18,901			17,224
Total	1,291,744	930,485		1,188,033	215,320	163,176		202,942

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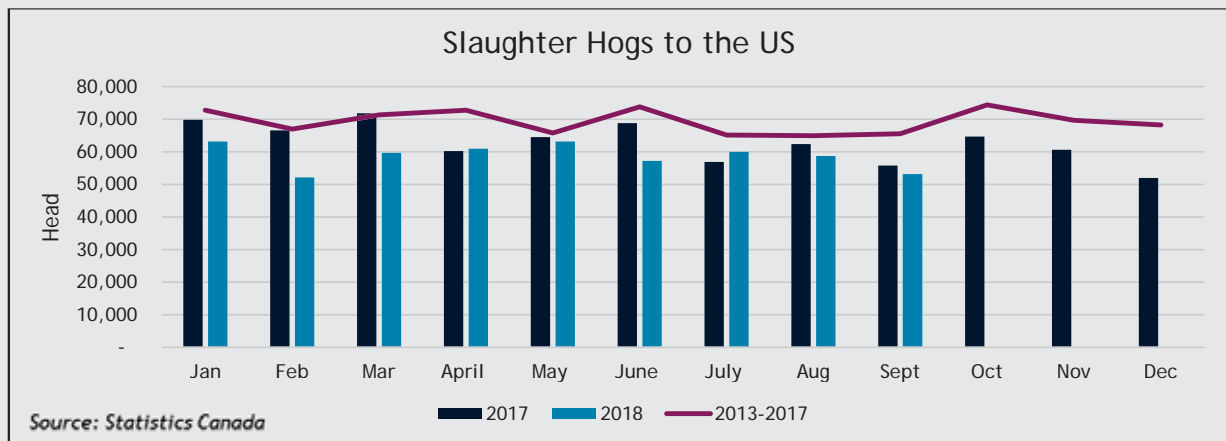
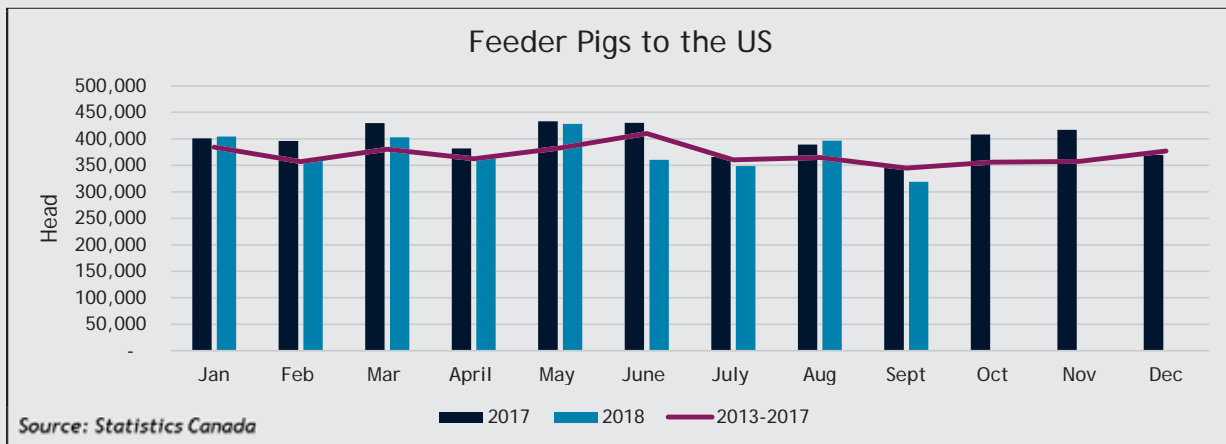
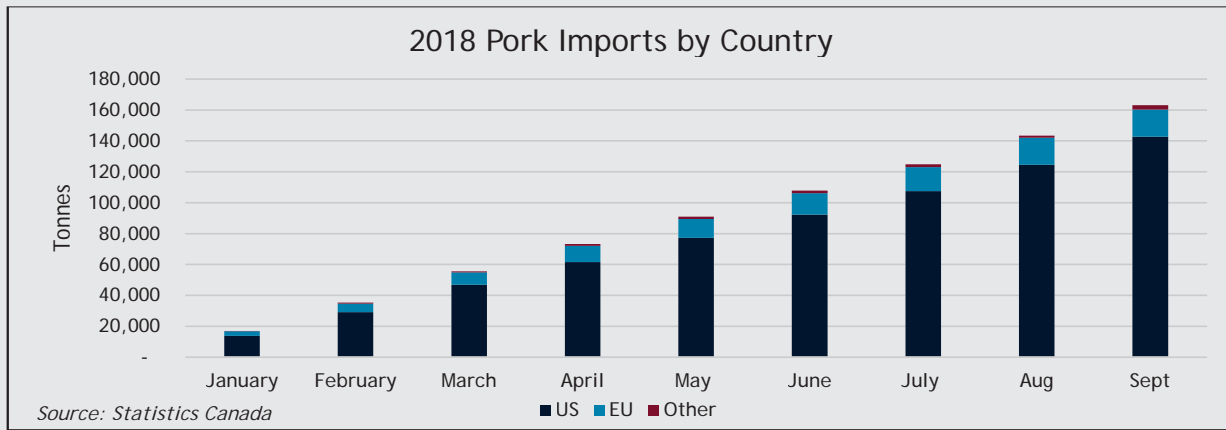
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Jan	400,831	404,171	0.83	384,419	69,784	63,129	-9.54	72,713
Feb	396,056	360,742	-8.92	356,960	66,573	52,139	-21.68	66,941
Mar	429,495	402,611	-6.26	380,587	71,808	59,678	-16.89	71,343
Apr	381,717	367,194	-3.80	362,433	60,197	60,932	1.22	72,713
May	432,864	428,152	-1.09	382,706	64,468	63,119	-2.09	65,727
June	429,977	360,512	-16.16	410,040	68,752	57,201	-16.80	73,792
July	365,609	348,827	-4.59	360,462	56,894	59,991	5.44	65,114
Aug	389,118	396,457	1.89	364,973	62,373	58,679	-5.92	64,925
Sept	347,444	319,016	-8.18	344,848	55,744	53,136	-4.68	65,549
Oct	408,020			356,012	64,625			74,378
Nov	417,180			357,278	60,613			69,685
Dec	369,407			376,839	51,942			68,221
Total	4,767,718	3,387,682		4,437,557	753,773	528,004		831,103

