

Western Hog JOURNAL

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Sneaking a peak at Banff

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**Western
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Message from the editor

Happy New Year to all of our readers across the country, and thank you for including us once again to share in this amazing industry with you. Last year was an interesting one for the Canadian swine business on all levels, and at the Western Hog Journal, it is our most fervent wish that 2016 will be healthy, happy and prosperous for all!

As you can see, our cover story this issue is an exciting one that many in our industry worked hard for. Losing COOL is a step in the right direction to finally re-harmonizing trade in North America. In this edition, we also take a close look at the WHO's red meat cancer warning. In Jennifer McFee's article, we learn that as always, the devil is in the details and real risk of consuming red meat is relatively low when compared to known cancer agents such as tobacco. Contextual reporting is one of the pillars of good journalism. Without it, readers are given information without the detail they need in order to know how to interpret it. Unfortunately, in today's world of fast food news, a lot of people just take the time to read headlines and lead sentences – and those are almost always sensational.

I read the story with both interest, and with concern. I had reported on some of the more solid studies associating cancer with red meat in the past, and I was aware of the issue. A couple of years ago, I did the math with respect to what was considered the amount of red meat that could be eaten without the risk, and I realized that I wasn't eating enough of it to be concerned. So if the livestock and meat reporter isn't eating too much, there's a good chance that most Canadian's aren't either and in fact, that's exactly what Jennifer's research reveals. In reading her coverage, I was impressed by the pork industry's calm, rational and most of all, truthful response to the WHO finding. It's important that our industry remain credible in the face of sound science, because we continue to use sound science to support our industry such as with antibiotic use, and animal welfare research.

Kevin Grier addresses pork demand in Canada in his column, The View from Grier, and the news is good! He also deals with the processing situation in the East, and the implications of the TPP deal. Speaking of out east, I'm looking for story ideas and writers from Ontario and Quebec, to give the Western Hog Journal more of a national scope as we expand our readership, and our coverage.

Lastly, huge congratulations go out to our star advertising and marketing consultant, James Shaw. Many of you know James for his energy and enthusiasm for our industry. Well, now you will also know him as the winner of the first ever Canadian Agri-Marketing Association (CAMA) Lifetime Achievement

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



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News and Views from Far and Near

Saccharomyces cerevisiae boulardii CNCM I-1079 improves sow's feed intake in lactation

Results of a meta-analysis show that probiotic yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae boulardii* CNCM I-1079, helps increase sow feed intake during lactation. The study was presented by Lallemand Animal Nutrition at the American Dairy Science Association® (ADSA) and American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Joint Annual Meeting, July 12-16, 2015, in Orlando, Florida. Optimal feed intake in early lactation is key to ensuring sufficient milk production and limiting sow body weight loss, which impacts both piglet and sow performance. These results confirm that the monogastric-specific probiotic represents a valuable tool for lactating sow management.

The meta-analysis encompassed 10 recent commercial trials performed with *S. cerevisiae boulardii* CNCM I-1079 throughout Europe and North America and included 1,111 sows. This robust statistical method showed an overall significant effect ($P < 0.05$) of the probiotic on sow feed intake in lactation ranging from 0.396 to 0.573 lb of extra feed /day/sow (depending on the statistical model used).

Eric Chevaux, PhD, applied R&D manager for Lallemand Animal Nutrition, says the probiotic action of *S. cerevisiae boulardii* CNCM I-1079 helps improve sow feed intake by balancing the microbiota of the digestive system. Documenting the effect across multiple trials was a result of producer feedback.

"When it comes to feed intake measurement, inter-individual variability remains high, even when parameters such as parity, feed or environment are fixed," he says. "This meta-analysis was conducted in order to bring a quantitative evaluation on the effect of the live yeast on sow feed intake in lactation."

Dr. Chevaux notes the statistical method used is recognized by scientists and helps ensure the effects are significant and the conclusions robust.

When feed intake during lactation is improved, both piglet and sow productivity can be improved, adds David Saornil, DVM, Swine Product Manager for Lallemand Animal Nutrition.

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Message from the editor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4



James Shaw (left) receives his honour from award sponsor Len Kahn, Kahntact Marketing Agency.

Award. James received his well-deserved honour in Winnipeg on November 5. Congratulations James, from all of us!

For those of you going to the Banff Pork Seminar, make sure you stop by the Alberta Pork booth to say hello! Make sure you read our preview of this year's seminar to amp you up for the big event. The speaker line-up looks fabulous, and I know the committee has put a lot of long, hard hours in planning another world-class event. And let's not forget that this is a homecoming year for BPS as it's being held at the luxurious Banff Springs Hotel. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you there! ■

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“The effects are numerous: Piglets’ average daily gain can be increased due to better milk production; sows appear to lose less body weight during lactation; and the wean-to-estrus interval can be reduced,” he says. “We know that significant weight loss during the first lactation has negative effects on future litter size, a phenomenon known as ‘second litter syndrome.’ The importance of sow body weight cannot be underestimated during this key step of pig production.”

Chevaux E., Guillou D., Keith E. Meta-analysis of the influence of live yeast addition on feed intake in lactating sows. Abstract # T292. ADSA-ASAS Joint Annual Meeting 2015, Orlando, Florida. July 12-16 2015. <http://m.jtmtg.org/abs/t/62826>

Fast Genetics appoints Dr. Steve Sornsen as director of U.S. business development



Previous senior director of veterinary business solutions at Zoetis (formerly Pfizer), assistant vice president of health assurance at Seaboard Farms, and veterinarian with Iowa Select Farms, Dr. Sornsen brings abundant business and scientific depth to the Fast Genetics team. He obtained both his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Master of Science from Iowa State University.

Dr. Sornsen will lead Fast Genetics’ U.S. sales and technical support teams, as all of Fast Genetics’ U.S. personnel will report up through him. Dr. Sornsen will report directly to Shannon Meyers, Fast Genetics’ chief operating officer.

With the implementation of sex sorted sperm and low dose semen technology, Fast Genetics is poised for significant growth. Fast Genetics will continue to add highly respected and talented individuals like Dr. Sornsen to its team in the near future.

Canarm AgSystems and Intelia to drive innovation into fan-controller market

Canarm AgSystems and Intelia recently announced the creation a partnership to drive innovative new solutions for barn ventilation systems.

Canarm AgSystems is an Ontario-based manufacturer of ventilation, housing and technology solutions for barns. Intelia is a Quebec-based manufacturer of precision controls for livestock barns, especially poultry, hogs and dairy cattle.

The partnership was formed to merge the innovation power of two companies creating precision solutions for livestock as farmers demand more data-driven tools. Look for exciting new barn environment products in early 2016 from Canarm and Intelia that will lower operating costs for farmers.

In the interim, the two companies are integrating their technology to create new barn environment control options. Canarm’s ventilation products combined with Intelia’s three levels of controllers provide a solution for every barn from simple to very sophisticated.

As well, Canarm AgSystems and Intelia are committed to long-term, industry-leading customer service that farmers can rely on to keep their barns monitored and working efficiently.

“This is another important step in our goal of becoming a full solutions provider to livestock farmers,” says Doug Matthew, Vice President

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Chris Fleming joins Genesis

Chris Fleming has joined Genesis Genetics as a sales and technical representative for the eastern United States. Chris brings more than 20 years of livestock and meat business knowledge to the team. He holds an associate of science degree from BlackHawk East and bachelor of science degree from Western Illinois University.

His previous experience includes extensive time with Farmland Foods and Rantoul Foods where he had leadership roles in hog procurement. In this time period, he was able to develop hundreds of relationships with swine producers. He looks forward to continuing to work with them in the future.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

HVAC and Ag Business Units with Canarm Ltd. "We're very excited to see what our companies can create as we work together."

"Partnering with Canarm will help us to expand the availability of our controls to the Canadian market as we focus on the exciting future of agriculture," says Dominic Desy, CEO for Intelia.

Canarm AgSystems and its

dealer network will now market Intelia's controllers across Canada. Canarm and its dealers will also support previously marketed Intelia controllers.

Canarm AgSystems has been a trusted supplier to hog, dairy and poultry farmers for 80 years, providing animal-housing solutions from the simplest penning to the most technologically advanced systems. The company is a

business unit of Canarm Ltd.

Since 1999, Intelia has designed, developed and manufactured advanced electronic products to support smart farm management. The company enables farmers around the world to protect, control and optimize their poultry, swine and dairy production through intelligent controllers, powerful algorithms and added-value services.



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Fast Genetics Grows Its Genetics Team

Fast Genetics recently added Dr. Richard Leach as its U.S.-based senior geneticist and Dr. Daniela Grossi as its molecular geneticist. Dr. Leach obtained his Ph.D. in Genetics from the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute and his B.Sc. in Genetics from the University of Liverpool. With this academic training, he will bring both a quantitative and molecular genetics focus to the Fast Genetics team. Dr. Leach has previously worked in the swine genetics industry as well as in research with

the United States Department of Agriculture. Based in the U.S., Dr. Leach will contribute to Fast Genetics' research and development programs, as well as provide technical support for Fast Genetics' U.S. operations.

Dr. Grossi obtained her D.V.M. from Universidade de Marilia in Brazil and M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Genetics and Animal Breeding from Universidade Estadual Paulista in Brazil. Previous post-doctoral researcher at the University of Guelph and statistical geneticist with a genomics laboratory, Dr. Grossi brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in genomics, quantitative genetics, and veterinary medicine. Dr. Grossi will be based out of Fast Genetics' head office in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

She will report to Murray Duggan, Fast Genetics' Senior Geneticist, focusing on all research and development programs, with particular emphasis on molecular genetics and genomic EBVs.

Topigs Norsvin Canada Inc. announces new logistics manager

Topigs Norsvin Canada Inc. announced recently that Ron Musick has assumed the role of Logistics Manager. Ron will be based in the Topigs Norsvin Canada head office, located in Winnipeg. He will be responsible for all breeding stock movements in Canada, as well as coordinating all global exports.

Ron brings with him many years of experience in a sales/service role and in recent years, having the additional role of managing the Ontario logistics. With more than 10 years of experience in GAP Genetics, TOPIGS Canada and Topigs Norsvin Canada, Ron is very familiar with logistics and customer needs.

We congratulate Ron on this new responsibility. Ron looks forward to serving the ever-growing customer base at Topigs Norsvin Canada.

Kane Manufacturing launches new rattle cup

The Kane Rattle Cup is animal friendly and made of high density, durable polyethylene, it's built to last. Its large handle makes the Kane Rattle Cup easy to use. Steel balls inside the cup allow handlers to move animals by sound alone. Make moving, sorting, and loading livestock easier using the Kane Rattle Cup. The actual size is 6 1/2" wide, 7 "tall and 5" deep, with a 6 x 2 1/2" handle. The cups ship in a box of 12. For more information, contact Kane Manufacturing at 800.247.0038 or info@kanemfg.com.



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Fresh innovations and partnerships drive growth for Canadian Bio-Systems

New science-based feed technology innovations and expanded customer relationships across the country are driving a new generation of growth for Calgary-based Canadian Bio-Systems Inc. (CBS Inc.)

“It’s an exciting time of fresh opportunities across the shifting landscape of the feed sector,” says Owen Jones, CBS Inc. president. “Customers need choice. They need innovation. They need trusted partners who will champion the best tailored solutions for their operations. We are fortunate as a Canadian company, delivering homegrown Canadian technologies, to be a part of this new era of opportunity taking shape across the country.”

A big driver of the fresh potential is new science, says Rob Patterson, CBS Inc. Technical Director. CBS Inc. has long-standing partnerships with the University of Manitoba and other key local science centres, to pioneer breakthrough technologies such as new “multi-carbohydase” enzyme formulations.

“Multi-carbohydase technology utilizes multiple enzyme sources with multiple activities, to target a ‘total breakdown’ of otherwise indigestible feed components, to deliver higher nutritional extraction from a wide range of animal feeds,” says Patterson. “This adds value to

feed, reduces potential waste and presents a new way to gain a competitive advantage and enhanced profitability.”

Solutions must constantly evolve to meet new challenges, says Mark Peters, CBS Inc. Sales and Marketing Director. Among recent examples, CBS Inc. has expanded the availability of NutraMix – a feed enhancer that helps support safe, high-quality feed as well as animal benefits.

“NutraMix offers a valuable insurance policy,” says Peters. “We see growing demand for this type of product that offers peace of mind to feedmills, producers, nutritionists and others in industry, as a tool to help safeguard feed quality and reduce threats to livestock performance.”

Another demand is the rising focus on options to “lock-in” performance gains earned throughout the production cycle, he says. CBS Inc. has introduced Maxi-Nutrio – a uniquely tailored yeast autolysate supplement for pigs and poultry, designed to carry forward early gains through the mid and later phases of production.

“Many customers use a more comprehensive, multi-faceted supplement, such as our Maxi-Gen Plus, during the starter phase to meet the full needs of young animals,” explains Peters. “But after that phase it’s still important to have a more targeted option to safeguard the strong production results and carry them forward through to the end of the feeding cycle. Maxi-Nutrio delivers just the right level of added boost for the remaining phases, to help producers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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protect their investment and make sure nothing derails a successful production period.”

Added to these types of advantages, all CBS Inc. products are bio-based formulations. This fits well with the pressures and demands of today’s marketplace, including the increasing emphasis on new options to reduce reliance on antibiotics use. “Our approach is all about the right science and championing the customer,” says Peters. “That includes always looking for new solutions that fit the shifting marketplace demands, both for today and tomorrow.”

Comprehensive information on CBS Inc. and its expanding portfolio of products and services is available on the company’s new website, located at www.canadianbio.com.

Canadian Bio-Systems Inc. is an innovation-focused

company that researches, develops and manufactures a wide range of products used in feed, food, industrial and environmental applications. The Calgary, Alberta-based company, with major Canadian manufacturing facilities in both Calgary and Oshawa, Ontario, is building on a 30 year legacy with expanding resources and partnerships worldwide. Follow on Twitter @canadianbio and on Facebook /canadianbio.

Carlo Genetics Inc. announces new GM

Carlo Genetics announced recently that Kyla Ripley has joined its staff as general manager. Kyla will be based out of the Carlo facilities near Ste. Anne, Manitoba. In her new role, Kyla will be responsible for all aspects of the business including production, quality control, delivery, and customer support.

“Kyla has extensive experience and knowledge of the swine AI business. She also has worked

for many years in the front lines of customer service and support. We believe she will enhance the team at Carlo and be a great asset as we move forward,” said Lorne Penner, Carlo Genetics Inc., president and director.

Kyla is a graduate of Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. She gained several years of experience managing boar studs for both Cotswold Canada and GAP Genetics. Most recently she was the Logistics Coordinator for Topigs Norsvin Canada. She is well known and respected by many producers in the Canadian industry.

“We are excited to have Kyla join us at Carlo. Her extensive organizational skills and her work ethic will bring great value to the business,” said George Goossen, director of Carlo Genetics Inc.

Carlo Genetics Inc., is a leading swine AI business in North America. Carlo supplies swine AI services to some of the largest production systems in Manitoba, but above all else

strives to provide the highest quality product available through the use of the latest technologies.

Kyla looks forward to being part of the progressive attitude and excitement that is a Carlo Genetics trademark as she moves into her new role.

Dawson Tire and Wheel to supply radial tires for Zimmatic®

Dawson Tire and Wheel has signed an agreement with Lindsay Corporation to supply radial pivot tires as original equipment on new Zimmatic® by Lindsay center pivot irrigation systems, and also to make them available through Lindsay’s parts department. Dawson and Lindsay worked closely together to test and determine the best fit for Zimmatic pivots. They concluded that radial tire construction lessens severe wheel tracking and compaction beneath sprinklers, while reducing overall drivetrain

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wear and tear. Additionally, the 320/85R38 radial tire has a 60-percent greater footprint than 11.2" x 38" bias tires that are standard on competitive brands of center pivots. The wide, flat tread face and durable sidewall of the radial tire makes it especially ideal for wet, muddy irrigation applications.

The two sizes of radial pivot tires, 320/85R38 and 380/85R24, offer heavy load ratings, even at low pressures, and are backed by an 8-year limited warranty. They fit standard pivot wheels and do not require tubes.

"We are proud to offer our customers the option of a true radial tire on our pivots," said Christopher Higgins, Zimmatic product manager at Lindsay Corporation. "These new radial tires provide strength and flexibility and a flat tread profile for improved flotation and pivot footprint."



