

Canadian Hog JOURNAL

Canada's national
hog magazine

A photograph of a pig farm aisle. A person in a dark jacket is walking a pig down a long, narrow aisle. The aisle is lined with metal railings and rows of red and white water dispensers hanging from the ceiling. The floor is concrete and the lighting is bright.

Also inside:

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bring relief**

African swine fever 101

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Congratulations to Terry Mandel from Haven Colony of Fox Valley, Saskatchewan, for his winning photo feature on our front page! Pictured is Terry's 10-year-old son, Jared working hard just like his daddy does. Terry and Jared help run the colony's 550-sow farrow-to-finish operation, and they just recently moved into their new loose sow housing barn. Very nice composition, Terry!

Front page photo contests are held every second issue, when our readers become our star photographers. Our next photo contest will be for our special Banff edition, so snap as many photos at the Banff Pork Seminar as you can and send them to sherimonk@gmail.com. Winners receive a plaque replica of the front page that features their work.

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Message from the editor

Welcome back! I hope everyone has had a summer filled with adventure and fun. Our fall issue is historically one of our most exciting as new products hit the market, research results pour in, and the wheels of news are turning again after everyone's well-deserved holidays.

By the time this reaches you, you should have had your fill of turkey (or ham) for Thanksgiving, the harvest should be mostly complete, and you should be thinking about some amazing industry events coming up – all of which you can learn about in this issue.

For many producers, times have been tough after a very brief reprieve. We are hearing that in the West, some producers have had to call it quits, and we all need to reflect on what that means for their families, their futures and for our industry. My heart goes out to them.

It wasn't that many years ago that I had to shut the doors on a newspaper I owned in southwest Saskatchewan. It was heartbreaking. That had been my dream, my goals and all my savings and assets rolled into one. It took a long time to recover – financially and emotionally. Although my loss may not compare to what it feels like to close the doors on a family farm with generations of history, I feel like I can relate enough to the pain to implore all of us to acknowledge the experiences of some of our fellow producers.

For them, for ourselves, and for our children, we must work harder than ever to work toward financial stability. It is easy to feel helpless when we are at the whim of unstable markets and even more unstable world leaders. And when it seems like the packers and retailers are always getting their cut while primary producers go hungry, the battle can feel all uphill.

I do believe that our producer groups across the country are working hard on the industry's behalf. Make sure you read our interview with Alberta Pork's Darcy Fitzgerald on how they are trying to engage the packers to work better together, for the strength of everyone. I believe strongly that programs like Canadian Pork Excellence are investments in our future. We produce a premium product, with superior standards and world class health and safety benchmarks. Programs like this aren't just part of our branding efforts, they are part of our identity and our commitment to sustainability in every realm.

I encourage you to become involved with your producer groups, with community events, and with public outreach. And not because it is your duty or another chore on the list to cross off, but because the experiences you share with others...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

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Mid-year inventory report shows no growth

Statistics Canada released its mid-year inventory report in August. The report showed that as of July 1, total sow numbers in Canada were virtually unchanged this year compared to last. Total sow numbers are at 1.25 million head, and only increased by less than 4,000 across the entire country.



By Kevin Grier

In Quebec and Ontario, the agency counted about 2,000 fewer hogs in total. There are about 630,000 sows in the two provinces so the decline is as much as a rounding error. Western sow inventories increased by one per cent or 6,600 head. The biggest western gain was nearly two per cent in Manitoba at an increase of 6,100 sows. Saskatchewan, surprisingly, saw sow numbers down one per cent, losing 1,100 while Alberta gained 1,500 or one per cent.

All in all, the picture for Canada shows an industry that is continuing to find its feet, at best. After four years of good to very good profits at the farm level and obvious capacity shortages on the prairies, the industry continues to show a lack of growth.

Part of the issue is the pending loose sow housing expenditures that many producers are facing. Depending on where producers are in their life and business, this is not an expenditure that many can justify. The myriad of other factors such as building costs, financing and environmental regulatory barriers are also obviously playing a role. Even little add-on costs and tasks like the Canadian Pork Excellence program are not helpful. It is added pressure on top of the loose housing expenditures. It adds cost without the producer returns.

Producers will also cite the fact that prices in Canada continue to bring back inadequate returns to generate a return on any potential expansion investment. Even two or three colonies on the prairies have recently decided to call it quits citing a lack of returns and opportunity costs. I use the word “even” because colonies are usually diverse enough to weather difficult times. In addition, hog barns have always been central to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Message from the editor CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

...can fortify your spirit and warm your heart. Knowing that you are a part of something bigger, that you are a valued member of a team... you can't put a price tag on that. Inspiration and optimism are nourishing in times of hardship.

If you're struggling with depression or anxiety, reach out. This is a tough, tough business to be in and it can feel like you have the weight of the world on your shoulders. It isn't weak to recognize that you need a little help to get through it all. There are resources and helplines available, and they vary by province. Ontario Pork and the Ontario Pork Industry Council have recently compiled a mental health resource guide that can be found on the Ontario Pork website. If you need help finding a resource in your province, contact your local producer group, or even shoot me an email and I will be happy to help confidentially.