Industry News

2018 Saskatchewan Pork Industry Awards of Distinction

Submitted by Sask Pork

Lifetime Achievement Awards

Sask Pork was pleased to present the awards this year to two Saskatchewan individuals well-known in the pork industry. Nearly 300 people were on hand November 14th at the annual Pork Industry Symposium banquet.

The first award of the evening, was given to Dr. Mark Jacobson of Warman Veterinary Services in Saskatoon. Jay McGrath of Sinnett Pork Farms presented the award, noting that Mark was nominated by the many producers, clients, industry supplier and colleagues who have appreciated and benefited from nearly 25 years of valued service, counsel, dedication and friendship over the many years he has served Saskatchewan hog producers. He added that Mark's contributions have had a positive impact on the success of many of the individual hog operations that supported the award.

Mark was born and raised on a mixed farm in north central Saskatchewan and attended the University of Saskatchewan College of Agriculture and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, graduating with distinction from the WCVI in 1975.



Pictured: Keynote opening speaker Trent Loos, of Loos Tales from the Farm in Nebraska.

Moving to Brandon, Manitoba in 1978, Mark joined Brandon Hills Veterinary Clinic as a veterinarian and partner, working there for 11 years. It was during this time he developed an interest in swine practice, monitoring the health and production

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



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Industry News



Pictured left to right: Jay McGrath, Marilyn Jacobson, Dr. Mark Jacobson, DVM.

of pigs. In 1989, he moved back to Saskatchewan accepting a position with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in Regina and Saskatoon where he remained for four years.

Mark missed the challenges of private practice and the relationships he developed working closely with livestock producers. As a result, he joined Dr. Neil Shantz at Warman Veterinary Services in 1994, later becoming a partner in 1996 and has worked closely with his swine clients providing



Pictured left to right: Dr. John Patience, Lee Whittington, Grace Whittington, Harold Fast.

health, biosecurity and production advice. He also brought his passion for the pork industry to his role.

A special presentation was made to Dr. Jacobson by Mark Wipf of Sovereign Colony, on behalf of the pork-producing Colonies, industry suppliers, and independent pork producers Dr. Jacobson served over the years. He was acknowledged by farms and individuals not only for his veterinary service, but also his friendship and genuine compassion for the people who work in the pork industry. He was presented with a hand-made commemorative clock crafted by Kyle Colony with the engraving by Goldenview Colony.

The second award of the evening was presented to Lee Whittington, past CEO of the Prairie Swine Centre (PSC). The award was co-presented by Dr. Harold Fast, Fast Genetics and Dr. John Patience, Iowa State University. Lee was nominated for his visionary leadership and contributions to the Saskatchewan Pork Industry.

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Lee retired earlier this year after a 25-year career with the Prairie Swine Centre. Dr. Fast reflected on the many years he's known Lee and spoke of the excellent qualities he possesses that contributed to his successful and rewarding career with the Prairie Swine Centre.

Lee joined the Centre in 1992 as director of technology transfer. His reach was local, national and international and he was driven by a passion to help producers be profitable. Above all, Lee always did his homework on new initiatives and research opportunities and was always prepared. This is in large part why he was so successful in gaining national support for PSC.

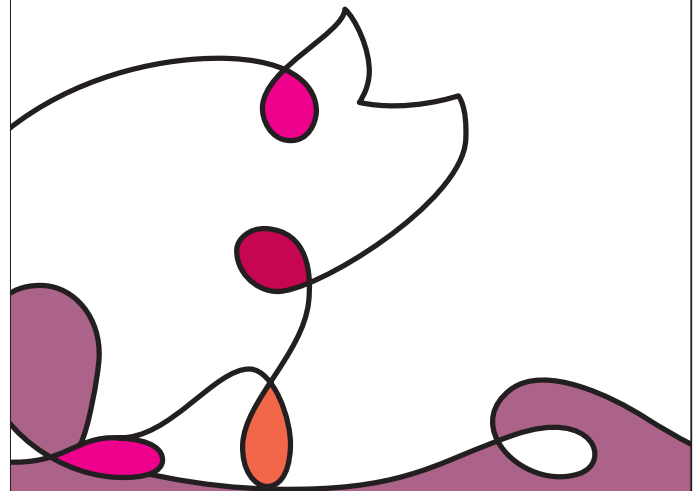
CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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Photo courtesy of Sask Pork.

He became president/CEO of the Prairie Swine Centre 2008, managing the operations, and maintaining an international brand for applied research in pork production. He has been an untiring spokesperson for the pork industry, the University of Saskatchewan, and the world. He followed the standard set by Dr. John Patience that a leader needs to be present, listen and be relevant and that brand recognition begins with, and is synonymous with, the institution's name.