Chad Kuhlman, a Nebraska grower who installed a full set of radial pivot tires in 2014, said, "I really liked what I saw after harvest. The tracks were very small, which was my main concern in switching to radials. We had trouble with tracks on this pivot before because it has heavy soil. I tried other tires, but nothing seemed to work. The radials were able to keep the pivots

going later in the season when the tracks normally get deep."

Manitoba Pork releases new barn budget estimates

Manitoba Pork commissioned DGH Engineering Ltd., to prepare a detailed budget estimate to construct new hog

finisher facilities in today's market conditions, using typical 2,000 and 4,000 head finisher barns as models. This information can be found on the Manitoba Pork website at manitobapork.com.

For more information, please contact Mike Teillet, Manitoba Pork's manager of sustainable development, at 204-235-2309 or mteillet@manitobapork.com. ■

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On Canadian demand, changes in Ontario and the TPP

Canadian Pork Demand

In light of the World Health Organization report pertaining to processed meats released in late October, it is worthwhile reminding ourselves that overall the demand picture for pork has turned very positive.

During the previous 20 years, pork demand struggled. Canadians and Americans ate less pork as per capita consumption declined. Not only that, but real pork prices were declining over much of that time period. That is the definition of declining demand. Not only did we eat less pork but it took lower and lower price to convince us to eat that declining amount. That is a depressing situation.



By Kevin Grier

In the last four years or so, however, the situation has changed dramatically. At the very least, demand has stabilized. Higher prices lead to less consumption and lower prices lead to more consumption.

That is normal and to be expected. More importantly, that is an improvement. In 2014 Canadians ate less pork, which is not surprising given the low supplies and record prices. What was interesting about 2014 though is that given how high prices were, we could have eaten much less pork. Instead we stepped up to the meat case despite the soaring prices. Going into 2015, and despite the WHO report, the situation remains positive.

Canadian pork consumption increased by 18 per cent during the third quarter this year compared to the third quarter last year. On a year-to-date basis through September, pork consumption increased in Canada by 18 per cent compared to the first nine months of 2014. Of course, North American production was down notably in 2014 due to PED, but nevertheless, the year over year increase is exceptional. Consumption is up by a similar amount when compared to 2013.

The big consumption increase so far this year is also notable given the big increases in pork prices in Canada over the last two years. During the first nine months of this year, the StatsCan consumer price index for pork increased by 5.5 per cent compared to last year. That increase in 2015 over 2014 came on top of a 13 per cent increase in pork prices in 2014 compared to 2013.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

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The main point is that Canadians are stepping up to the meat case to purchase pork despite big price increases. That is a clear sign of strong pork demand. Pork demand has been improving and strengthening for at least the last three years. The performance of demand in the United States has also been very supportive and encouraging. Robust pork demand keeps prices firm through the chain. The strong performance stands in contrast to the very weak demand seen through most of the last 20 years.

The strength of pork demand was tested with the WHO release on October 26. The stark decline in lean hog futures started a couple days before the WHO release and there were a number of contributing factors to the decline. Nevertheless, the WHO report did not help. In addition the U.S. belly primal declined sharply. The decline started just before the October 26 release, but it accelerated after the release.

Finally and anecdotally, the week that the report was released Canadian sales of processed pork products declined markedly compared to the same week last year. I expect that sales of processed product will recover fully, largely because pork demand is strong and consumers are ready to move on. If pork demand was less robust, however, that WHO report might have been even more damaging.

Ontario structural change coming?

I have mentioned in the WHJ before that many producers in Ontario are seriously struggling due to the capacity shortage caused by the Quality Meat Packers closure. According to a presentation by Ken McEwan of the University of Guelph at a November 16 meeting of the Ontario Pork Industry Council, Ontario is on pace to produce 5.7 million hogs in 2015. That total production works out to 110,000 head per week with total federal and provincially inspected capacity at about 80,500 per week. There are two main federally inspected plants in Ontario -- Conestoga and Sofina. Canadian Pork Council data puts Conestoga capacity at 28,000 and Sofina at 43,500. Provincially inspected plants can handle up to 8,000 per week. That leaves

a shortage of about 30,000 head per week against the capacity. In the fall of 2015, the two federal plants have been doing more than their listed capacity with total federal kills averaging over 75,000 on full weeks. Also Olymel's Quebec plants have not been taking anywhere near their normal flow from Ontario due to production problems. That has meant thousands of hogs per week going to Manitoba, which is not a sustainable solution. Shipping to the U.S. may become a bit more appealing again in the future, if COOL is ever repealed. However, in the fall of 2015, U.S. shipments were challenging for logistical and supply reasons.

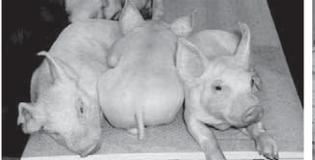
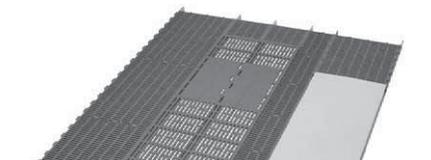
The bottom line for many Ontario producers is that production is being cut, and expansion plans have been curtailed while others have started to sell more feeder pigs to the U.S. It is easy to argue that at the very least there will be a major structural change away from market hogs to feeder pigs.

TPP Win

Details of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) deal were not released as of this writing, but based on what is known now, it is a positive development for the Canadian pork industry.

The TPP is a comprehensive trade agreement between 12 Asia-Pacific region countries --Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam. The TPP agreement will give Canada preferential access to member countries. Tariffs and other barriers faced by a wide range of Canadian products from various sectors will be cut. These sectors include agriculture and agri-food, fish and seafood, forestry and value-added wood products, metals and mining, and manufactured industrial goods. The agreement will also provide improved access in areas such as financial, professional, architectural and engineering, research and development, environmental, construction and transportation services.

From the pork industry's perspective, it should be noted that Canada already has free or at least liberalized trade agreements

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with New Zealand, Chile, the U.S., Mexico, Australia and Peru. As such, the importance of this agreement for pork was largely concentrated on Japan. Improved access to Japan for pork, in which last year Canada sold nearly \$900 million dollars not counting offal, was a central focus. Improved access to Japan would mean more sales to the highest priced export market for Canada. Improved access through this agreement would give Canada an advantage over the EU and Brazil.

Perhaps just as importantly, Canada needed to be a part of a deal with Japan if the United States was going to get a deal with Japan. The Canadian pork industry could not afford not to be part of a deal if the U.S. had a deal. The Canadian pork industry is still living with the consequences of missing out on a Korean FTA deal in which the U.S. gained significant access advantage.

With that noted, Japan has an elaborate system of import barriers to pork. One important component of it is “the gate price”. The gate price is a floor price program that has been used by the Japanese government since the early 1970s to support the pork market in Japan. The gate price is an internal floor price used to support hog prices in Japan. Imported product delivered to Japan at below the gate price is subject to a levy that increases its price up to the gate price. There are multiple gate prices. The gate price for carcasses and half

carcasses is ¥393/kg. For pork cuts and offal, the gate price is ¥524/kg. For seasoned or preserved products, the gate price is ¥897.59/kg. Note that as of the end of last week, the exchange rate was about 92¥ to a C\$. As such on cuts, the gate price was about \$5.65-5.70/kg.

There is also a tariff placed on top of the gate price of 4.3 per cent applied to carcasses, cuts, and offal, and an 8.5 per cent tariff applied to seasoned and preserved product.

There are all kinds of permutations and combinations of impacts stemming from this sort of protection, but the bottom line is that it restricts entry to Japan and keeps prices in Japan higher than would otherwise be the case without the system.

Based on the best information available now, the deal eliminates the 4.3 per cent tariff. In addition, lower priced or lower value pork items can be imported into Japan with a tariff as opposed to through the gate price. Higher priced or higher valued pork cuts would still mostly go through the gate price.

In essence the deal is not a big erosion in protection for the Japanese industry. At the same time, however, it will improve access for lower priced Canadian product. While the lower priced items will gain in sales volumes, the higher priced items from Canada will still flow over the gate price. In fact, rightly

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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or wrongly – and I think wrongly – many in the Canadian packing industry saw the gate price as an advantage for Canada. They saw it as protecting value and easing pricing competition in and for the market.

Most importantly, it is a deal that is on the same terms as the Americans. That was critical.

Almost as importantly, it is access that the EU does not yet have, and that should mean a gain in Canadian share.

The TPP deal also provided improved access to Vietnam which could become an important market to Canada over time. Canada sold just \$1.5 million of pork, not counting offal, to Japan last year. The CPP press release noted that Vietnam's population is approaching 90 million inhabitants and the preferred meat, by far, is pork. Now Vietnam has a tariff of 27 per cent on fresh and frozen product. That tariff will be eliminated for Canada over nine years.

Pork Powerhouses

Successful Farming published their 2015 Pork Powerhouses recently. The listing for Canada shows the top five with HyLife at LaBroquerie at 72,000 sows, unchanged from 2014. Maple Leaf is second at 65,000, down 2,000 while Olymel (west) is third at 46,500, up 5,500. Provista and The Progressive Group of Steinbach and Niverville are listed at 40,000 and 33,500 respectively.

Successful Farming does not list the larger Quebec producers. It is likely that F. Menard and Isoporc would each have over 30,000 sows.

Eat Bacon and Save the Environment

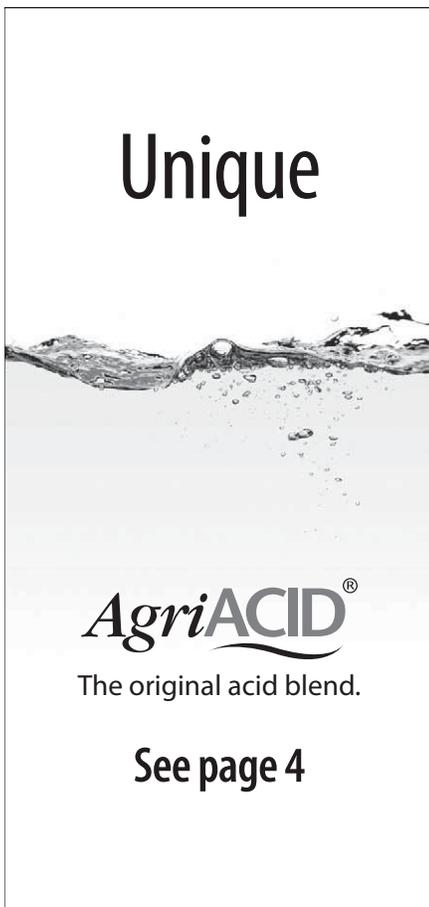
Here is some great and the same time, fun news. According to new research from Carnegie Mellon University, if a person follows USDA recommendations to consume more fruits, vegetables, dairy and seafood you could be doing more harm to the environment. That is because those foods have relatively high resource uses and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per calorie. Published in Environment Systems and Decisions, the study measured the changes in energy use, blue water footprint and GHG emissions associated with U.S. food consumption patterns.

“Eating lettuce is over three times worse in greenhouse gas emissions than eating bacon,” said Paul Fischbeck, professor of social and decisions sciences and engineering and public policy. “Lots of common vegetables require more resources per calorie than you would think. Eggplant, celery and cucumbers look particularly bad when compared to pork or chicken.”

Eating the recommended “healthier” foods – a mix of fruits, vegetables, dairy and seafood – increased the environmental impact in all three categories: Energy use went up by 38 per cent, water use by 10 per cent and GHG emissions by six per cent. (climatedepot.com, December 14)

Don't expect to see the results of this study plastered over the mainstream media like the WHO report was back in October. In fact, I would be surprised if this gets any play at all. Nevertheless, the next time someone flaunts their vegetarianism, you can pull this one out of your back pocket. ■

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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Alberta's Bill 6 – you can't take shortcuts to the highroad

By Sheri Monk

Producers in Alberta have no doubt heard about the Alberta government's controversial Bill 6. The bill would have extended mandatory WCB coverage to all paid farm workers, as well as occupational health and safety standards. The outcry was loud and immediate. After tremendous media attention, protests across the province and heated public meetings hosted by the government, the proposed bill was amended to exclude farm families, even paid family members, and neighbours helping with chores such as harvest and branding.

As I write this, the ultimate result of the bill is unknown. Alberta's election of its NDP government in 2015 was unexpected and unprecedented. I don't know if the family farm owners who came out en masse will continue to

protest Bill 6 because it will guarantee minimum wage for farm workers and extend WCB to non-family workers. I hope the fight is over, because at some point, if Alberta farmers keep protesting the bill, they aren't going to look like they are trying to preserve their quality of life – they'll appear as though they are trying to line their pockets at the expense of vulnerable workers.

On December 3, I attended a meeting in Lethbridge hosted by the Alberta government about Bill 6. On my way into the city, I passed a convoy of big trucks and tractors on their way to town to show their displeasure. This convoy took one entire lane of Highway 3, slowed down the remaining eastbound lane significantly, and generally caused a traffic hazard. I get they wanted the visibility – I'm just not sure that was the most ideal way to go about it.

That same morning, I interviewed Lori Sigurdson, Alberta's minister of jobs, skills, training and labour. Honestly, she sounded genuine, but very, very green. While willing to admit that perhaps



the government approached this project in the wrong way, she wouldn't come anywhere near close to considering starting over – but it wasn't long after that the amendment was announced.

Once I went to the meeting, the room was packed. There had to be 500 people there, of all ages, from all walks of life. There were quite a few children missing school to hold the signs their parents had painted for them. Agriculture Minister Oneil Carlier was also to be in attendance, along with Ms. Sigurdson.

As soon as the meeting was called to order, the crowd drowned out the facilitator while they chanted "Kill Bill 6! Kill Bill 6!" at the top of their lungs. My interest was piqued. As a journalist, it's both exciting and rewarding to see the public engaged over issues – provided the engagement is informed and reasonable. Unfortunately, as the meeting progressed, I began to seriously question how many in attendance were informed or reasonable.

There was an incredible amount of heckling. The crowd was angry – very

An advertisement for LONGARM hog handling equipment. It features a large black banner with the LONGARM logo and the text "the only way to go". Below the banner, there is a testimonial: "Move hogs faster, easier & safer by yourself with the light-weight and portable solution – the LONGARM." A black oval on the right side of the banner contains the text "Now Available 30' for \$450". At the bottom left, there is an email address "Email: sales@thelongarm.ca" and a website "www.thelongarm.ca". At the bottom center, there is a phone number "Sales: 519-546-8697".

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angry – to the point where it felt like a kettle about to boil over and I didn't want to be anywhere in the way. Seriously. I looked around the room to make sure I knew where all the exits were. And if that's how uncomfortable I felt, I can only imagine how the ministers felt up on stage.

At one point, Carlier nervously stuttered when answering a question, and the audience roared with laughter, and many began making fun of him. One individual who was given the microphone to ask a question started to imitate the minister, stuttering his words as he posed his question. The longer the meeting went on, the less the people listened, and the angrier and the bolder they became. I was actually ashamed, and my face flushed with the collective embarrassment we all should have been feeling. In fact, I ended up leaving halfway through the meeting. I couldn't stomach anymore.

The truth is, those ministers were just doing their jobs and they were showing up to face the music at each and every meeting. That takes the kind of courage I'm not sure I could say I possess. I know I'm a very empathetic person, but how could the people in the audience not also have been uncomfortable with the aggression, and the name-calling? I became more and more uncomfortable by the hive behaviour, but it seemed like most other people took it as sanction to bully them even more.

This administration isn't an evil government. It's an amateur one. They truly didn't understand the challenges of creating employment standards for small family operations, and they thought they could amend the legislation now, and figure out the details later. I don't for a second think they were actually trying to destroy the family farm, kill the branding tradition, prevent kids from being in 4-H, or stop spouses from bringing dinner out to the field. I literally think they were just trying to extend workplace rights and safety to all workers, and that they were too new and too inexperienced to know how to roll it out.

I do not support unplanned, ill-timed and poorly researched legislation. I think the government went about this entire process ass backwards. They should have consulted at length first, and then proposed the legislation. And once they realized they screwed this up, they should have immediately tabled Bill 6, and started the process over.

But nobody should be bullied the way those elected officials and their staff were that day in Lethbridge. We can protest and we can be loud and we can be heard without being cruel and threatening. As coverage of those meetings and protests increasingly made their way into the households of urban families, I observed more and more backlash against the agricultural community for their vitriol. As a community of people who take a great deal of pride in the value of a handshake, we must set the bar higher. Our future depends on it. ■

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HOT ISSUES

Pork industry ponders perspective on cancer warning

By Jennifer McFee

The pork industry has plenty to digest following a recent report that links processed meats and red meats with cancer.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which is the World Health Organization's cancer agency, analyzed more than 800 studies that looked at the connection between cancer and the consumption of red meat or processed meat.

Tobacco is responsible for far, far more cancers and far, far more cancer deaths than processed meat is, and this study is not saying otherwise.
~ Erin Crawford, Canadian Cancer Society

The results conclude that processed meat can be classified as carcinogenic to humans and that each 50-gram portion of processed meat eaten daily increases the risk of colorectal cancer by 18 per cent.

Similarly, the study found that eating red meat is probably carcinogenic to humans. These links were mainly made in

relation to colorectal cancer but also exist with pancreatic and prostate cancer.

IARC uses a five-category classification system that indicates the weight of evidence that an item could cause cancer. However, it does not measure the likelihood or risk that cancer will occur due to exposure to the item.

Processed meats are classified in Group 1, which means there is convincing evidence that they cause cancer in humans. Red meats are classified as Group 2A, which means there is limited evidence that they are carcinogenic in humans and sufficient evidence that they are carcinogenic in experimental animals.

Erin Crawford, director of public issues for the Canadian Cancer Society in Manitoba, explains that although tobacco is also classified in Group 1 along with processed meats, it doesn't mean that processed meat is as carcinogenic as tobacco.

"The studies are strong in the case of both processed meat and tobacco. But when you look at the risk associated with tobacco compared with the risk associated with processed

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meat, they're not comparable the way you would think they are," she says.

"Tobacco is responsible for far, far more cancers and far, far more cancer deaths than processed meat is, and this study is not saying otherwise."

Although the study indicates that processed meats are carcinogenic, it's all about risk levels, Crawford says. A 50-gram portion of processed meats would be equivalent to about two slices of deli meat, which is less than the average daily consumption.

"Most people are not eating that much processed meat. It's not that people shouldn't be concerned about this and aware about this. Probably we have always advised that people use moderation and be informed about their risks so when they're going to the grocery store, they are making decisions that take that into account," she says.

"With processed meats in particular, we have always recommended saving that one for a special occasion – the hot dog for your cookout, the pepperoni on your pizza. We recommend once a month for processed meat."

For red meats, Crawford suggests that people be aware of how much they are eating.

"Make informed decisions so that you're eating less of it and you're able to modify your own risk because you know what other sorts of risks you're exposed to," she says.

"There are all sorts of other things that contribute to cancer risk as well. Drinking alcohol is associated with cancer. We know that smoking causes cancer. We know that body weight impacts cancer risk. We know that physical activity impacts cancer risk. All those sorts of things put together your package of your cancer risk."

From our industry perspective, we just have to keep doing a good job and always look at continuous improvements wherever we can.
~ Darcy Fitzgerald, Alberta Pork

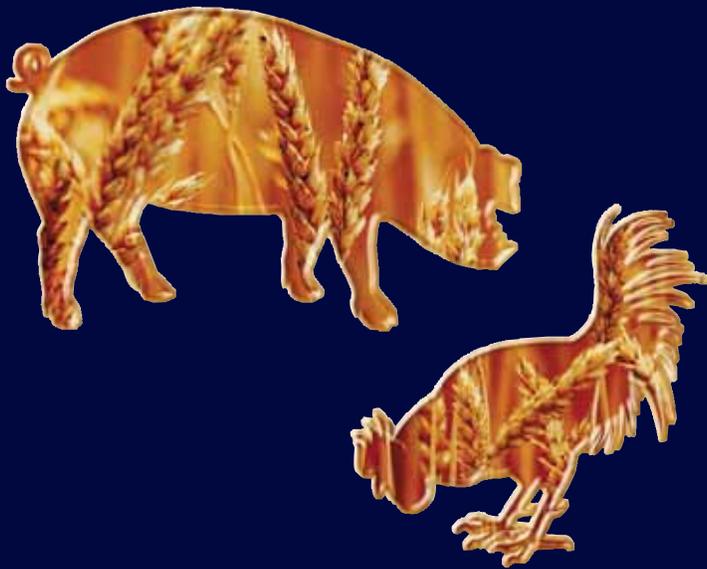
Kate Comeau, a dietician and spokesperson for Dietitians of Canada, says the dietician community wasn't surprised to see the IARC report. They were, however, surprised by the response.

"We've been recommending that Canadians limit their processed meat consumption for many years because of the association with risk of cancer but also because it happens to be higher in sodium and higher in unhealthy fats. We've always seen it as an occasional once-in-a-while type food," she says.

"What was actually most surprising to us was the initial excitement and flurry in the media and then the backlash from consumers."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

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Definition of terms in the IARC report:

Red meat refers to all types of mammalian muscle meat including:

- Pork
- Beef
- Veal
- Lamb
- Mutton
- Horse
- Goat

Processed meat refers to meat that has been transformed through the following processes:

- Salting
- Curing
- Fermentation
- Smoking
- Other processes to enhance flavour
- Other processes to improve preservation

Processed meats include:

- Hotdogs
- Ham
- Sausages
- Corned beef
- Beef jerky
- Canned meat
- Meat-based preparations and sauces

Like Crawford, Comeau recommends taking a look at food intake to get a grasp on personal eating habits.

“Maybe instead of sitting down and having five or six strips of bacon, I can cut it back to two,” she says. “I can split a pork chop with my partner to ensure that our intake is balanced with other nourishing food like vegetables and fruits and whole grains.”

Meat-eaters should also be mindful about proper portion size, which is approximately the size of your palm and the thickness of your baby finger.

“A pork tenderloin and a pork chop would be leaner sources of pork. Then on occasion or maybe as a flavour to food, you could add the higher-fat, more processed food, for example, bacon or a high-quality sausage,” she says.

“Instead of sitting down to a big plate of sausages, have one sausage or cut it up into pieces and put it into a sauce so that individual members of your family are consuming less while still enjoying the flavour.”

She also encourages people to consider alternating the way they cook their food.

“When it comes to fresh meat like a pork chop, we know that high-heat cooking methods actually increase the carcinogens in the meat. Maybe avoid barbecuing all the time because the char

marks are actually the increase in the compounds that can be carcinogenic,” Comeau says.

“Some advice to a consumer is to vary the cooking method, sometimes using your slow cooker or having stew because it could be safer.”

People don’t need to stop eating meat all together, but they should consider some foods to be an indulgence rather than a staple.

“There’s something very different about enjoying a hotdog at a Saturday afternoon birthday party than driving to the drive-thru and wolfing back a breakfast sandwich in the car,” Comeau says.

“It’s a very different eating experience. When we’re going to have something that’s more indulgent, it’s important to really enjoy it and be mindful about it.”

The media really blew it up for 24 hours, but I really do think that the advice was just so sensational that it's not reasonable. ~ Mary Ann Binnie, Canadian Pork Council

For Mary Ann Binnie, nutrition manager for the Canadian Pork Council, common sense prevails.



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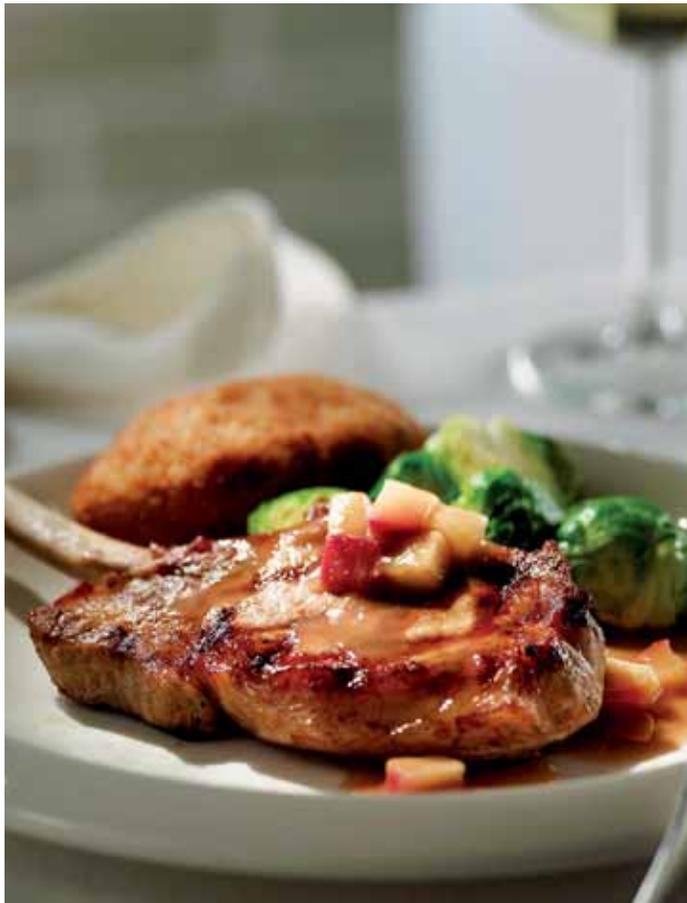


Photo courtesy Canada Pork International

“There was that initial flurry of sensational headlines, but the truth is in the message that moderation and balance is key,” she says.

“If we really want to protect our health, there are many, many factors. Cancer is a complex disease. There is no one food that can cause or cure any type of cancer. By and large, genetics and aging are the greatest risk factors and we can’t control them.”

In general, Canadians don’t devour red meats in the same amounts as in other parts of the world, she adds.

“The key point is that this was a global review. It’s so important to put this global review within the context of Canadian eating habits. This report found that at the 50-gram level, there was a slight elevated risk of colorectal cancer, but Canadians are eating less than half that with 22 grams,” Binnie says.

“Canadians consume meats moderately. That’s the danger of these reports, and unfortunately the groups that this type of messaging resonates with are the young girls and women of childbearing age who are already under-consuming. They see that as a further reason to reduce their meat intake and then that leads to unintended health consequences such as low iron stores.”

On the flipside, other segments of the Canadian population might be eating too much red meat.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

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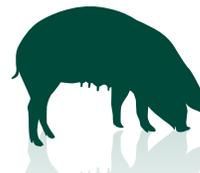


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“Some men, on the other hand, may be over-consuming meats and alternatives,” Binnie says. “They need to replace some of those meat calories with vegetables and whole grains.”

As a mother of three, Binnie doesn't plan to remove red meats and processed meats from her family's menu.

“We want to feed them and provide them the best nutritional variety and, definitely for my family, that includes red and processed meat. The convenience of processed meat is second to none,” she says.

“And the nutrition you get from pork is like Mother Nature's multivitamin. It probably has as many vitamins and minerals as an over-the-counter multivitamin. Processed meats have protein because the raw ingredient is pork so all the nutrients are there. It's just transformed and cooked for us. It is prepared and we can grab it and go.”

When it comes to the impact on the hog sector, Binnie doesn't believe the report

is cause for great concern.

“The media really blew it up for 24 hours, but I really do think that the advice was just so sensational that it's not reasonable. It was taken out of context. I really do think common sense will prevail. We've had people weigh in, indicating that red meat and cigarettes are not the same risk level for cancer, so we did have that common-sense voice,” she says.

“So what will the impact be? I think little, if none. If people are really wanting to minimize their cancer risk, live a healthy lifestyle, don't smoke, achieve and maintain a healthy weight., be physically active, eat plenty of vegetables and follow Canada's Food Guide.”

As for pork producers, she offers some words of reassurance.

“They're in a good business,” Binnie says. “They are producing safe, healthy food –not only for Canadians but for our global citizens – and they should be proud of that.”

Darcy Fitzgerald, executive director of Alberta Pork, shares a similar sentiment.

“Our position would be that pork is a good healthy choice of protein for people to consume,” he says. “If you read the report itself and get past the headlines in the newspaper, it doesn't say to stop eating meat.”

Instead, Fitzgerald says people should be mindful of consuming large quantities of meat, along with many other products such as sugar or alcohol.

“The Canadian Food Guide lists food products that we should consume, and meat is on there as a choice,” he says.



The Canadian Cancer Society has an online tool called It's My Life, which can help you to learn about the impact of cancer as well as how to reduce your risk in your own life.

To try out this tool, visit www.itsmylife.cancer.ca.

“If you consume too much of a rich food or something that has too much salt, it's probably not good for you, but it's all about moderation.”

However, Fitzgerald does believe that the IARC report has had some effect on the hog industry.

“I think it's had an impact on some consumers. Right after that report came out, it seemed like the prices slid down awfully fast,” he says.

“But if you look at what the responses were by the average person who took the time to comment back on blogs and Twitter and back to newspapers around the world, lots of their comments were quite negative towards the report.”

For producers, Fitzgerald says they should always be concerned about information that is circulating as well as to the reactions of consumers.

“I think the more important message to producers is to maintain the programs they have to improve what they're doing – the quality assurance programs, the animal

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Photo courtesy Canada Pork International

care programs, the things we do for the environment, the regulations that we follow, the good quality things that we do to try to improve what we're doing with our workforce," he says.

"It's also important to get our message out to consumers through the various programs that we have, whether they are provincial associations like Alberta Pork or our national association like Canada Pork. We need to all work together in a value chain – the producer, the processor, retailer, food service – to give a message out that these are good foods. The raw product of pork is something good and nutritious."

In the hog industry, there are plenty of initiatives in place to

ensure the production of safe, healthy food, Fitzgerald adds. Nonetheless, not everyone is rooting for success in the sector.

"To scoff at the viewpoint of scientists or the medical professionals or even just the general public is not a good thing. We have to hear what they have to say and address their concerns when we can, but not everybody is out to keep us in business. Regardless of what we do, there are people who we will never please and their goal is not to improve anything. It's just to remove animal agriculture," Fitzgerald said.

"From our industry perspective, we just have to keep doing a good job and always look at continuous improvements wherever we can." ■

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COOL finally defeated

WTO allowed retaliation, U.S. responded by repealing the labeling law

By Sheri Monk

The seven-year war on COOL (country of origin labelling) finally went out – with a little more whimper than bang – with the passage of the U.S. omnibus bill on December 18. The bill passed both houses and then was signed by President Obama, officially repealing the troublesome mandatory country of origin labelling (mCOOL) provisions for beef and pork. The move came in response to the December 7 WTO decision authorizing Canada and Mexico to retaliate against the law with \$1 billion in punitive tariffs.

The real boost will be on the flow of weaners. ~ Kevin Grier

“We are very pleased that yesterday the U.S. Congress and U.S. President Barack Obama signed into law a bill that will repeal COOL for beef and pork, effective immediately,” said Canada’s ministers of agriculture, trade and economy in a joint statement. “This outcome is a result of close cooperation and collaboration between our two countries and our many allies within the U.S. Congress over the past several years. We remain committed to working with partners in all three countries to enhance our shared North American prosperity.”

Industry groups across Canada and the U.S. responded with news releases celebrating the repeal.

“Challenging the U.S. COOL has been a long and expensive fight for Canadian producers,” stated Rick Bergmann, chair of the Canadian Pork Council (CPC).

While the result has been long-fought for, and almost resulted in punitive tariffs imposed on the U.S., the market won’t change overnight.

“There are unlikely to be any major changes in the short to medium run,” explained Martin Rice, executive director of the CPC. “The negative impacts of COOL on Canadian piglet producers and slaughter hog marketers happened several years ago, leading up to and immediately following the implementation of the mandatory country-of-origin labelling rules in the fall of 2008. Canada’s sow herd declined drastically during those years. That production capacity cannot be restored overnight.”

Pricing in the hog sector has somewhat stabilized, particularly in the previous three years. The existing stronger market signals will be strengthened by the repeal of COOL, which should slowly cause expansion within Canada’s industry.

“Restoring conditions of unrestricted trade between Canada and the United States will provide the conditions of confidence which can see renewed investment in swine production in Canada,” said Rice.

One of the most important aspects to the repeal of COOL will be the increased



market access for producers in both Canada and Mexico. Additional buyers typically translate into more selling opportunities, and theoretically, higher prices over time because of the economics of competition in the marketplace.

“There is expected to be a greater number of sales alternatives available for Canadian slaughter hogs, which strengthens the sellers’ position when it comes to price discovery. And finally, with the removal of COOL requirements for pork as well as live swine, Canadian pork processors will once again be able to sell fresh meat into U.S. retail channels on a fully competitive basis as their U.S. counterparts. Overall, it allows us to get to a fully integrated North American pork industry,” Rice explained.

It’s not just pork producers in Canada who are celebrating. Producers in Canada’s beef sector have spent nearly \$4 million (through check-off levies) fighting COOL over the years.