Lee also helped to create a culture at PSC that focused on measurable results and the \$/pig impact making changes had on net income. This was an objective that brought credibility and accountability to the organization. The Centre has started a new research project every 10 days while still achieving 30+ PSY. They have also achieved in most years to maintain a positive cash flow despite some of the most challenging times in the last 50 years.

His imagination, personal credibility and tenacity resulted in the recent establishment of the NSERC research chair on Swine Welfare at the WCVI and the selection of Yolande Seddon who appointed Chair earlier this year. He was also responsible for the design, development and management of the Pork Interpretive Gallery at Elstow which for many years offered the general public, students and stakeholders a birds-eye view of modern pork production.

He has contributed as a member of Prairie Diagnostics Services board of directors, Sask Pork's Research Committee, AgWest Bio and others. He has also received numerous industry leadership, stewardship and marketing awards throughout his career. In the local community, he has been part of the Raj Manek Business Mentorship Program and has mentored 12 small business owners since 2008. ■

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Alberta pork producers convene in Calgary for AGM

By Sheri Monk

On November 20, pork producers from all over Alberta gathered at the avant-garde Calgary Airport Marriott In-Terminal Hotel for Alberta Pork's annual general meeting. In the morning, Chair Dan Majeau was first up to deliver his report.

"It is my first year as chair of the Alberta Pork board of directors, and it has been a challenging year in many areas, including market uncertainty, trade tariffs and other issues we are focusing on," he opened.

Majeau stated that of all producers' concerns, pricing seems to have been the heaviest on their minds.

"What started out as a year with promise turned into a year of jeopardy due to an increase in U.S. production tempering the market. Add in a trade tariff war beyond Canadians' control, and we saw the market price drop to a two-decade low over the course of a few weeks in late summer – a time in which we typically expect to see highs."

He also spoke to price discovery, the variations in the cost of production across the country, and how AgriStability isn't working as well for producers as it should be if the goal in fact is financial stability. He highlighted the promise of the



Time to socialize is always a valuable to folks who come from all corners of the province once a year to check in with their producer group.

new Canadian Pork Excellence (CPE) program, saying it does bring value to Canadian pork producers. He closed by urging producers to work together in order to seize the moment and capitalize on opportunity.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

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Industry News

Executive director Darcy Fitzgerald hit the podium next, recapping the many initiatives and industry discussions the Alberta Pork staff were busy with over the previous year. He reported that production staff visited one-third of producers in the previous year, speaking to how important it is to have real boots on the ground. The Alberta Pork website was revamped and communications programs Andrew Heck was brought onboard, while two other staff members have left to pursue other challenges. A number of policy issues were hammered away at such as the carbon tax, the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act, and the Fair and Family-friendly Workplaces Act.

“As we move toward our 50th anniversary in 2019, it will be a time to truly reflect on the enormous changes the pork industry has experienced, and it should be a time to fix the problems holding this industry back from being even more amazing in the next 50 years,” Fitzgerald said in closing.

The official business portion of the AGM concluded the morning before lunch break with resolutions brought forward from the floor. There was only one, but it is a significant one.



Dan Majeau, chair of Alberta Pork, spoke to the ups and downs of the pork industry in the past year.



Executive director Darcy Fitzgerald addresses the full house at the Alberta Pork AGM.


“Whereas the CQA program is being phased out and producers are being asked to participate in the new, more onerous CPE program, be it resolved that Alberta Pork will only support the transition of producers onto the CPE when all federal packers have agreed to pay an additional \$7 per head for CPE-validated hogs.”

After lunch, producers were treated to three informative presentations, much of it centred around price discovery. Brett Stuart, president of Global AgriTrends presented World Pork Trade, World Events, and the North American Pork Market. Steve Dziver of Commodity Professionals was up next with his in-depth expertise on Canadian Hog Pricing. Economist Kevin Grier was centre stage next with a presentation centred around a hot topic for Alberta producers – price discovery and producer-packer negotiations. Lastly, the informative day ended with a boar pit panel discussion on pricing with all three of the afternoon speakers. ■

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Managing water intake

Auditing Best Management Practices - Part 8

Submitted by Ken Engele, Prairie Swine Centre, Geneviève Berthiaume, Centre de développement du porc du Québec

In 2017, on-farm best management practices were audited on a total of 24 farms throughout Canada as part of a national project titled **From Innovation to Adoption: On-farm Demonstration of Swine Research**. This article is part of an eight-part series reporting on these audits.

Among nutrients, water is required in the greatest amount but quite often receives the least attention. Water intake of finisher pigs has been reported to range up to three times feed intake, depending on body weight and feed intake. However, most 'water intake' reported is in the form of water disappearance from drinkers, including water wastage, rather than water actually consumed by pigs. Previous work has shown finishing pigs can waste 25% of water from well-managed nipple drinkers, therefore opportunities exist to reduce wastage when flow rates are adjusted on a regular basis¹. Actual on-farm water flow rates and nipple drinker heights were measured on 24 farms across Canada, representing each phase of production from gestation to finishing. Note that not all farms had nipple drinkers installed in each phase of production, for example, some producers solely relied on wet/dry feeders without an additional water source.

Table 1 outlines water flow parameters showing ranges measured for low, target, high, and very high values. Recommended flow rates should range between 1.0 to 2.0 L/min and 0.5 to 1.0 L/min for farrowing and all other phases of production respectively, while the target range used in the analysis was expanded from 0.5 to 1.5 L/min for all areas other than farrowing.