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“This is fantastic news for Canada’s beef cattle producers,” said CCA President Dave Solverson. “The CCA initiated this fight in 2008 because the U.S. failed to live up to its international trade obligations. In the seven years since U.S. COOL has been in effect, the cumulative losses for the Canadian beef and pork sectors have been staggering.”

Pork producers have also invested significantly in the legal battle.

“Pork producers collectively have spent well over a million dollars plus enormous amounts of time from producer leaders and their staff in challenging mandatory country-of-origin labelling, going back to when it was passed in the 2002 U.S. Farm Bill. The most important source of funding for these efforts was provincial levies, which financed both province-level and Canadian Pork Council activities fighting COOL,” said Rice.

Economist and industry analyst Kevin Grier says the COOL victory is the result of the threat of tariffs, which the WTO sanctioned in early December, as well as the hard work of producer organizations and government.

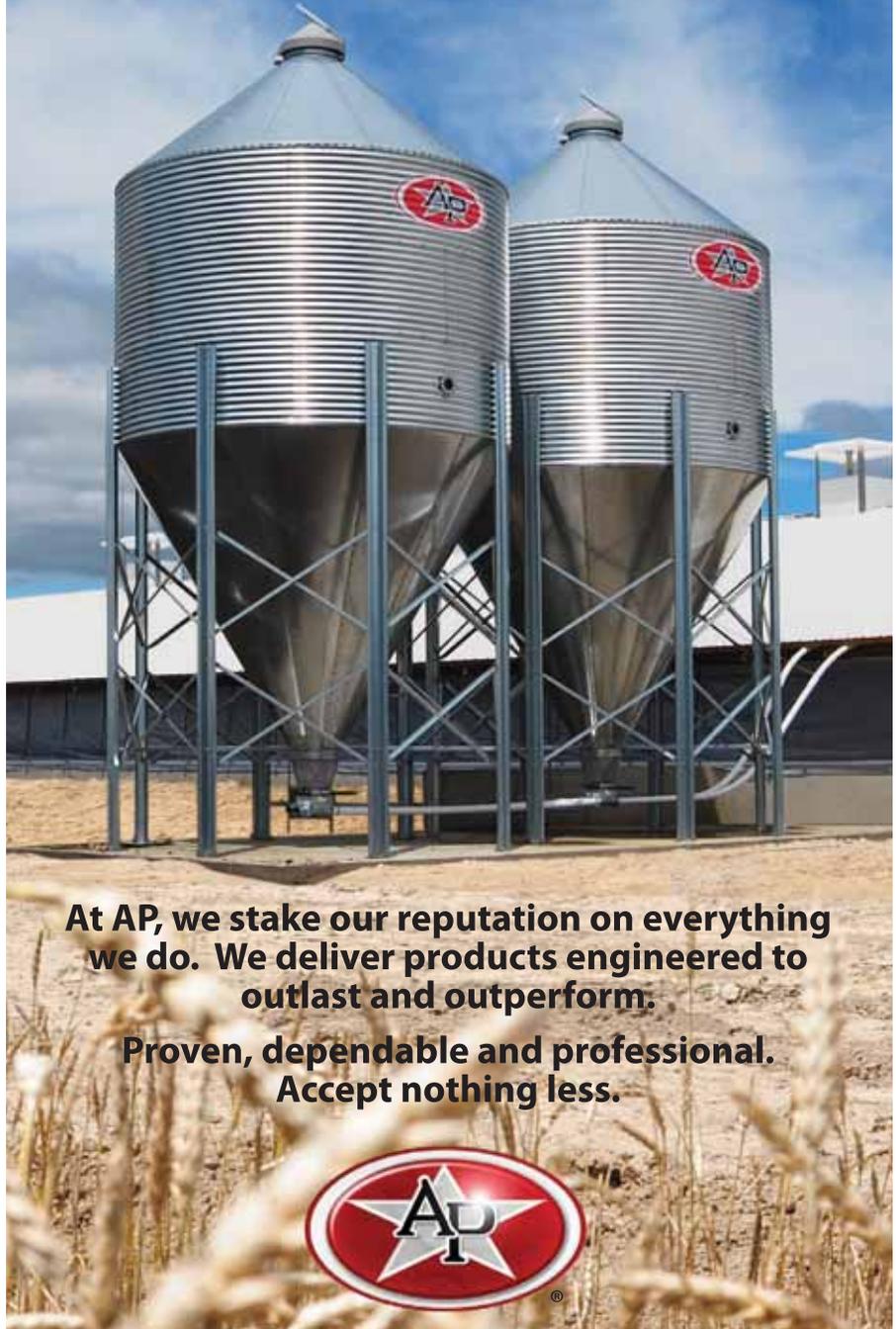
“COOL is done because Canada’s success at the WTO ended with the threat of retaliatory tariffs against the U.S. Without the threat of tariffs, the U.S. would have kept COOL. The Canadian Pork Council and the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association led the fight and deserve major credit. Millions of dollars of Canadian cattle and hog producer check off fees and countless hours of economic and legal arguments at the WTO paid off,” said Grier. “The trade and legal staff at the Agriculture Canada and Global Affairs departments also deserve credit.”

While COOL legislation didn’t prohibit trade specifically, it required retailers to label meat according to complicated rules and where it was born, raised or produced. The rules required segregation throughout the production chain, which proved to be too onerous a burden for most packers and distributors.

“There will be no more discounts, special slaughter days, or logistical challenges. With that said, it all depends on supply and demand at any given time whether cattle move south. Our packers would not see an immediate change, but all in all, the U.S. packers would be more of a factor in Canada than they have been for the past eight years,” said Grier.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

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It will take time for the market in the U.S. to adjust, and it won't happen overnight. It takes time and preparation for large operations to change procedures, and to roll out changes with staff and partners. If business is already operating smoothly, money is being made, and animals are easy to find, the needed impetus to order new labels and change procurement strategies may be slow in coming. However, most businesses will at least be reevaluating their options so they are ready to act should market conditions suddenly change.

There are unlikely to be any major changes in the short to medium run. ~ Martin Rice

"This does not mean that there will be a sudden flow of hogs south. It does however, mean that the regulatory impediments are now gone. There will be an adjustment period. Now firms such as Morrell and Hormel will be assessing their options as they work through the new logistical opportunities and run through their remaining U.S.-only labels. Some grocers will decide that they want to stay U.S. only but the market will dictate how serious they are about that," said Grier.

Canada's beef sector has been struggling with a very low animal inventory that has caused feedlots and packers to fill their pens. Though some have expressed concern that the COOL repeal will

put even greater pressure on the limited available numbers, the effects will be gradual, and will likewise trigger herd expansion. A similar scenario can be expected in the pork industry.

"Given the lack of finishing space on the prairies and the contracts in place, it is doubtful that there will be material export increases in market hogs. Maple Leaf and Olymel will eventually need to reassess their contracts to ensure that they can keep market hogs out of the hands of Morrell, Hormel, Tyson and the regional players," said Grier. "The repeal will provide a much needed boost to capacity strapped Ontario producers, but again, there will be a period of adjustment."

The low Canadian dollar will also affect the market as the effects of COOL wear off.

"The real boost will be on the flow of weaners. Eventually Morrell and Hormel will go back to taking Canadian born hogs that were finished in the United States. Tyson already is taking the Bs. The conditions are perfect for increased weaners going south. The dollar is depreciated as it was in the late 1990s and early 2000s. That just makes weaner sales south that much more profitable. In addition the grain costs on the prairies are at a disadvantage now for prairie finishing. Prairie packers are going to see more going south," Grier explained.

It's difficult to really ascertain the financial damage that COOL caused to Canada's beef and pork industry, but the majority of North American beef and hog players are happy to see it gone. ■

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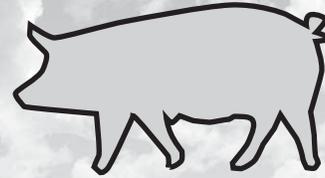


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Industry News

Alberta Pork gears up as year winds down

Submitted by Alberta Pork



On November 5, 2015, people from across the province gathered in Calgary for the Alberta Pork AGM. In this photo, Darcy Fitzgerald, executive director of Alberta Pork, delivers his report to members. Photo by Sheri Monk.

If New York is the city that never sleeps, Alberta Pork is the Canadian equivalent of the Big Apple. Long after the bears and groundhogs have retired for the winter, we're burning the midnight oil on behalf of producers, and the last few months have been a perfect example.

Labour without the pains

In the pork industry, some issues come and go, but labour is a constant challenge, one that became even more daunting with recent changes to legislation.

So the timing was perfect to get involved in the *Agriculture*

Labour Summit 2015: Addressing Challenges & Finding Solutions. Employers and producers from primary agriculture along with agri-food employers and processors attended the one-day event on October 20 at the Sheraton Red Deer Hotel.

In addition to helping sponsor the event, Alberta Pork was on hand to talk with attendees and hear their concerns. The turnout was excellent and the program was jam-packed with information on key topics such as team building, farm safety and navigating the Temporary Foreign Worker program.

Thanks to AILCA (Agriculture Industry Labour Council of Alberta) members and the Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency (ALMA) for their sponsorship of this summit.

Front and centre at back-to-back events

What could be better than attending an agriculture event in Red Deer in October? If you said "attending two events back-to-back", some may say you need to get out more, but not us. We were pleased to be on hand the day after the Labour Summit for the Red Deer Swine Technology Workshop.

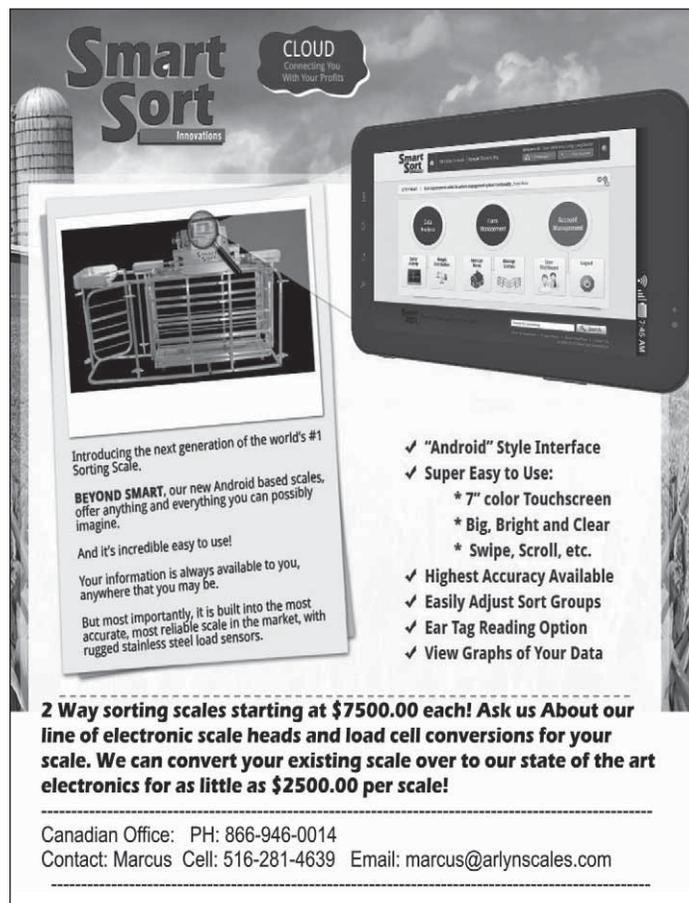
Now in its 17th year, the workshop remains as relevant as ever to barn workers and managers, evidenced by the record attendance and rave reviews. It's why Alberta Pork was proud to once again be a major sponsor of the event as part of our mandate to support producers.

Organizers opted for shorter presentations this year in order to address a wide range of issues including antibiotics, pain management and an update on the Western Canadian Truck Wash Program by Alberta Pork's own Javier Bahamon (he didn't ask me for this plug, but he still owes me now).

A personal highlight for me was the on-stage dance number by Laurie Fries of Sunhaven Farms and her friend. If it's true that public speaking is a major stressor for many of us, than dancing up a storm in front of 200 barn workers should trigger a full-blown panic attack, but not for those brave women. Unfortunately, the next presenter – Dr. Egan Brockhoff – chose not to



The AGM wasn't all member business – attendees also had the opportunity to hear from an interesting panel of speakers, including Martine Varekamp-Bos on navigating the foreign worker process. Photo by Sheri Monk.



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Alberta Pork chair Frank Novak is always a crowd favourite. Photo by Sheri Monk.

follow in their dance steps, but there's always next year.

A November to remember

Closing out our key events this year was our annual general meeting in Calgary. Apart from updates by Alberta Pork's chairman and executive director, producers and industry partners heard talks on three timely topics: Farm safety, labour and domestic marketing.

Always looking to add a new wrinkle that will engage the audience, we presented an electronic polling feature - first used at the Red Deer Swine Tech Workshop - with multiple choice questions that participants answered on their cell phones. With results posted on the screen in real time, those who took part could see how their views compared with friends and associates.

Overall, the meeting had a nice blend of the new and familiar, and most agreed that it was the perfect recipe for a memorable day.

Safety first (and second and third)

How often have you agreed with someone on where to go but been completely at odds on how to get there? That's the challenge our industry is currently facing with respect to farm worker safety, and it was magnified by the recently tabled *Bill 6 - Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act* in the Alberta Legislature. This bill broadly repeals exceptions for businesses related to farming and ranching under the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, WCB insurance legislation and employment standards (minimum wage, overtime, vacation pay, etc.).

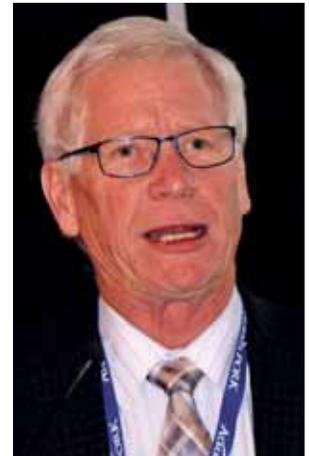
Over the past several years, Alberta Pork has been working extensively on the issues addressed by Bill 6, talking with the government and addressing occupational health and safety at our regional meetings, Annual General Meeting and through one-on-one discussions with producers. We recognize that some change is needed but in a stepwise fashion with education and awareness at the forefront.

The Alberta government decided to proceed rather quickly with the introduction of Bill 6. And while they have arranged town hall sessions as a forum to express concerns, many people will be unable to attend. We are therefore encouraging producers to share their feelings with the government by going online or contacting their MLA by phone, letter or email.

When it comes to worker health and safety, we agree that preventing accidents and protecting the injured is of paramount importance. But it needs to be done in a practical, common sense manner that considers both the needs of workers and the ability of producers to remain viable.

Therefore we are hopeful that the Alberta government will slow the process until they have heard from producers and identified key challenges and opportunities to truly address farm safety for workers and producers.

It may be an exaggeration to say that Alberta Pork never sleeps, but we do work hard for those who pay the bills. And if our efforts play even a small part in keeping workers out of harm's way and producers above water, it will all be worth it. ■



Marvin Salomons addresses the crowd on accessing labour - an issue that continues to plague producers. Photo by Sheri Monk.

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Thinking outside the box: Olymel shipping more pork to China

Submitted by the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency

Olymel's federally-inspected Red Deer plant is Alberta's largest hog processing operation and is a major contributor to Western Canada's hog slaughter volume. Olymel is also the largest hog processor in Canada. Weekly, Olymel moves 120,000 hogs through its Alberta and Quebec processing facilities, distributing fresh and frozen pork domestically and internationally to more than 60 countries, including China. Through a recent partnership with the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA), Olymel is extending its reach into China through its head box project.

Recent modifications to the processing line in the Red Deer plant are helping Olymel to sell and ship whole hog heads to buyers in China. Now, rather than deconstructing the head into its

various parts in a separate room, the heads remain intact and are collected quickly and frozen prior to shipment to China.

In the first 10 weeks of production, 1.8 million kg of boxed heads were produced and 62 containers shipped to China. When production meets full capacity, Olymel expects to ship eight containers of heads per week.

This streamlined production has additional positive effects, according to Rob Ackerblade, Olymel Red Deer's Plant Manager.

"Getting a strong foothold into this market has been great for Olymel. We're looking at this steady flow of frozen product as a way to open new doors into China for our other value-added products."

Due to the increased volumes now going to the Chinese market, Olymel hired more employees to handle the boxing



and shipping of the product. "Normally an upgrade to the plant helps us ease our labour problems, but this is one of those cases where the improvement resulted in more jobs."