	Low (L/min)	Target (L/min)	High (L/min)	Very High (L/min)
Gilt Pen	< 0.5	0.5 - 1.5	1.5 - 2.5	> 2.5
Gestation	< 0.5	0.5 - 1.5	1.5 - 2.5	> 2.5
Farrowing	< 1.0	1.0 - 2.0	2.0 - 3.0	> 3.0
Nursery	< 0.5	0.5 - 1.5	1.5 - 2.5	> 2.5
Finishing	< 0.5	0.5 - 1.5	1.5 - 2.5	> 2.5

Prairie Swine Centre. 2000. Pork Production Reference Guide.²

Overall water management within audited farms varies across phase of production (Table 2). Generally producers do a better job in managing flow rates within Gestation (pens) and Nursery, where approximately 60% of the nipple drinkers measured met the target flow rate. The challenge is in Finishing,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

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where approximately two-thirds of nipple drinkers provide flow rates in excess of pig's requirement, with 11% of nipple drinkers being rated very high (>2.5 L/min).

Economics

Table 3 represents a hypothetical situation of a 6,000-head finishing barn. In this case, if 100% of the nipple drinkers were adjusted to recommended flow rates (1L/min) water disappearance would be 42,000 L/day for the facility. However, as shown in the example in Table 3, only 29.3% of nipple drinkers would have been optimally adjusted. For this scenario, we can assume that any water disappearance above the rate of 7 L/day could be avoided. Therefore, the daily water disappearance would increase by 70% (or 30,800 L) to reach a total disappearance of 72,800 L/day. The direct cost of water wastage (30,800 L) associated with manure disposal would translate into approximately \$119/day or \$41,500 per year if the previous assumptions were met.

Assumptions

- 6,000 head finishing barn
- Average daily water consumption per pig - 7L/day
- Duration of finishing period - 350 days/year (18 weeks/batch)
- Manure application cost - \$0.0175/gallon or \$0.00385/litre

Table 2. Measured Water Flow Rates – 24 audited farms

	Low (<0.5L/min)	Target (0.5 – 1.5 L/min)	High (1.5 – 2.5 L/min)	Very High (>2.5L/min)
Gilt Pen	5.1%	33.3%	56.4%	5.1%
Gestation	0.0%	59.4%	21.9%	18.8%
Farrowing	15.3%	38.9%	29.3%	16.6%
Nursery	15.2%	56.8%	19.0%	8.9%
Finishing	5.4%	29.3%	54.3%	10.9%

The previous example provides potential savings for a hypothetical site; every producer should take the opportunity to assess potential savings related to manure disposal, water use, and pumping costs on a regular basis for their operation.

Properly mounting nipple drinkers can help reduce water wastage.^{3,4,5} Nipple drinkers mounted at 900 should be set



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to shoulder height, while nipple drinkers mounted at 450 should be set to 5cm (2 inches) above the back of the smallest pig in the pen. It is important to note that mounting nipple drinkers lower than required will increase water wastage.

Conclusion

Finishing pigs can maintain adequate water intake from a variety of drinker types, however water waste from drinkers can be very different depending on drinker type and management. Research has shown well-managed nipple drinkers can help reduce water waste to the same level as bowl drinkers.^{1,3} Finally, ensure you regularly check water flow rates, as this will determine time spent at the nipple, water intake and water wastage. Too little is just as costly as too much when it comes to flow rates.

For Further Reading

¹ Water Usage and Wastage from Nipple Drinkers (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/water-usage-and-wastage-from-nipple-drinkers/>

² Pork Production Reference Guide (English) http://www.prairieswine.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/2000_Prairie_Swine_Reference_Guide.pdf

³ Effects of nipple drinker height and flow rate on water wastage in grower and finisher pigs (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/>

Table 3. Hypothetical water disappearance measurements

Category	Low	Target	High	Very High
Measured Values**	5.4%	29.3%	54.3%	10.9%
Water Flow Rate (L/min)	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.75
Number of Pigs	324	1,760	3,260	655
Daily Water Disappearance/Pig (L/pig)	7	7	14	19.25
Total Daily Water Disappearance/Day (L)	2,268	12,323	45,646	12,613
Daily Water Wastage (L/pig)	0	0	7	12.25
Total Daily Water Wastage (L)	0	0	22,823	8,026

** Refers to the percentage of nipple drinkers that were measured in each respective category. A total of 24 farms were measured across Canada.

reducing-water-wastage-from-nipple-drinkers-by-grower-finisher-pigs/

⁴ Recommended Flow Rate & Height of Nipple Drinkers (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/recommended-flow-rate-height-of-nipple-drinkers/>

⁵ A Checklist for Water Use (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/a-checklist-for-water-use/> ■

Category	L/Day
Calculated Water Disappearance	72,849
Target Water Disappearance	42,000
Water Wastage	30,849
Additional Manure Disposal Cost/Day	\$119

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High-fibre diets and immune stimulation increase threonine requirements in growing pigs

Submitted by Dan Columbus, PhD, Research Scientist, Prairie Swine Centre, Inc., and Michael Wellington, MSc, PhD Student, Department of Animal and Poultry Science, University of Saskatchewan

Understanding the interaction between nutrition and pig health

With new legislation eliminating the use of in-feed antibiotics for growth promotion in Canada and increasing consumer pressure to reduce antibiotic use in animal agriculture, it is critical that we develop alternatives to antibiotic use in order to maintain animal performance and health during immune challenge. An increased understanding of the interaction of nutrition and animal robustness (i.e., the ability to cope with an immune challenge), therefore, will be a key component in efforts to replace and/or reduce antibiotic use. Specifically, nutrition-based alternatives to antibiotic use need to be identified.