"By simplifying their processing and improving efficiencies, Olymel is increasing Canada's presence into a key target market," says Gordon Cove, ALMA president and CEO. "Making inroads into a profitable markets takes time but Olymel's efforts seem to be paying off sooner than expected. That is great news for the pork sector in Alberta and Canada as a whole." ■

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Producers sought to complete stress survey

By Sheri Monk

A researcher from the University of Guelph is conducting a study on the stress that agricultural producers in Canada endure. Andria Jones-Bitton, associate professor of epidemiology in the department of population medicine, says so far, 700 producers have completed the survey, but at least an additional 300 responses are needed. Producers can work in any commodity within agriculture.

“I’m hoping you’ll help us meet or exceed our goal of 1,000 producers so we can obtain good baseline data,” said Jones-Bitton. “It pertains to agricultural producer stress, and how producers may or may not be managing it, as well as investigating producer’s opinions with respect to what resources should be available.”

The stresses that farmers experience are unlike the work stresses most other Canadians contend with.

“Anecdotally, many of us have personally known producers who have suffered from significant stress and other mental health issues... some tragically, have resulted in these colleagues dying by suicide. Of additional concern is the additional stress imposed on producers during animal disease outbreaks and other extreme events,” said Jones-Bitton. “We currently know very little about stress and mental wellness in Canadian producers outside of these anecdotal experiences.”

Ultimately, knowing and understanding the kind of stressors those in agriculture face will help researchers to plan what resources are needed. Resource delivery in rural areas is a known challenge, so having more specific information on what could help is very important.

“We are conducting this study to learn about the stress experienced by producers from any agricultural commodity in Canada, as well as their resiliency or ability to cope with these stresses. Some producers are highly resilient, while others are not – it is important to learn

about the factors associated with both so that we can help those who need it most,” said Jones-Bitton.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and is completely anonymous. It can be completed on computers as well as on mobile devices. Participants can enter their name into

three draws for \$200, but their names are not in any way linked to their individual response. The survey can be found at www.producerwellness.ca. The survey deadline is currently set for January 18, and Jones-Bitton says the summarized results will be made available in the future, as will updates on the project. ■



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Successful fall meeting for Manitoba pork producers

By Jennifer McFee

Manitoba Pork Council went whole hog at its fall pork producer meetings that featured an agenda jam-packed with timely topics.

In total, about 130 industry representatives and producers attended this year's events, which took place Oct. 27 in Niverville and Oct. 28 in Portage la Prairie.

George Matheson, board chair of Manitoba Pork Council, said the mood of this year's meetings was generally positive.

"Usually it's a direct relationship with the earnings and the pork prices for the year. Of course, we came off our

strongest year ever in 2014," he said.

"The prices this year are not absolutely fantastic but not too bad. But they are starting to collapse a bit now going into the latter part of the year."

As one of the highlights, guest speaker Dr. Leigh Rosengren of Saskatchewan provided a presentation entitled "Raising Pigs in a World Without Antibiotics."

"Her topic of antibiotic use in pork production was well received and very current," Matheson said.

"There were a few questions from both audiences in regards to her general message of the need to move away from antimicrobials for growth promotants or disease prevention because of society's concerns and general health."

The meeting also featured a talk about barn building in Manitoba by Mike Teillet, sustainable development manager for Manitoba Pork.

"We have a barn moratorium in the province, but there has been some relief with the province granting pilot projects in that regard," Matheson said.

"He spoke on what some of the requirements might be and general procedures that a producer would have to go through to get the necessary permissions and permits to build a new barn."

The main area of concern, Matheson noted, centred around the Canadian Food Inspection Agency truck wash regulations that will be enforced Jan. 13, 2016.

"We have a very good truck wash facility just over the border in Manitoba that we have been using with the trailers being tagged at the border and coming across and being permitted to wash there," he said.



John Carney, executive director of MLMMI, shared his knowledge about manure management and its implications for Manitoba producers. Photo by Manitoba Pork.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

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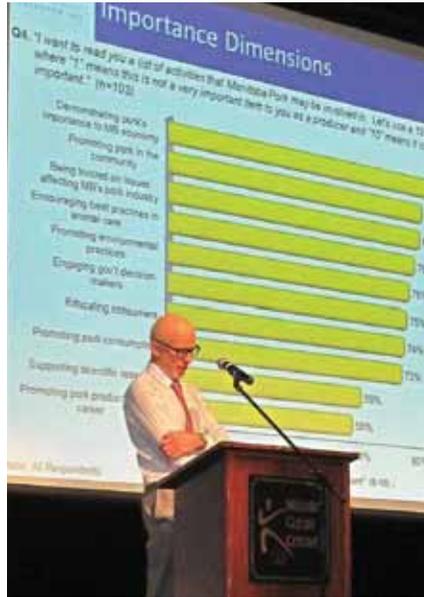
We would also like to congratulate our 4 runner-up prize winners who have won free registration to the provincial CE event of their choice!

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Andrew Dickson, general manager of Manitoba Pork, provided a report that focused on border transportation, trade and country-of-origin labelling. Photo by Manitoba Pork.



Manitoba Pork chair George Matheson welcomed pork producers and industry experts at two fall meetings held Oct. 27 and 28. Photo by Manitoba Pork.



Dr. Leigh Rosengren asked the crowd to imagine raising pigs in a world without antibiotics. Photo by Manitoba Pork.

“We’re currently trying to determine if it would be at all feasible to have a similar truck wash built in the States, and if that’s not possible, possibly a change in regulation. We do have a new government now, and perhaps that would be something more acceptable to them. This probably would be our biggest issue that has to be dealt with on an expedient basis.”

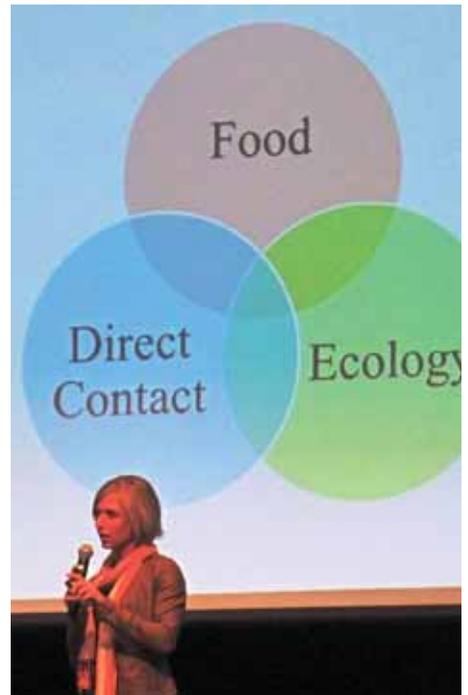
Other Manitoba Pork speakers included Andrew Dickson with his general manager’s report, Mark Fynn on diseases and biosecurity, Miles Beaudin on CQA and labour programs,

and Susan Riese on a promotional campaign called Bacon Makes It Better.

In addition, John Carney, executive director of Manitoba Livestock Manure Management Initiative, spoke about manure management and its implications for Manitoba producers.

“All in all, everything went well,” Matheson said, “but we would always like to see more producers out there.”

For its next large gathering, Manitoba Pork Council plans to host its annual general meeting in April 2016. ■



Dr. Leigh Rosengren of Rosengren Epidemiological Consulting Ltd. was the guest speaker at the 2015 fall pork producer meetings in Manitoba. Photo by Manitoba Pork.

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Faces and Places

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Success at the Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium

By Sheri Monk

The 38th annual Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium was held November 17 and 18 at the newly renovated Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre. The two-day event attracted a record crowd, with significant walk-up registration.

“We’re very pleased with the interest and attendance this year,” said Kim Browne with Sask Pork.

The speaker line-up was illustrious and the topics diverse. Presentations covered raising antibiotic-free animals, enrichment and exercise, euthanasia, batch farrowing,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40



Attendance was terrific at the 2015 Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium, and the spirit was buoyant.



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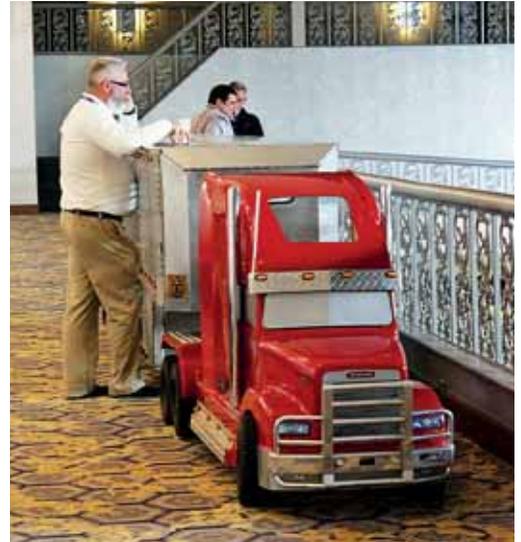
Dave Van Wallegem speaks to the crowd about the cleaning and disinfecting of facilities to enhance biosecurity.



The symposium allowed ample space to explore research posters and exhibitor booths.



The Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium always attracts a healthy line-up of sponsors – in this shot, attendees are enjoying a lunch sponsored by Olymel.



This livestock truck and trailer replica is a well-known staple at all the best industry events.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42



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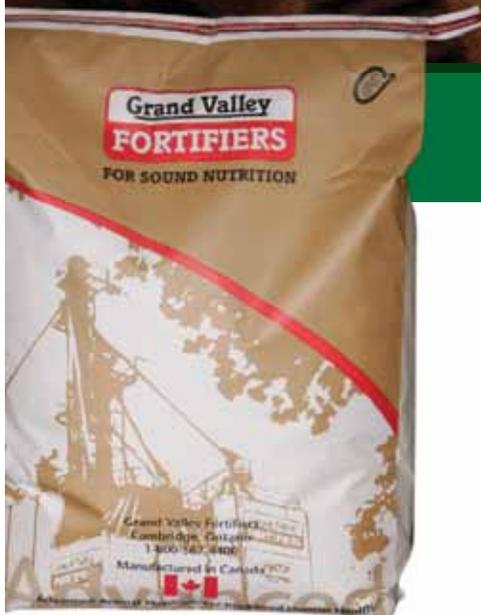
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The Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre has long been a landmark of Saskatoon. Just before the conference, renovations, upgrades and changes were completed revealing a stunning new look for the hotel.



Euthanasia can be a difficult but necessary topic, and Jennifer Woods tackles it during the symposium.



Dr. Madonna Gemus Benjamin discusses the world from a stockperson's perspective.

human resources, barn construction, biosecurity, and much, much more. A partial list of the speakers included Steve Meyer, Ben Woolley, Gregory Simpson, Denise Beaulieu, Shawn Davidson, Jennifer Brown, Yolande Seddon and many others.

“This is probably my favourite pork event,” said one attendee who preferred to remain anonymous. “It just keeps getting better and better every year.” ■

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Upcoming Events

Sneaking a peak at Banff Pork Seminar 2016

Submitted by Banff Pork Seminar



Coming home. This year's seminar returns to its historic venue, the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, January 12-14, 2016.

For 45 years pork industry delegates from across Canada and around the world have been coming to the Banff Pork Seminar. They come because it is the place to hear the latest information on the leading issues of the day. They come because of the opportunity to talk directly with so many industry leaders in one place. And they come to celebrate their industry in one of the most naturally beautiful areas known around the world, Banff, Alta.

The upcoming 2016 edition promises to be one of the best seminars yet, with a dynamic new program, themed "Honouring

the Past, Embracing the Future," and a return to the event's historic home the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel. The three-day event is January 12 to 14, 2016.

Fresh buzz in the air

"We couldn't be more excited and pleased to be 'coming home' with a fresh program of leading-edge topics and top speakers for this milestone edition of our conference," says Dr. Ruurd Zijlstra, Banff Pork Seminar co-program director.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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Upcoming Events



A very grand entrance – world-class facilities welcome Banff Pork Seminar delegates.

“Things have really come together,” agrees Dr. Bob Kemp, chairman of the seminar advisory committee. “This year perhaps more than ever, I don’t think you could go to one pork industry meeting where you can get the depth and the breadth of what we are able to showcase here. It’s a testament to everyone involved with the organization and all of the speakers and participants who make it happen.”

Fine-tuning the details

As the Western Hog Journal went to press, Kemp and Zijlstra, along with new Seminar coordinator Ashley Steeple and the full team of key people involved with the event organization were working diligently on final details. This included fine-tuning the featured topics and speaker lineup, as well as adding fresh twists to unique interactive formats, such as the popular “Boar Pit” session.

“An important aspect is preserving the many Seminar elements that have made it an iconic industry event, while looking for new ways to keep things fresh,” says Steeple.

“The Banff Pork Seminar has developed an enviable reputation for bringing together the very best speakers on the most critical issues of the day. That’s the main focus and there are many additional elements as well to round out the event and make it the best experience possible for participants. It doesn’t happen on its own. There’s a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes, both leading up to and during the event, to not only maintain that reputation but to keep building on it.”

Strong sponsor support

“Sponsors are a critical part of our success,” notes Dr. Michael Dyck, co-program director. As of early December another strong showing of support was already secured. “So far there are more than 70 sponsors in total and their diversity is significant.”

“To put on a conference of this scale and impact would cost almost double what we charge if it were not for sponsor support,” he adds. “They really are the backbone that makes this possible.”

Top speakers and hot topics

“The confirmed speaker and program topics roster offers something for everyone,” says Zijlstra. “We have completely refreshed the program, building on updates of the past several years, to offer the best of what delegates have come to expect along with new features such as more interactive and panel sessions.”

Plenary speakers include world-renowned animal welfare expert Dr. Temple Grandin of Colorado State University, Maple Leaf Foods President and Chief Executive Officer Michael McCain, and Joe Schwarcz of McGill University’s Office for Science & Society. Breakout sessions tackle biosecurity, antibiotics, feed cost & net income, new technologies, hot topics shaping the industry, and more.

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“We can’t wait for the event to get started,” says Zijlstra. “We are fortunate to work in a vibrant, resilient, progressive industry that has come through challenging times to embrace a new and exciting future. The Banff Pork Seminar is an excellent place to learn about a lot of the ground-breaking knowledge, technological advances and innovative approaches that will help our industry lead and thrive in the new world of food production.”

Boosting social media, blog coverage

“A strong communications program to help highlight ideas and transfer knowledge from the Seminar is another crucial part of the mix,” says Kemp. “In addition to regular news and information items delivered direct from the event to industry, this year’s communications program continues a growing emphasis on live blog items and social media. This adds to the great coverage we always look forward to from the range of media who attend and cover the event.”



A fresh face! Meet new Seminar coordinator Ashley Steeple.

Delegates and others interested in the Banff Pork Seminar can follow on Twitter @banffpork and #BPS2016, as well as connect on Facebook /BanffPork. Complete coverage of the event is available in a Special Meeting Report of the 2016 Banff Pork Seminar, presented by communications partner Meristem. Find the special report link on the Seminar site home page, at www.banffpork.ca, or directly on the www.meristem.com home page.

Sneak peek: Six highlights

There are many reasons to attend the 2016 event. Here are six highlights:

Hear the most powerful speaker in the world on farm animal care. Dr. Temple Grandin’s work has revolutionized farm animal care. For that she has graced the cover of TIME Magazine, talked to the world from the stage of major Hollywood awards shows about the movie on her life, and has been honoured many times. In her usual forthright and clear fashion she will be speaking at BPS 2016 on how consumers view animal welfare.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46

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Upcoming Events



Outstanding gourmet pork highlights the BPS dining menu.



The man in charge – Dr. Bob Kemp chairs the 2016 Seminar.



Dr. Ruurd Zijlstra, seminar co-program director.

The emerging power of Brazilian pork production. Rui Eduardo Saldanha Vargas of the Brazilian Association of Animal Protein talks pork production and opportunities for one of Canada's global competitors.

The new world of swine health and genomics. One breakout session deals with an innovative project to identify animals that are genetically more resilient to disease and opportunities to select for enhanced resilience. Key players from the research project will present results and address opportunities in this new frontier in research.

Using antibiotics responsibly. Producers are changing how they use antibiotics. At BPS 2016 they can learn the latest tips on responsible antibiotic use, and learn how to get into antibiotic free production systems and manage once you are in it.

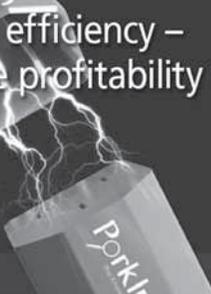
The Boar Pit returns. The Seminar ends with top speakers tackling the most dynamic topics of the day in a moderated but free flowing and fun environment. Lots of questions from the floor. Always entertaining and informative.