Pigs are continuously exposed to microbial pathogens and immune-stimulatory antigens that negatively impact animal



productivity. Pigs exposed to immune challenge, without exhibiting any clinical signs of disease, show reduced appetite and growth and less efficient use of nutrients compared to healthy animals. Previous studies have estimated a reduction in lean growth of 20-35% and feed efficiency of 10-20% in growing pigs at sub-clinical levels of disease (Williams et al., 1997; Le Floc'h et al., 2009). This decrease in performance can have a substantial impact on profitability of producers. Stimulation of the immune system alters protein and amino acid metabolism and utilization, with amino acids redirected from growth towards supporting the immune response. Of the amino acids, glutamine, arginine, threonine, and aro-

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matic and sulfur amino acids are of particular importance as precursors for synthesis of many critical components of the immune response (Reeds and Jahoor, 2001). It is thought that provision of these amino acids may be important for improving pig response and growth performance during times of stress and disease challenge.

Pork producers have been incorporating increased amounts of co-products from the milling and biofuel industries and other feedstuffs in swine rations. These feedstuffs have higher fibre content and variable protein content and digestibility which may have a detrimental effect on overall pig immune status and robustness. It has already been established that an increased level of threonine is required in high-fibre diets. However, the impact and interaction of factors such as dietary fibre and health status on requirements for specific amino acids that are used for the immune response are not well characterized.

What We Did

A nitrogen-balance study was conducted to determine threonine requirement for maximum protein deposition when dietary fibre and immune system stimulation (ISS) were present alone and in combination. Ninety barrows (20.5 ± 0.75 kg initial body weight) were randomly assigned to 1 of 10 wheat and barley-based dietary treatments ($n = 9$). Diets consisted of a low fibre (12.5% total dietary fibre) or high fibre (18.5% total dietary fibre from sugar beet pulp and wheat bran added at 15% of the diet in a 2:1 w/w ratio) with graded levels of threonine (0.49, 0.57, 0.65, 0.73 and 0.81% standardized ileal digestible) fed at $2.2 \times$ maintenance metabolizable energy requirements. After an 8 day adaptation period, two 4 day nitrogen-balance collection periods (pre-ISS and ISS) were conducted. Immune stimulation was induced by repeated injections of increasing doses of *E. coli* lipopolysaccharide. The threonine requirement was determined in each period based on the response in nitrogen retention to dietary threonine content using a quadratic regression statistical model.

What We Found

Feeding pigs high-fibre diets and stimulating the immune system both independently increased the threonine requirement for nitrogen retention when compared to low-fibre and non-stimulated pigs, resulting in an estimate of 0.78 and 0.76% SID threonine, respectively, compared to 0.68% SID threonine. The threonine requirement was also increased when pigs received both high-fibre diets and the immune stimulation (0.72% SID threonine), however, this was not further increased above what was determined for fibre and immune stimulation alone. The exact mechanism behind the interaction of fibre and immune challenge is unknown but may be indicative of a protective effect of fibre. Interestingly, stimulation of the immune system resulted in an increase in the variability of pig response to dietary threonine content, highlighting the difficulty in determining nutrient requirements and development of feeding programs during disease challenge.

Conclusions

This study was the first to confirm an increased threonine requirement during immune challenge in pigs, and also the first to determine the interactive effects of both fibre and immune stimulation. This information will be important for the development of feeding programs that decrease feed costs and maintain animal performance while reducing reliance on antibiotics.

Acknowledgements

Funding for this research was provided by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Research and Development, Evonik Nutrition & Care GmbH, and Mitacs. General program funding provided to Prairie Swine Centre by Saskatchewan Pork Development Board, Alberta Pork, Manitoba Pork, Ontario Pork, and the Government of Saskatchewan. ■

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Feeding hogs extruded and expeller-pressed *B. juncea* canola cake

Xun Zhou¹, Miranda Smit², Malachy G. Young³, Vicente Zamora³, Ruurd T. Zijlstra¹, and Eduardo Beltranena^{1,2*}

¹University of Alberta, ²Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, ³Gowans Feed Consulting *Email: eduardo.beltranena@gov.ab.ca

Take Home Message

Brassica juncea is a yellow-seed canola cultivar with a thinner seed coat and therefore lower fibre. However, *B. juncea* has more than double the glucosinolate content of conventional canola (*B. napus*). Glucosinolates are bitter tasting compounds that may reduce feed intake. We thought that extrusion prior to expeller-pressing (EEP) could reduce their antinutritional effects. We therefore fed increasing levels (0, 5, 10, 15 or 20%) of extruded and expeller-pressed *B. juncea* cake to hogs from 38 kg to market weight. Each 5% increase in EEP *B. juncea* canola cake inclusion linearly reduced feed intake by 46 g/d, weight gain by 8 g/d, carcass weight by 440 g, and loin depth by 0.6 mm, but did not affect feed:gain, dressing percentage, backfat thickness, lean yield, or carcass index. Extrusion prior to expeller pressing did not lessen the bitterness of a specific glucosinolate (3-butenyl) that is particularly high in *B. juncea* canola. We therefore recommend feeding hogs not more than 5 to 10% *B. juncea* cake, depending on cake cost. In contrast to these results, we have previously fed hogs up to 30% conventional, solvent-extracted canola meal without reducing growth performance or carcass traits.

Why *B. juncea* canola?

Yellow-seeded *Brassica juncea* has recently been labelled the third canola specie in Canada. *B. juncea* has agronomic advantages over conventional, dark-seeded *B. napus*. It matures earlier, is more thermo-tolerant and disease resistant, and it can be combined straight without the pods shattering. It is best suited for the warmer, lower rainfall, Brown and Dark Brown soils of the Prairies, where currently little canola production exists. *B. juncea* has a thinner seed coat and therefore lower fibre content than *B. napus*. Lower fibre content means one could feed greater inclusions to pigs. However, *B. juncea* has at least double the glucosinolate content of *B. napus* canola. Glucosinolates are bitter compounds that may reduce feed intake, and affect thyroid, liver, and kidney functions.

Extrusion and expeller-pressing

Extrusion compresses feedstocks using a large screw within a cylindrical barrel through a die-end nozzle. The decreasing channel width between the screw and barrel combined with narrowing of the screw thread creates shearing force, high pressure, and generates heat to partially cook feed-stuffs. Shearing disrupts cell wall structures (fibre) that trap nutrients, increasing protein denaturation, fat solubility, and mineral availability. Extrusion therefore improves the digestibility of feedstuffs protein, fat, and phosphorus for animals. Extrusion of canola seed prior to expeller pressing could further heat up and cook glucosinolates rendering them harmless. Expeller pressing canola seed is similar to conventional processing of canola meal, except that the last



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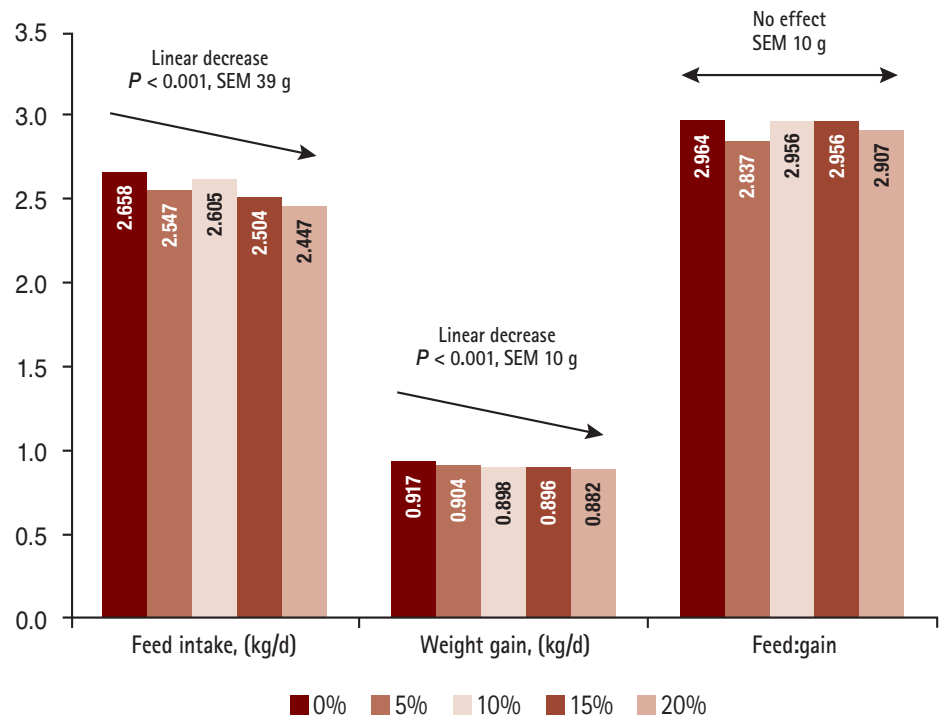
step, solvent-extraction, is not carried out. If seed is expeller-pressed rather than solvent-extracted, oil remains in the cake increasing its feed energy value. Greater oil content in expeller canola cake implies less need for costly fat or liquid oil supplementation in feeds to meet the energy requirements of pigs. We therefore thought that expeller-pressing combined with prior extrusion (EEP) of *B. juncea* canola seed might be beneficial for swine feeding.

Nutrients in EEP *B. juncea* canola cake

The *B. juncea* canola seed was sourced from southern Saskatchewan with the help of Viterra. The seed was extruded and expeller-pressed at Apex Nutri-Solutions Inc., Edgbert, AB. The ground cake was then trucked to Sunhaven Feed Mill at Irma, AB where

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

Figure 1. Increasing extruded and expeller-pressed *B. juncea* canola cake inclusion in hog diets from 38 kg until slaughter weight (120 kg) linearly decreased overall daily feed disappearance and weight gain, but did not affect feed:gain.



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Table 1. Farm ship weight, carcass characteristics and days on trial of hogs fed increasing inclusions of extruded and expeller-pressed *B. juncea* canola cake with 17% remaining oil.

	EEP <i>B. juncea</i> canola cake (%)					SEM	P-value
	0	5	10	15	20		Linear ^a
Farm ship weight, kg	123.7	122.1	122.8	122.3	121.9	0.6	0.02
Warm carcass weight, kg	96.3	94.0	94.8	94.2	94.0	0.9	0.04
Dressing	0.79	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.7	0.65
Backfat, mm	16.3	15.8	16.2	16.2	15.8	0.3	0.49
Loin depth, mm	60.5	60.9	60.3	58.6	58.8	0.6	<0.01
Lean yield, g/kg	616	619	617	616	618	2.0	0.98
Index	109.5	109.7	109.0	109.0	110.2	0.5	0.69
Days on trial	95.4	94.7	95.7	97.4	96.8	0.6	<0.01

^a If the P-value is less than 0.05, it means that there was a linear increase or decrease with each 5% canola cake inclusion.

the test diets were mixed. The EEP *B. juncea* canola cake fed provided 34% crude protein, 17% fat, and 6% fibre. Lysine content was 1.72% with lysine availability of 1.57%. The total glucosinolate content was considered high (10.9 vs. 5 µmol/g in conventional meal), 9.7 µmol/g being 3-butenyl.