Networking in a world renowned location. The seminar moves to the Banff Springs Hotel. Both the hotel and the Banff area are known globally for their beauty. Great social events, lots of personal time with other delegates are all included as part of the networking opportunity.

Full program details and registration information are available at the Seminar website www.banffpork.ca. ■

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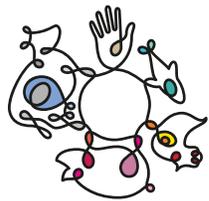
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Alberta colony leads in reducing antibiotics

Submitted by Brad Brinkworth, Meristem

Spring Creek colony near Walsh is gaining attention as a leader in reducing antibiotic use. The colony has almost eliminated antibiotics by adopting enzymes and other bio-based feed supplements.

“We’re always thinking about not only how we can improve on the farm but what the consumer wants, and how we can provide that,” says Paul Hofer, swine manager at Spring Creek Colony. You have to do that in this business. If it works on the farm and it fits what the consumer wants, that’s the direction we go.”

This has proven to be a proactive approach, particularly now that Tyson, Walmart and many other customers have started implementing restricted use policies.

“The consumer is always right,” says Hofer. “We have to listen to them and we have to work with them. We’re not producing pigs or cows or chickens, we’re producing meat and we need to provide the meat that the consumer wants.”

Bio-based feed approach

Spring Creek started this shift before ‘antibiotic-free’ and ‘natural’ became popular trends. They saw advantages for reducing antibiotics. They also saw advantages for feed efficiency, health, performance and ultimately profitability, for many aspects of their diverse operations. Spring Creek colony is one of the largest prairie landholders and a major swine and poultry producer, as well as dairy and beef producer.

“There’s a lot of pressure on the animal industry right now – for welfare, antibiotic-free, the environment, you name it,” says Hofer, who also oversees the colony’s feed mill. “We know this. But it’s not the only reason.”

Profitability boost

“We’ve used enzymes for a long time and we use a lot of enzymes now,” he says. “We get more nutrition and energy out of the feed. With the top options we use, it’s not hard to get \$10 to \$15 more per pig from that investment. Plus it fits what the market wants today and is better environmentally.”

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Hofer currently uses several enzyme products, which become active once ingested. One is a phytase product. This helps the farm managing phosphorus nutrition for swine, to optimize the performance and health of animals. It also reduces phosphorous excretion in order to help with soil nutrient management.

Focus on real benefits

He also uses multi-carbohydrase enzymes products, which break down particular feed components that otherwise would be hard or impossible for the animal to digest. A multi-carbohydrase approach requires developing unique formulations where the different activities complement one another.

“There are five to seven enzyme activities in the main feed efficiency products we use, and that’s why we use them. You get more feed breakdown with more activities so the efficiency and value is much higher,” Hofer said. “Part of the reason we go with multiple activities is that you just get more happening during what we sometimes forget is a small window of opportunity. You have to keep in mind the animals only have so much time to digest.”

The colony also uses another bio-based feed supplement designed to mimic the activity of beneficial nucleotides, to stimulates intestinal development and improve immunity,



Spring Creek colony near Walsh, Alberta.

particularly in young animals. The product improves average daily gain and feed intake, while enhancing nutrient absorption and gut health.

The colony isn’t totally antibiotics free, but is operating that way much of the time.

“As much as we liked antibiotics for a number of reasons in the past, today we only want to use them when we really need them for health issues. And overall we don’t end up needing them very much.” ■

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Alberta's pork processors gaining traction in global markets

Submitted by the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency



Shoji Nomura (l), Director of CPI Japan Office; Michael Young (r), CPI VP, Technical Programs & Marketing Services

Alberta's federal pork packing plants have a track record of success in translating market activities into sales. Alberta holds just 11 per cent of the total hogs and slaughter volume in Canada but accounts for 27 per cent of the Canadian pork exports to Japan – currently the highest value market. From 2012-2014, Alberta pork processors increased their export volume by 42 per cent. A

new program administered by Canada Pork International (CPI), and supported by the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA), aims to position Alberta's federal plants for continued success.

The Alberta Pork Export Market Development Program (APEMDP) allows Alberta-based pork processing plants to access additional funds to grow their international efforts. The APEMDP also helps offset the costs of marketing Canadian pork into Japan, China, South Korea, the European Union and Mexico. One of the main goals of the project is to help diversify the markets for high-quality Canadian pork.

According to Michael Young, CPI's Vice President of Technical Programs and Marketing Services, international trade is a long-term commitment.

"There is an upfront cost to international development because a company often has to invest for months and even years before they see sales. And by invest I mean time and money. You can't just show up in a market and expect contracts to follow. There is a process through which you and your customers grow to trust each other – and that process is a little different in each market."

Young hopes the APEMDP will open up some export doors for more Alberta packers.

"The payoff of international development can be seen in the premiums that companies are getting from markets like Japan and China. Now we have a way to help offset that upfront cost, so that eventual payoff becomes even more attractive for Alberta's federal pork plants."

Michelle Normand, ALMA's Senior Manager of Industry and Market Development, sees the APEMDP providing benefits beyond market development.

"One of the benefits of this program is that it makes Alberta an attractive business environment for these federal packing plants. We want them here, helping our industry grow, and they want to be here to grow their international presence."

In addition to targeting markets, over the next three years the APEMDP will help support incoming missions to Alberta from these priority markets; outgoing missions to expand sales volume, introduce new specifications or product lines; retail sampling programs; branded promotions; and competitive benchmarking.

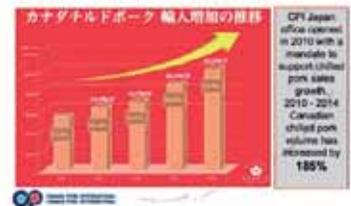
Trevor Sears, Maple Leaf Foods' Director of Sales and Marketing, is thankful for the program.

"We are always looking to increase our exposure to the premium markets, particularly in Asia. With this cost sharing, you can increase the frequency that you go to see new customers and reconnect with existing ones," he said. "A phone call is great, and we still do that, but it is hard to overstate how important face-to-face meetings are and how much more you understand about a market when you actually go there."

Gordon Cove, ALMA's president and CEO, said, "The APEMDP helps Alberta's packers to continue pushing into global market, and they are gaining traction. It also helps the industry as the international demand encourages more pork production in our province and across Canada."

For more information on this project, go to <http://www.canadapork.com/>

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New WHE boss brings passion by the Bushell

“Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t – you’re right.” - Henry Ford

By Geoff Geddes

Life is funny. One day you’re donning a hard hat and working construction, and the next you’re in rubber boots and wading knee deep in pig... well, you get the idea.

And if you’re Brent Bushell, the new general manager for the Western Hog Exchange, you’re loving every minute of it.

From Prairie Boy to New Kid on the Block

Between growing up in Regina and growing a new career in Alberta, a hard hat was just one of many Bushell wore. Along the way, he earned a two-year diploma in architectural engineering, worked for Federated Co-operatives and accumulated 30 years of management experience.

He has accomplished a lot, but is probably most proud of what he did with the Farmers of North America (FNA) in Saskatoon, a business alliance of farmers dedicated to maximizing profitability.

“When I first got involved, it was an upstart company. By the time I left in 2004, we had grown it from concept to 5000 members.”

Alberta Bound

His first stop in Alberta was the construction industry. It had a lot to offer, but for Bushell, there was one major shortfall: It wasn’t agriculture.

“I found myself really missing the ag industry. It’s full of challenges and fantastic people, most of them in it for the long haul which brings a certain stability that you don’t find in a lot of fields these days.”

Spare some Change?

While the pork sector may be stable in one respect, it has more than its share of hard knocks and tough times. That might have scared away some applicants for the WHE job, but it was actually part of the appeal for Bushell.

“Through my work with organizations like FNA, I got used to the ups and downs that many commodities experience. There’s been a lot of change in the hog industry over the last decade, and some people find that unsettling. To me though, change means opportunity.”

Meet, Greet, Repeat

Seeing opportunity is one thing, but seizing it is another, especially when you’re the new kid in class. Like other challenges, this was one that Bushell met head-on.

“I’ve already talked with a number of producers as we explore new risk management tools with Gibson Capital. I went to all three meetings to see producers face-to-face and get their feedback on the tools. It gave me a chance to shake a lot of hands and everyone has welcomed me with open arms, which I really appreciate.”

Bushell said some people “wondered who this new guy was and what he would bring to the table,” so meeting face-to-face early on was a chance for people to get to know him and vice versa.

Interestingly, Bushell doesn’t view his lack of a hog-specific background as an impediment to success. In fact, he said in some ways it may be an advantage.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

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“Through my past work, I’ve built a good knowledge base around how agriculture functions on a global scale and how it filters down to the provincial level. At the same time, I bring a fresh set of eyes to the pork business. In my talks with industry partners, I’m trying to challenge our views on what can and can’t be done and focus on how to make things happen. I think people find that refreshing.”

Extending Credit

Like any good leader, Bushell understands that his success is closely tied to the people around him.

“I’m fortunate to be inheriting a fantastic staff that knows their job inside out. We also have a very progressive board. They understand that change is happening in the industry and they want to be catalysts of that change rather than reacting to it.”

Buoyed by that strong supporting cast, he is already rolling up his sleeves and charting a course for the future.

“My first goal is to analyze the WHE and how we do things to see if there are ways of increasing our efficiency. Once we are functioning as a lean, effective and efficient organization, we need to look closely at where the industry is going and what role we can play to help it get there.”

Glass Half Full (at least)

Having done his homework, Bushell had a good idea of what he was getting into. Though he isn’t blind to the challenges, he likes what he sees so far after two months on the job.

“When we talked about risk management with producers the uptake was very high, which showed a real willingness and ability to progress on their part.”

As far as the public goes, “I’ve never seen a consumer base so willing to be engaged in where their food comes from. 10-15 years ago, it wasn’t a big focus, but now it allows us to educate them and market to them, and that will only strengthen our industry.”

It’s a tall order; fortunately, time management is not an issue for Bushell. In spite of his new responsibilities, he still finds moments in the day to spend with Patricia, his wife of 21 years, their four children and their 10 grandchildren. That is, when he’s not playing hockey, golf and slo-pitch or cheering for the Chicago Blackhawks (cut the new guy some slack).

Whether coaching minor hockey or stepping into rubber boots for a tour of the WHE’s Red Deer operation, Bushell is a hands-on guy. In part, he credits that approach for his enthusiasm about the future.

“The WHE has a fantastic history and has done a phenomenal job so far. I truly believe that we are positioned to write a new and exciting chapter rather than the ‘same old same old’, and I look forward to helping lead that change.”

These days, he rarely dons those rubber boots, but who needs them? Instead of wading, he’s now diving headfirst into a new challenge. And if it’s a case of “sink or swim” for the WHE and the hog industry in general, Bushell says the smart money is on the latter. ■

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Multi-pathogen test could improve detection of respiratory disease

Submitted by the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency

Respiratory disease in pigs can result from infections by multiple viruses, bacteria or adverse environmental conditions affecting the animal's immune system. The result of this combination of disease pathogens is called porcine respiratory disease complex (PRDC). Unfortunately, PRDC is a notable problem in Canada's pig industry because of its negative impact on feed efficiency and animal health.

Diagnosis of PRDC is difficult and time-consuming. Currently, no single test allows for simultaneous detection of the major pathogens that are often associated with PRDC. In partnership with the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA), Dr. Oliver Lung with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency laboratory in Lethbridge recently led a team that developed user-friendly tools to identify eight major PRDC pathogens, in a single reaction.

To accomplish simultaneous testing, Dr. Lung's team used a novel technology, which uses multiple DNA "baits" fixed on gene chips to detect genetic fingerprints of pathogens most commonly associated with PRDC. This multi-pathogen test has a turn-around time of between four and five hours. This is much more efficient than current tests, which targets a single pathogen, thus requiring multiple tests and 10-14 days to obtain results. This new tool can also enhance biosecurity and facilitate future investigations into PRDC surveillance and control.

"This research is an important step in understanding how these pathogens lead to PRDC-related diseases," said Dr. Lung. "We can build off this work to determine other combinations of pathogens leading to PRDC and have a better idea of how to detect and stop PRDC in its early stages. Considering the size of the Canadian swine industry, this could significantly help

mitigate the effects of one of the most problematic animal health and economic concerns in the pig industry."

ALMA President and CEO, Gordon Cove, sees the benefits for Alberta's hog producers. "Enhancing animal health is an important industry goal and projects like this show how the research community is constantly investigating new disease detection methods," he said. "Considering this test could reduce the negative effects PRDC has on feed efficiency, it provides a boost to industry sustainability and productivity."

While there is still work ahead to make these chips commercially available, there is already new research underway using this technology to detect poultry and livestock pathogens that contribute to respiratory and enteric diseases.

"Increasing concerns regarding animal health from producers and consumers have heightened the industry's desire for more efficient disease detection technologies and a better understanding of disease formation," said Dr. Lung. "With our results, it is reasonable to believe that user-friendly, multi-pathogen detection technology could be a multi-purpose and cost-effective strategy to monitor and detect animal diseases. That would go a long way to maintaining the competitiveness of Alberta's livestock industry."

For more information, please contact Dr. Oliver Lung at oliver.lung@inspection.gc.ca. ■



From left: Dr. Oliver Lung and Cody Buchanan

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Feeding canola press-cake to starter pigs

X. Zhou¹, E. Beltranena^{1,2}, R.T. Zijlstra^{1,*}

¹University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB; ²Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Edmonton, AB E-mail address: ruurd.zijlstra@ualberta.ca

Take home message

Canola press-cake (CPC) is a co-product of biodiesel production from processing plants that mechanically press canola seed without conditioning, flaking, cooking and solvent extraction. The CPC contains 37 per cent crude protein and 20 per cent remaining oil; thus, CPC could be a source of protein and energy in pig diets. Effects of replacing soybean meal (SBM) and canola oil with increasing inclusion of CPC on diet nutrient digestibility and growth performance of weaned pigs were evaluated. In total, 240 pigs (initial weight = 7.5 kg) starting 1 week after weaning (19 d of age) were fed 5 wheat-based diets containing 0, 5, 10, 15, or 20 per cent CPC replacing SBM and canola oil in 2 phases (Phase 1 and 2). Diets were balanced for net energy (NE) value using canola oil and standardized ileal digestible (SID) amino acid (AA) content using crystalline AA. Increasing dietary inclusion of CPC did not affect average daily feed intake and average daily weight gain but improved feed conversion (feed:gain). In conclusion, 20 per cent CPC can replace 20 per cent SBM and 3.3 per cent canola oil in diets formulated to equal dietary NE value and SID AA content and fed to nursery pigs 1 week after weaning without detrimental effects on growth performance.

Canola press-cake

Solvent-extracted canola meal (CM) is the most common canola co-product and is fed to pigs mainly as cost-effective alternative to SBM. The CM is produced by extracting canola oil using solvent extraction in crushing plants. Canola oil can also be extracted by simply pressing seed mechanically without conditioning, flaking, cooking and solvent-extraction, leading to lower infrastructure cost and

equipment requirements. The co-product after pressing is named canola press-cake (CPC).

Apart from human food consumption, canola oil is also used to produce biodiesel. Demand for biodiesel is increasing worldwide due to policies supporting renewable diesel content in fuels as alternative to petroleum diesel to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Consequently, canola seed crushing and oil production will increase further, and may lead to greater availability of CPC.

Feeding CPC to pigs may have advantages over feeding CM: 1) The CPC contains about 20 per cent remaining oil that is much more than CM (3 per cent), indicating greater energy value for pigs; 2) The availability of AA in CPC may also be greater than that in CM due to exclusion of cooking and desolventizing that may cause heat damage to AA. Feeding CPC to pigs may also have a concern: the lower processing temperature

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may be insufficiently high to inactivate the enzyme myrosinase that hydrolyses glucosinolates to produce harmful breakdown compounds. With increasing availability of CPC in North America, its feeding value as AA and energy source for pigs should be validated. However, the growth response of weaned pigs to increasing dietary inclusion of CPC has not been researched extensively.