Growing-finishing pig trial

We were interested in comparing the growth performance, carcass characteristics, and jowl fatty acid profile of hogs fed 0, 5, 10, 15 and 20% EEP *B. juncea* canola cake under commercial conditions. In total, 880 pigs with an initial body weight of 38 kg were housed in 40 pens, 22 pigs per pen, and had free access to 1 of 5 mash feed regimens until slaughter (120 kg). Test diets were best-cost formulated to provide 2.3 Mcal/kg NE and 4.2, 3.8, 3.6, 2.9 and 2.9 g standardized ileal digestible (SID) lysine/Mcal NE for Grower 1 (d 0 – 14), Grower 2 (d 15 – 35), Grower 3 (d 36 – 56), Finisher 1 (d 57 – 74), and Finisher 2 (d 75 to market weight) phases, respectively. Grower 1 and 2 diets included 25% and Grower 3, Finisher 1 and 2 diets included 20% of wheat distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS). Increasing EEP *B. juncea* canola cake inclusions substituted lentil, soybean meal and barley grain in diets that were balanced for energy and amino acids for each growth phase.

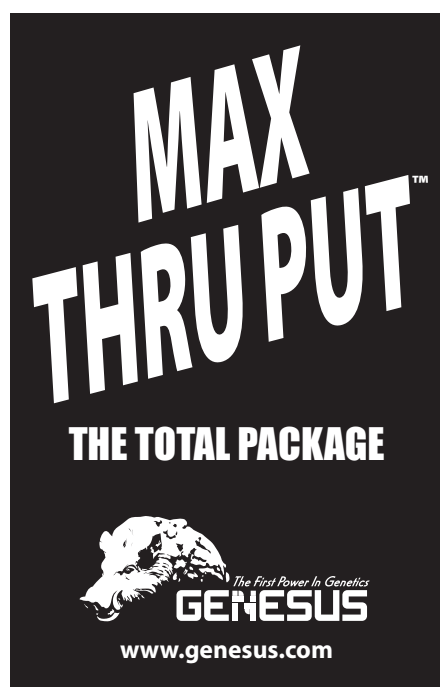
Trial results

Increasing EEP *B. juncea* canola cake

inclusion in the feed linearly reduced pig body weight at d 14, 35, 56, 74 and 85. Pigs fed 20% of EEP *B. juncea* canola cake were 2.7 kg lighter than controls at d 85. For the entire trial, each 5% increase in dietary EEP *B. juncea* canola cake inclusion linearly reduced feed intake by 46 g/d and weight gain by 8 g/d, but did not affect feed:gain (Figure 1).

Each 5% increase in dietary EEP *B. juncea* canola cake inclusion linearly reduced carcass weight by 440 g and loin depth by 0.6 mm, but did not affect dressing percentage, backfat thickness, lean yield, or carcass index (Table 1). Pigs fed 20% EEP *B. juncea* canola cake reached slaughter weight 1.4 d after controls fed no canola cake.

Canola seed is high in unsaturated oil. Feeding unsaturated fats to pigs reduces the firmness of pork fat. Soft pork fat causes miscuts during pork deboning and reduces the quality of processed pork products (i.e., oily sausage, mushy patties, stretchy raw bacon that shrinks too much at cooking). Therefore, pork fat quality should be considered when feeding high oil feedstuffs to hogs. In our experiment, increasing EEP *B. juncea*



canola cake inclusion linearly reduced saturated fat content, whereas it increased mono- and polyunsaturated fat content in jowl fat. Iodine value, an indicator of overall fat firmness (lower values are better and indicate more firmer fat in the carcass), increased linearly with increasing of EEP *B. juncea* canola cake inclusion, but it did not exceed the 70-75 g/100 g fat that it is still considered as acceptable pork fat firmness.

Cost vs. benefit analysis

At the same cost per kg of cake, increasing EEP *B. juncea* canola cake feed inclusion increased average diet cost. However, feed cost per kg of body weight gain was lower for all diets including EEP *B. juncea* canola cake versus the control diet. Gross revenue margin per hog after subtracting feed cost was highest feeding diets containing 5% EEP *B. juncea* canola cake.

Conclusions and recommendation

The results of this commercial-scale trial indicate that feeding increasing inclusions of up to 20% of EEP *B. juncea* canola cake to hogs linearly reduced overall growth performance. The reduction in weight gain observed could be explained by reduced feed intake. Thus, it cancelled out the beneficial effects from reduce fibre and increased feed energy due to the 17% remaining oil content in EEP *B. juncea* canola cake. Because backfat and lean yield were not affected, we attributed the reduced feed intake to a specific glucosinolate that tested high in EEP *B. juncea* canola cake. This glucosinolate (3-butenyl) is known to be bitterer than others found in conventional *B. napus* canola. Extrusion prior to expeller pressing of *B. juncea* canola cake did not lessen the negative effects of glucosinolates on hogs.

Increasing feed inclusions of EEP *B. juncea* canola cake increased unsaturated fatty acids in jowl fat, but did not compromise pork fat firmness. Due to the reduced feed intake, weight gain, and carcass weight, we recommend feeding not more than 5 to 10% extruded and expeller-pressed *B. juncea* canola cake to hogs, depending on cake cost. In contrast to these results, we have previously shown that hogs perform fine when fed up to 30% conventional, solvent-extracted canola meal (Western Hog Journal 2011, Vo. 32, No. 3 pp. 39-43).

Acknowledgments

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YOUR DAILY BACON

BY BUDDY SIMMONS

True Crime!

We here at Your Daily Bacon are pretty diligent about scouring the internet for interesting pig tails, er, we mean pig tales, but for this edition, we found the pickings to be a bit slim. But fear not, we did discover a few stories of interest from days past that slipped beneath our radar, so we are happy (relieved) to be able to pass them on to you.



Always follow your dreams.

This first one is actually pretty recent. A report published on November 14th of this year revealed the story of assault and bacon battery. It seems that an unnamed woman who worked in the kitchen at a McDonald's in Bluffton South

Carolina, decided to snack a bit on the bacon that was presumably awaiting to be served. Her manager spotted her helping herself to some free tasty pork-product, and instructed her to just cut it out, after which the hungry worker acknowledged the reprimand... and then helped herself again to another couple crispy strips.

Now, we know what you are thinking, the same thing as we did. "Who could blame her?"

While bacon is extremely tempting, in a civilized society we wait for somebody to offer it to us, not steal it. The bacon-snatcher apparently was not a follower of this code. And as a result, the manager told the woman's boss. (That bit is a little confusing, at McDonald's wouldn't the manager BE the boss?)

Anyway, in retaliation, the bacon thief, upon learning she had been ratted out, backed the manager into a corner

Bacon is the Duct Tape of Food



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and proceeded to attempt to shove hot crispy bacon into the manager's face. Again you are probably thinking as we did, "Um, what's the crime in that? Bacon is great, who cares about the delivery method?" But there is a difference between somebody shoving bacon into your mouth and into your face, after-all. The former is a tasty, if perhaps a bit forced, favour, the latter is a ticket to a burn-treatment center.

Naturally the manager fought the bacon-crazed employee who then responded by slapping the manager. With the bacon still in her hands. As the report noted, if the manager had just eaten the bacon coming at her, the unruly employee would have been pretty much disarmed. It is unknown if she also shrieked, "Do you want fries with that?"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 48

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Pork Culture and Trends

The police were called, and a warrant for the bacon barbarian was issued. When apprehended, she will face charges of assault and battery.

The story did not contain a resolution, so for all we know she may still be at large. Who knows, she may have headed for the Canadian border to escape prosecution. So just in case, if you see a wild-eyed woman eating a BLT on the streets, play it safe and avoid her! Or at least do not ask her for a bite of her sandwich, tempting as it may be to do so.

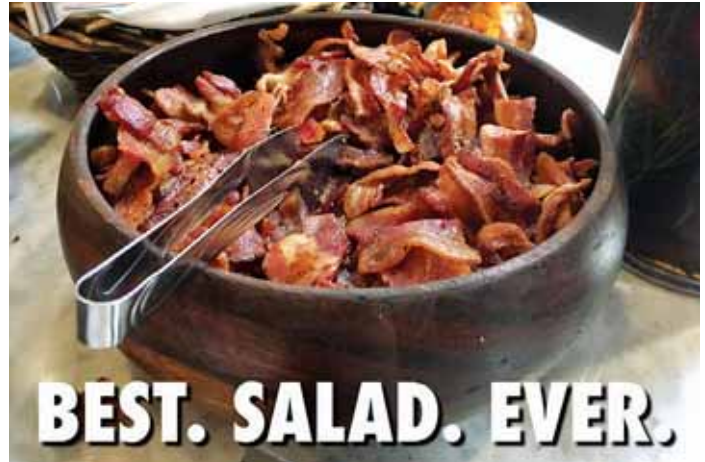
That is not the only case of meat mayhem. In Goldsboro, North Carolina, during an argument, a man's girlfriend slapped him upside the head with an entire package of bacon. The boyfriend did not press charges, probably because hey – free bacon! Ap-

parently, the further south you go, the nuttier people get. The tale is insane. After all, who would waste perfectly good bacon by using it as a weapon?

And in where we deduced may have been in the city of Madison, Wisconsin (forgive us for the sketchy details, we just dig this stuff up, we can't always figure out the whereabouts unless it is explicitly stated and bacon crime is often a deeply shrouded mystery), a man – are you ready for



This is real. We checked.



Especially if there is a recall...

this – named Thomas Bacon was arrested for allegedly assaulting another man for eating the last piece of breakfast sausage.

We also learned that back in 2014, a man in Staten Island, New York was arrested for attempting to steal 48(!) packages of bacon from a grocery store, hiding the merchandise beneath his clothes. Along with some beer and dog food. We can imagine one store clerk commenting to another, “Hey did that guy weigh 300 pounds when he came in here?!?” At least the thief thought of his dog as well, we guess. So he can't be ALL bad.

Next, in 2013, a woman was arrested in Athens, Georgia at a Piggily Wiggily grocery store for swiping five packs of bacon

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Just a dog eating a bacon strip

Okay, it isn't his tongue, but if it were, he could lick our faces all he wanted.

and two packages of chicken wings. When observant employees attempted to confront her, she sprayed them with pepper spray. She had to be insane. After-all, she could have gotten two extra packs of bacon if she had left the chicken wings behind. She ended up receiving five years in the pig-penitentiary for her misdeeds.

Finally, in 2010, in Surrey, England, a crook broke into a home and stole a pack of bacon from the refrigerator. He left a single uncooked slice hanging from the doorknob of the house, indicating that he was not entirely heartless.

And that concludes out forensic time-travel into the world of purloined pork crimes. We'll leave you with this bit of advice: keep your bacon locked up! ■

If this cut wood makes you think of bacon we can be friends.



If we had to choose between wood for heat or bacon and freezing, you know what we'd choose. As long as we had other wood to cook the bacon over.



If you receive this from a suitor, it means they're a keeper.



Think about that, vegetarians!

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