Nutrient profile of canola press-cake

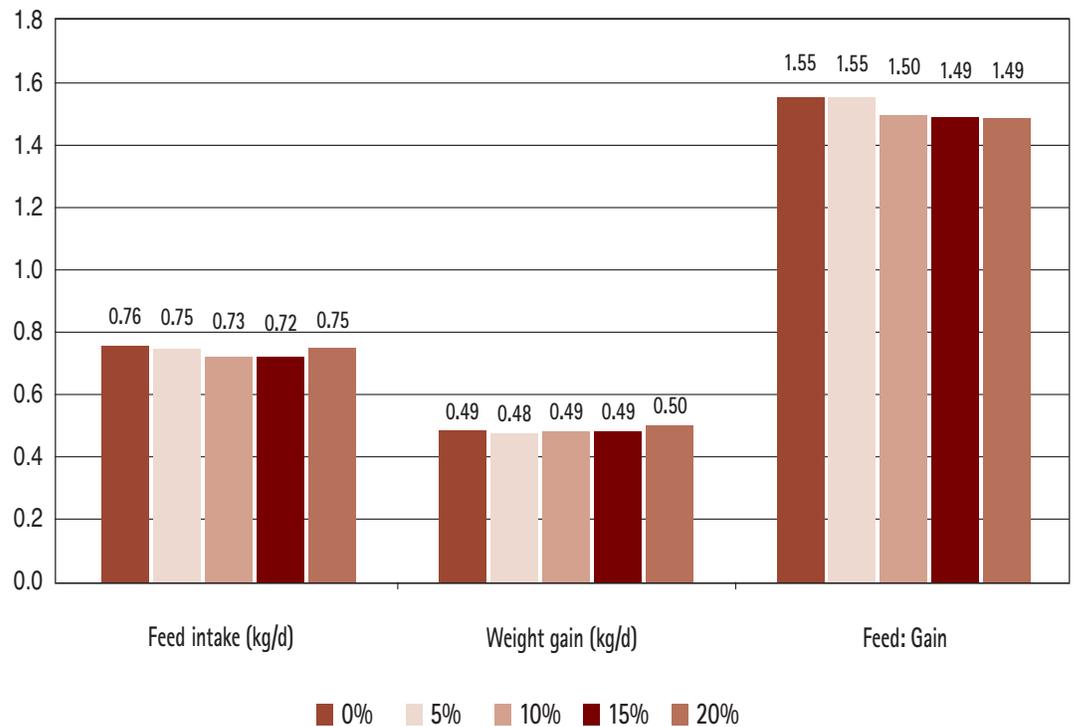
Canola seed was sourced from Apex Nutri-Solutions Inc. (Edberg, AB, Canada). The CPC was produced at the Agri-Food Discovery Place (Edmonton, AB, Canada). The sample contained 37 per cent CP, 20 per cent crude fat, 20 per cent ADF, 23 per cent NDF, 2.3 per cent lysine and 2.2 per cent available lysine, 0.73 per cent methionine, 1.6 per cent threonine, and 1.1 per cent phosphorus on as fed basis.

The weaned pig trial

The animal trial was conducted at the Swine Research and Technology Centre, University of Alberta (Edmonton, AB, Canada). Experimental diets were formulated to contain 0, 5, 10, 15 or 20 per cent CPC to replace up to 20 per cent SBM and 3.3 per cent canola oil. Diets were formulated to provide 2.46 and 2.39 Mcal NE/kg and 5.02 and 4.19 g SID lysine/Mcal NE and were fed for 14 (Phase 1) and 21 d (Phase 2), respectively. Canola protein concentrate and herring meal were each included at 5 per cent and 2.2 per cent in Phase 1 and 2, respectively, as specialty ingredients. Diets did not contain antimicrobials or growth promoters. Phase 1 and two diets were cold-pelleted and steam-pelleted, respectively.

In total, 240 pigs (Duroc x Large White/Landrace F1; Hypor, Regina, SK, Canada) were weaned at 19 days of age (initial weight = 7.5 kg) and housed in 60 pens with 4 pigs in each pen. After weaning, pigs were fed sequentially commercial Phase 1 and Phase 2 diets (Hi-Pro Feeds, Sherwood Park, AB, Canada) for five and two days, respectively. Pigs in each

Figure 1. Growth performance of piglets fed increasing inclusion of canola press-cake in diets.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

pen were then fed a randomly allocated test diet for five weeks. Pigs had free access to water and the assigned diets. Individual pig body weight and pen feed disappearance were measured weekly.

Trial results

For the entire 35-day trial, increasing dietary inclusion of CPC did not affect average daily feed intake and average daily weight gain but improved feed conversion (feed:gain, Figure 1). Final body weight was 24.7, 24.2, 24.9, 24.4 and 24.9 kg for pigs fed 0, 5, 10, 15 and 20 per cent CPC, respectively, and was not affected by CPC inclusion.

Increasing dietary inclusion of CPC reduced the apparent total tract digestibility (ATTD) of gross energy in diets from 86.0 per cent to 84.8 per cent for Phase 1, and from 86.0 to 84.7 per cent for Phase 2; reduced ATTD of CP from 86.0 per cent to 83.5 per cent for Phase 1, and from 85.7 per cent to 84.0 per cent for Phase 2; reduced diet digestible energy values from 3.58 to 3.54 Mcal/kg for Phase 1, and from 3.46 to 3.42 Mcal/kg for Phase 2; reduced predicted NE values of diets from 2.51 to 2.46 Mcal/kg for Phase 1 but maintained diet NE value at about 2.41 Mcal/kg for Phase 2.

Cost vs. benefit

Assuming prices per MT for wheat \$220, CPC \$350, SBM \$450, canola oil \$1,200, L-lysine-HCl \$2,550, L-threonine \$3,100, and DL-methionine \$5,000, increasing dietary inclusion of CPC from 0 to 5, 10, 15 and 20 per cent reduced feed cost by \$4.00, 7.99, 11.97 and 15.96 per MT for Phase 1, and \$4.34, 8.08, 11.98 and 15.65 per MT for Phase 2, respectively, and reduced feed cost per unit of body weight gain for the entire 35-d trial by 0.67, 4.08, 5.19 and 5.84 cents/kg, respectively.

Recommendation

The CPC can be fed to pigs as dietary protein and energy source. Starting from 1 week after weaning, feeding up to 20 per cent of CPC replacing SBM and canola oil in nursery diets may reduce feed cost without affecting growth performance of weaned pigs when diets were balanced for NE value and SID Lys/NE ratio.

Acknowledgements

We appreciate the research funding from the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund, Alberta Pork, Danisco Animal Nutrition and Canola Council of Canada that sponsored a multi-trial project. ■



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Using exploratory behaviour to increase pre-weaning creep consumption

By Jennifer Brown, Yolande Seddon, Prairie Swine Centre

Summary

This study investigated whether feed consumption before and after weaning can be increased through stimulating exploratory behaviour in piglets, and whether this is best achieved through provision of enrichment (E), or through presentation of creep feed in a large tray feeder (TF) so as to facilitate synchronized feeding among litter mates.

Enrichment consisted of cotton ropes hung in the farrowing pen. Piglets provided with enrichment were observed to contact the enrichment on average 11 times per day. Feeder type, but not enrichment, resulted in a greater frequency of piglet visits to the feeder on day 12 with more piglets using the tray feeder. On day 26 there was a tendency for a greater frequency of visits to the tray feeder. Litters supplied with a tray feeder also had a greater daily creep disappearance with no effect of enrichment.

However, litters provided with the standard feeder (SF) had a greater piglet birth to wean average daily gain. Provision of a larger feeder that encourages social feeding, appears to have a greater influence on attracting piglets to creep feed. The increased creep disappearance and more frequent feeder visits in the tray feeder treatment indicate that this treatment may be effective at improving feed consumption and reduce weaning stress.

Introduction

Piglet weaning is a stressful experience in standard commercial practice, as shown by high levels of aggression, weight loss and increased salivary cortisol concentrations. Inadequate food intake in the first two days after weaning, in combination with the stress of weaning, has been shown to decrease piglet performance, resulting in increased disease susceptibility and mortality through changes in metabolic and immune response. Promoting feed intake in piglets before weaning by provision of creep feed familiarizes the

animals with solid food, and has been shown to increase feed intake and improve growth rate in the critical two days post-weaning. Pre-weaning creep feed consumption by piglets has also been shown to correlate with increased weight gain in the week prior to weaning in addition to improving post-weaning performance. However, the overall consumption of creep by a litter can be low, and varies greatly among littermates. Considering this, the provision of creep is not generating the desired effect for producers, resulting in higher production costs without significant benefits.

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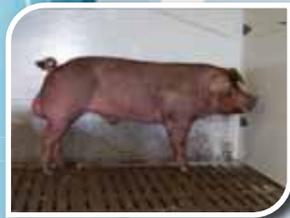


Table 1. Average total frequency of visits made to the creep over 8 hours (8am – 4pm) when presented in a Standard Feeder (SF) or Tray feeder (TF).

Day	Feeder type		Pooled SEM	P
	SF	TF		
12	1.3	6.0	1.2	<0.06
19	3.8	15.0	3.6	0.052
26	5.3	16.4	4.1	0.086

It is of interest to identify convenient, effective and economical ways to increase the quantity and consistency of creep feed consumption by piglets within litters. Previous research has determined that the amount of creep consumed by piglets can be increased through provision of a specially designed feeder that encourages exploratory interaction around the feeder. It is known that piglets born outdoors are quick to consume starter feed and are often ingesting soil and plant material

before weaning while exploring their environment. However, piglets born into indoor farrowing pens do not have the same opportunity for exploration in standard practice. This study builds upon current knowledge to investigate the effect of increasing the exploratory behaviour of piglets through provision of environmental enrichment in the farrowing pen and nursery. If simple enrichment can increase creep feed consumption in piglets this could transfer to piglets consuming starter feed earlier and having less of a growth check in the immediate post-weaning period.

Specific objectives of this project were to determine:

- 1) If providing enrichment, and/or a large shallow tray feeder in the farrowing crate results in increased exploration of creep feeders or increased creep feed consumption by the piglets, and any improvements in pre-weaning growth rate.
- 2) If the provision of enrichment in the nursery and having a larger tray feeder in the farrowing room results in increased consumption or any improvements in piglet growth during the first 2 weeks in nursery.

Creep feed was offered to all litters from 10 days after birth until weaning at 28 days. Strips of cotton rope were attached in two locations in the farrowing crate (anterior and posterior)

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for the enrichment treatment, from five days after birth until weaning. Piglets were weighed on days 0 (birth), 3, 7, 10, 17, the day of weaning (day 26), day 35, and 42 in the nursery. Creep consumption was calculated weekly by total weight per litter. Behaviour was recorded on four litters per treatment for eight hours (8 a.m. - 4 p.m.), on days 12, 19, and 26. The frequency and the average number of piglets observed at the feeder or enrichment was calculated on each observation day. Average daily gain and creep consumption were calculated.

T1: Creep provided in a standard feeder

T2: Creep provided in standard feeder, with cotton rope as pen enrichment (SFE);

T3: Creep provided in a large tray feeder (9" x 13") (TF);

T4: Creep provided in tray feeder with enrichment provided

Table 2. Growth rate (ADG, kg) per piglet across treatments.

Treatment	Standard Feeder	Standard Enrichment	Tray Feeder	Tray Feeder + Enrichment	Pooled SEM	P
Birth to Wean (Day 0 to 28)	0.26	0.23	0.21	0.22	0.014	NS
Wean to day 42	0.22	0.16	0.24	0.25	0.03	NS
ADG day 1 nursery	-0.04ac	-0.22c	0.16ab	0.18ab	0.11	0.06
ADG day 35	0.22	0.23	0.16	0.16	0.02	NS
ADG day 42	0.35	0.34	0.34	0.38	0.02	NS

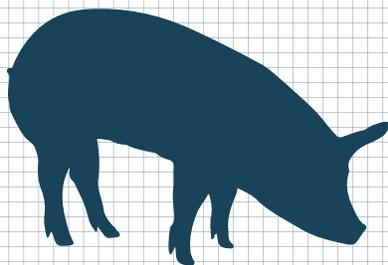
Results And Discussion

Piglet behavior

Piglets interacted with the enrichment when provided, on average 11 visits per day in the farrowing crate. However, provision of a tray feeder, rather than enrichment resulted in a greater

frequency of piglet visits to the creep (Table 1). This continued from day 12, with a tendency for a greater number of visits to the feeder on days 19 and 28 pre-weaning. There was a tendency for a greater number of piglets per visit at the tray feeder on day 12 pre-weaning,

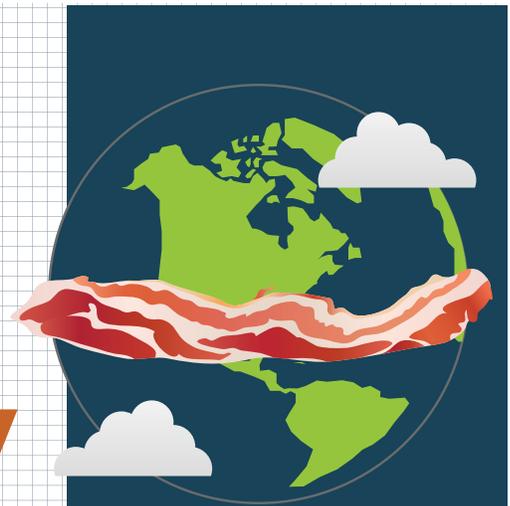
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but no differences thereafter among the treatments.

Creep intake and growth rate

Rope enrichment had no effect on the creep disappearance or average daily gain in the pre-weaning period. Litters supplied with the TF had greater daily creep disappearance (In g/pig/day: SF: 5.4; TF: 13.2, SEM 1.33, P<0.0005), with no effect of enrichment. No treatment differences in average daily gain values were observed between day 0 and 28,

and day 28 to 42. Pre-weaning growth rate did not differ across treatments, however, piglets using a TF pre-weaning, showed no weight loss in the first days post weaning. On day 29 (day after weaning), T2 piglets had a significantly greater growth check within the first 24 hours of moving into the nursery, while the ADG of piglets in T1, T3 and T4 did not differ (Table 2).

The provision of enrichment in the farrowing pen elicited exploratory

behaviour in the piglets, as demonstrated through rope interaction observations. However, provision of a larger feeder that could encourage social feeding and rooting appears to have a greater influence on attracting piglets to creep feed. This was demonstrated by the increased frequency of visits to the feeder when litters were provided with tray feeders. This feeder was a rectangular shape, allowing more piglets to investigate the feeder simultaneously. Pigs are social feeders, and will synchronize feeding. The accessibility of the tray feeder may help facilitate this behaviour. The increased creep disappearance found in the tray feeder suggests piglets were interacting with the creep. However, birth to wean growth rates did not reflect any benefits of increased creep consumption suggesting that use of the tray feeder may have resulted in greater feed wastage.

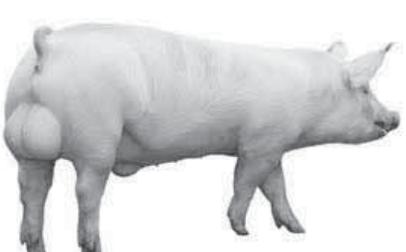
In the period immediately following weaning, piglets using the tray feeder performed better, having no negative growth check, and maintained a positive average daily gain compared to piglets that had been given standard feeders. There was no effect of enrichment on the piglet performance post weaning. Piglets that received the standard feeder and rope enrichment had a significantly greater growth check at day 29 post-weaning than did piglets provided with the tray feeder, with or without enrichment.

Conclusion

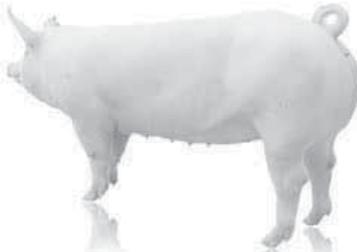
A large tray feeder that encourages social feeding and foraging is more effective at attracting piglets to creep than a standard feeder, or the provision of rope enrichment. Providing a tray feeder before weaning also had a positive effect on piglet growth immediately after weaning. Growth benefits may have arisen from piglets more readily taking to solid feed post weaning, having had increased exploration of solid feed pre-weaning. These results are favorable for producers as a reduced growth check post weaning could also mean that piglets are better prepared for immune challenges and other stressors associated with weaning. ■

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Exploring geothermal heating in swine operations

Submitted by the Prairie Swine Centre

Previous studies showed that energy costs in swine operations range from about \$7 to \$12 per pig sold. This has steadily increased over recent years and now represents the third largest variable cost in hog production (after feed and labour). Maintaining the desired conditions year round in a production barn requires a significant amount of energy, particularly in cold climate regions. A survey of 28 swine farms in Saskatchewan showed that heating and ventilation costs constitute almost 80 per cent of energy used in various types of swine barns. Compared with conventional heating systems using either gas, oil or electricity, a geothermal system utilizes ground heat to provide primary heating and cooling.

Computer simulation analysis was done to calculate the overall heating energy use in a production room operated under normal management practices; this served as the basis for designing the required capacity and the associated components of the geothermal system needed to meet the projected heating energy consumption.

The geothermal system, or alternatively known as ground source heating system was composed of a heat pump and 550 m of 1.9-centimetre diameter polyethylene pipes buried in 2.6 m to 3 m deep trenches on the ground outside the PSCI barn. The buried pipes contained a 20 per cent methanol and 80 per cent water solution for absorbing heat from the ground for heating and for using the ground as heat sink during the cooling trial. A five-ton heat pump which used R-410a refrigerant was installed in the geothermal room and its air-handling unit was connected to the room's air recirculation duct. A 22-kW forced convection heater was also installed in the room as back-up heater.

Energy consumption for heating and ventilation

Energy consumption for heating and ventilation comprised the total energy use in each room. Energy consumption for heating included both the electrical and heating fuel consumption of the geothermal heat pump and heaters while

CONTINUED ON PAGE 63

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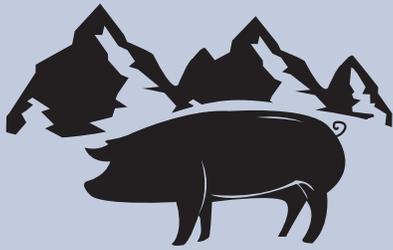
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that for ventilation included the electrical consumption for both ventilation and recirculation fans. For the three heating cycles used in this analysis, the heaters needed to operate only during the first three to six weeks of the trial when the pigs were still small and the room temperature set point was the highest (i.e., supplemental heat from the heaters were required to maintain the set point temperature). On subsequent weeks of the room cycle, the heaters were only needed minimally with negligible energy usage because the heat generated by the pigs was sufficient to maintain the set point temperature in the room.

Table 1 shows the energy consumed by the geothermal and control rooms for heating and ventilation during the period when heaters were running. On average, the room with the conventional gas-fired heater (Control) consumed a total 189.8 ± 43.6 m³ of natural gas for heating. The room with the geothermal heating system did not use any natural gas but consumed a total of 1206 ± 489 kWh of electricity mainly to run the heat pump. On the other hand, the energy consumption for ventilation in the control room was about 268 ± 136 kWh of electricity while the geothermal room used about 282 ± 169 kWh of electricity to ventilate the room during the heating season.

Table 1. Energy consumption for heating and ventilation in the geothermal and control rooms over three heating trials

Trial	Heating		Ventilation	
	Geothermal, kWh electricity	Control, m ³ natural gas	Geothermal, kWh	Control, kWh
1	1232	226.5	476	426
2	705	201.2	194	199
3	1682	141.6	175	181
Average	1206 ± 489	189.8 ± 43.6	282 ± 169	268 ± 136

Since the heating fuel consumption was expressed in terms of cubic metres (m³) of natural gas while electrical consumption of heaters and fans was in kWh, the weekly average energy consumption data of the two rooms were converted to gigajoules (GJ) to be able to compare the two heating systems. Results showed that the weekly energy consumption

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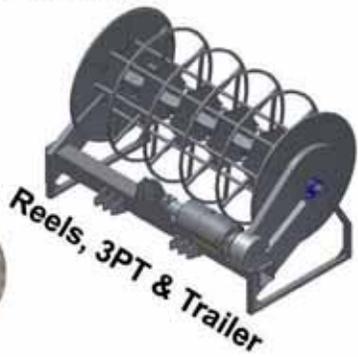


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for heating the geothermal room was significantly lower ($p < 0.10$) than in the control room. Additionally, the two rooms did not differ significantly in average weekly energy consumption for ventilation. Thus, over one growth cycle, the geothermal heating system required less energy (5.36 GJ) to extract heat from the ground and to heat the room air compared to the conventional natural gas-fired heater (8.43 GJ); this is about 36 per cent significant reduction ($p < 0.10$) in total energy needed for heating and ventilation compared to the control room.

Temperature and relative humidity

Average air temperature at the center of the rooms as well as the temperature and relative humidity near the exhaust fans when heaters were in operation are presented in Table 2. Both rooms had almost the same room air temperature and relative humidity over the three heating trials. On average, the temperature at the center of the room with the geothermal heating system was about 21.3 ± 0.5 °C while the control room had 21.8 ± 0.6 °C. Furthermore, an average temperature of about 19.6 ± 1.0 °C and relative humidity of 60.2 ± 6.9 per cent were observed near the exhaust area of the geothermal room; these were about 4.8 per cent less than

the corresponding temperature and relative humidity in the control room, respectively.

Conclusion

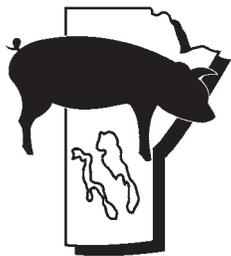
Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be made:

In-barn evaluation of the geothermal system showed about 36 per cent reduction in energy consumption for heating and ventilation in the room with the geothermal system during the heating season relative to the room with the conventional forced-convection heater. The mean air temperature, relative humidity, and air quality within the two rooms were relatively similar during winter season.

During the cooling season, the geothermal room had higher total energy for heating and ventilation (1475 kWh higher) than that in the conventional room, mainly for the operation of the heat pump. Average room air temperature was cooler in the geothermal room compared to the conventional room.

Significant reduction in methane and carbon dioxide concentration during heating and cooling trials was observed in the room with the geothermal system relative to the room with the conventional gas-fired heater. ■

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BY BUDDY SIMMONS

Howdy, bacon connoisseurs!

You know, it's a given that everybody loves bacon. But if you ask the man or woman on the street WHY bacon is so fantastic, you'll just get a look of disbelief, followed by the reply, "Because it tastes great, of course!" And that would be absolutely true.

But we've thought of some other reasons and have decided to enumerate them in the time-honoured tradition of a top 10 list. Of course, we're sure that there are so many, many more positive reasons for loving bacon and that our list falls far short

of being complete. But, luckily, we have our usual selection of memes to make up for whatever we may have missed, so take a look at them as you mentally compose your own list detailing why bacon is so darned special!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 66



Bacon rocks!



'twas the night before breakfast...



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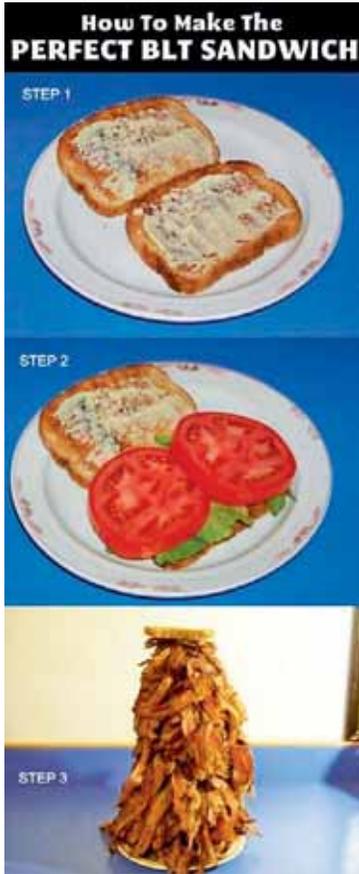


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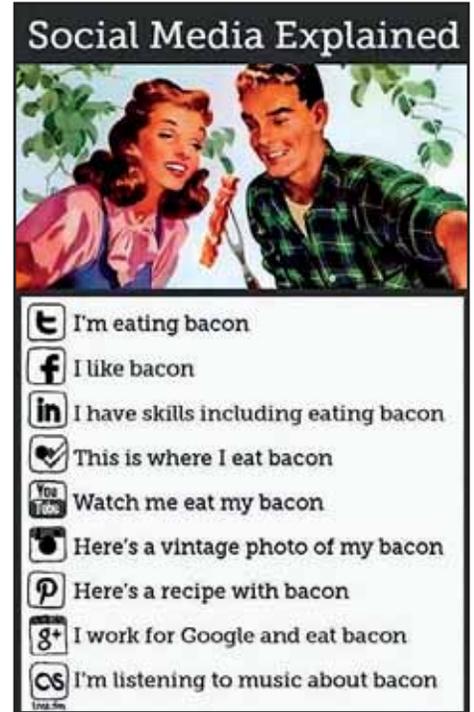
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Pork Culture and Trends



It's as easy as 1-2-3!

1. The sound of bacon sizzling in a pan is more comforting than listening to rain patter on the roof. We don't recommend falling asleep to the sound, however.
2. Without bacon, a "BLT" sandwich would just be an "LT" sandwich, which just doesn't sound very appetizing to us.
3. If you propose marriage to the love of your life, you risk being rejected. If you propose whipping up a big plate of bacon, you'll always get an enthusiastic "Yes!" (And if you don't, he or she probably was not the right one for you anyway.)
4. "Bringing home the broccoli" just doesn't have the same ring to it.
5. No bacon, no bacon memes. No bacon memes, no "Your Daily Bacon". 'nuff said.
6. Frying bacon eliminates the need for costly air fresheners.
7. Bacon is loyal. Once yours, you'll never catch it with another pan.
8. Bacon is conveniently located near several other tasty pork products. Both on the grocery shelves and on the pig.
9. Bacon is also loved by dogs around the world. And if you can't trust your dog, who can you trust?
10. Bacon's popularity stands on its own without needing a silly list. ■



Oh, so THAT'S how it works



Banff Pork Seminar 2016

F.X. Aherne Prize for Innovative Pork Production



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Prizes include complimentary registration for BPS 2016 for the innovator and a guest; accommodation at the Banff Centre; reimbursement up to \$800 in travel expenses; and the opportunity to showcase your innovation at the Banff Pork Seminar!

Application deadline: **Oct 27, 2015**. More details will be available at www.banffpork.ca. Submit your own application or nominate an innovator you know. ...Any innovation, big or small!

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Chop 'til you drop

Passion for Pork holds a flurry of winter activities

By Geoff Geddes

The cold may be descending, but Alberta-grown pork is hotter than ever thanks to several events around the province.

For the third straight year, Alberta Pork took part in the “Christmas in November” event from November 6-15 at the Jasper Park Lodge. In addition to sponsoring Anna and Michael Olson, two of the more popular chefs at this gathering, we provided crown roasts for the gala meal from Maple Leaf Lethbridge and whole roasted hogs for the opening night reception via Pine Haven Colony.

The most popular session this year featured a pork-focused menu of retro holiday appetizers delivered by the Olsons to packed houses of 60-130 people per session. While they may have paused briefly to sample the cuisine, Alberta Pork staff were busy distributing “Find Local Pork” information sheets showing where to find local product in Edmonton and Calgary.

In case you missed the event, you can get recipes for those yummy appetizers and a wealth of other pork dishes at www.passionforpork.com.

One week later, our Chops and Crops event at the Matrix Hotel in Edmonton hosted a number of MLA's. It was a great opportunity to share the benefits of agriculture for Alberta and sample the finest food that our livestock and crop sectors have to offer. While The Honourable Lori Sigurdson brought greetings from the government, the relaxed atmosphere encouraged some frank discussions on timely issues for the pork industry.

From there, it was on to the final Swine & Dine event of the year at the Hotel MacDonald. Since it started four years

ago, Swine & Dine has been a great collaboration with local restaurants offering a multi-course pork menu (all locally sourced of course) paired with wine or beer. The program was expanded from Edmonton to Calgary last year and even features special promotions at unique locations like the Jasper Park Lodge. Watch for the Banff Springs Hotel to come on board in 2016!

Since wine and beer are generally frowned upon in the classroom, Alberta Pork is finding other ways of exposing students to the pork industry. We recently signed on to the Classroom Agriculture Program, and we're also developing our own Alberta Pork Education Program. As part of this effort, we've enlisted Calgary nutritionist Beth Castle to design a pork-focused program for students in grades 4, 9 and 12, the last two including a cooking component. Castle previously worked on similar endeavors for Alberta Beef and Alberta Egg, so we're excited to see what she comes up with.

We hope to hire two educators this month to teach the program in Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary, with the goal of reaching 2000 students between December and April. If this pilot project is successful, we'd like to expand it to Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Grande Prairie and perhaps Fort McMurray. And with pork as the focus, success is a given.

While it's fine to have events that target either adults or children, there's one that both can enjoy. Since the final day of this year's hugely popular Porkapalooza BBQ Festival, we've been working on the 2016 edition. In keeping with our goal of making it bigger and better all the time, there'll be an announcement in December regarding a new venue and a major addition to the festival.

So whether it's a classroom talk or a first class event, we've covered all the bases. If you don't get to one of them, it must mean you've cut all ties with other humans and are living in a cave. But that's a whole other issue. ■



Canadian Pork Market Review

A bi-weekly report of hog and pork industry market analysis, forecasts and issue assessment with a distinctly Canadian focus.

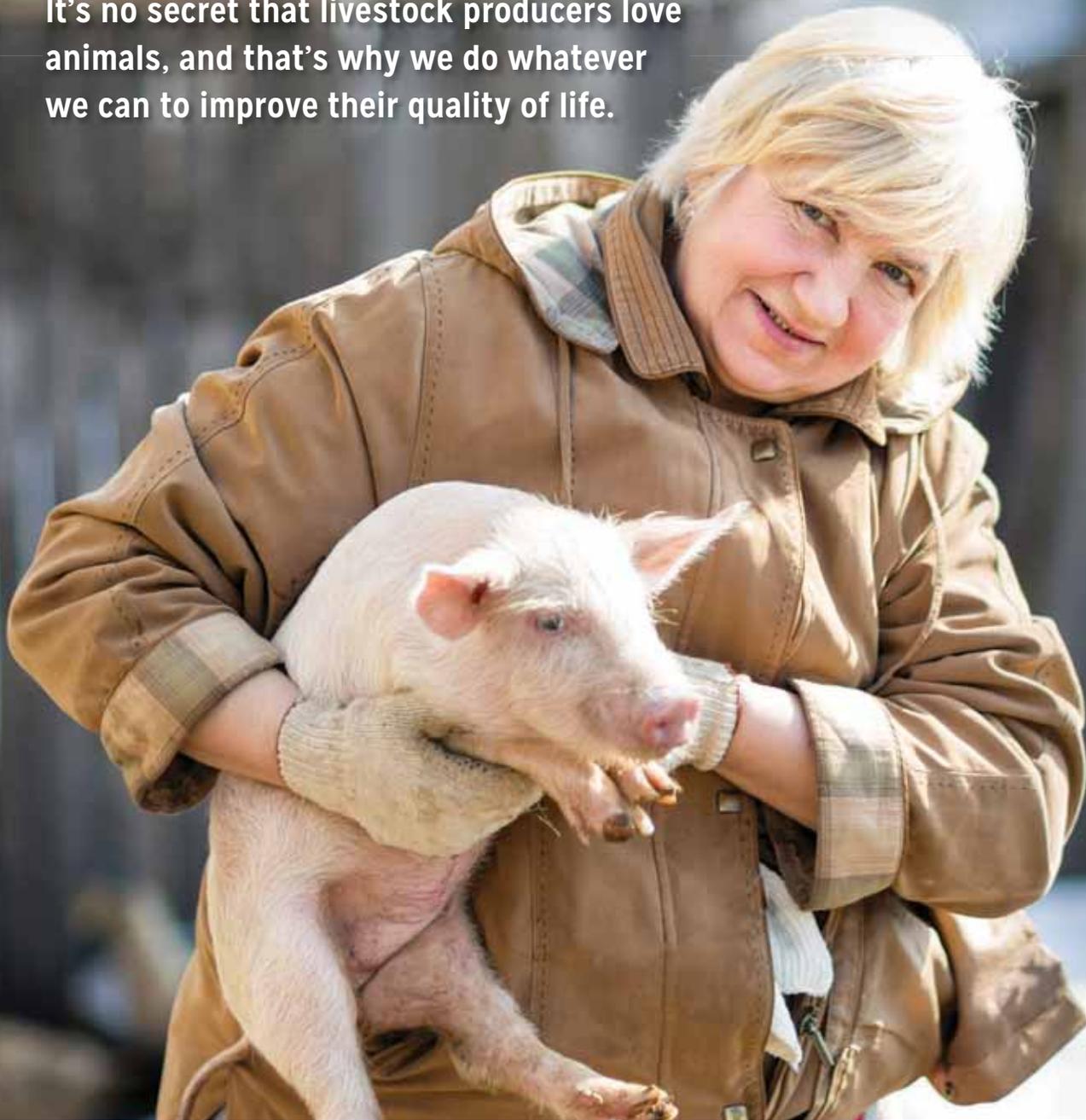
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