You are not alone, and you have an army of people who deeply care about this industry behind you. ■

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Sheri Monk

Editor, business manager

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the revenue stream of a colony on the prairies. They will take a few months to wind down, but they are done in the business.

Surprising growth in Ontario

With that noted, however, there does appear to be notable expansion occurring in Ontario, even if it did not show up yet on the StatsCan radar. Younger producers with equity from the family farm or those that have been finishing or nursing are expanding back to sows. Based on discussions with a variety of industry suppliers there is likely about 8,000-10,000 new sows that have come on stream in the past half year or will be on stream in the next. There have been minimal numbers of sows lost over the past year in Ontario. In addition, there is significant construction work going into finishing barns. There is likely between 40,000-60,000 new finishing spaces either completed this year or soon to be.

WHE sharpens focus

The Western Hog Exchange is changing its focus. The Western Hog Exchange, WHE, based in Edmonton, has been marketing about 600,000 hogs per year from less than 100 producer members in recent years. All of the hogs sold by the WHE go to Olymel. The producer member hogs probably represent about a third of Olymel's slaughter.

Within that overall context, the WHE is going to be changing its marketing methods. In the past I saw its focus as getting the best price from Olymel. In the future, it is going to be targeting the best price from the market. In other words, I expect to see WHE offering member contracts or some form of offerings of hogs to all potential packer buyers. They have said they will ship hogs anywhere, any time. There is going to be more of a marketing focus as opposed to a procurement focus.

Part of the impetus for the change are the new market dynamics. The shortage of hogs versus capacity in the prairies in theory does provide hog marketers more leverage. Buyers

want hogs and do not want to lose the hogs they have. At the same time, as I have argued, bidding hogs away from a competitor has been a zero sum game. Hogs offered openly by a third party such as WHE however, are different. When the WHE offers hogs in the future, they are not going to be seen as Oly hogs, they are WHE hogs on behalf of producers. There is little downside risk to doing something different at WHE, given that its previous role was one of procurement. Producers are no longer wedded to the old arrangement.

In addition, there is more frustration than usual in Alberta given packer returns which have been excellent recently. Producers see packers in Canada able to benefit from U.S. trade friction and other opportunities, but the formulas stay largely unchanged. Oly has a new formula, but it nets only about \$2 extra.

As of now there has not been much of a change in activity. The WHE does not have hogs coming off contracts until the fall. Anything they are doing now is just test loads. They have done side-by-side comparisons with different packers. They have also sent test loads to the United States. The U.S. shipments have brought back surprisingly good results per hog versus prairie tests. In the fall there will however, be a block of hogs in the 1,000-2,000 head range. Those hogs are going to go to the packer that offers the best contract.

Weaner exports down

For the month of July exports of all hogs to the United States were down by three per cent compared to the same month last year. The StatsCan report breaks the numbers down by market hogs and the weaners and feeders less than 50 kilograms. There is no breakdown in the monthly report for culls. The market hog numbers, which include the culls, were up four per cent compared to last July while the weaner and feeder (w/f) shipments were down four per cent. On a year to date basis for the first seven months of the year, w/f shipments were down by six per cent versus 2017 while the market hog numbers were down nine per

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Fake news and NAFTA

By Sheri Monk

When the topic of politics comes up – and it always does – so many people exit the conversation by saying, “I hate all politicians – they’re all the same.” And I’ve always been perturbed by that response because it comes from a place of such unacknowledged privilege.

We live in one of the best countries in the world. We have universal healthcare and education. We have a low population density, large land mass and access to the fourth-largest source of fresh water on the planet. We have a justice system that although not perfect, allows most of us to feel safe. And we have a democracy that allows every adult to participate, to shape not just our country, but the world around us.

But those amazing privileges aren’t static. They aren’t enshrined or written in stone. Just like a barn or a truck, they require attention and maintenance to remain in working order. Women weren’t allowed to vote until 1918 – only 100 years ago. But it wasn’t until 1960 that Canada’s Indigenous people were given the right to vote. We like to think of Canada as a beacon of light in an unjust world and in many respects,

we have earned that reputation. But people – many of them oppressed minorities – have had to work hard to change attitudes, values and ultimately, our highest laws.

Part of upholding our freedoms is remembering history instead of romanticizing it. We excel at honouring the memory of the veterans who fought for our country, but we need to remember the sacrifices of so many Canadians who suffered and didn’t enjoy those freedoms because they were different. It is mind-blowing that thousands and thousands of Indigenous people fought in both World Wars for a country in which they weren’t even allowed to vote.

Immigration to Canada was perceived like Willy Wonka’s golden tickets, but the reality on the ground was often much different. Driven by a desire for a better life and opportunities for their children, immigrants came here with high hopes and often not much else. They frequently ended up working on farms for very little pay, and their children sometimes were kept out of school to help. One Dutch immigrant I spoke to recently said his family stayed in a one-room shack that passed for employee housing. The family spent three winters there before sending him off to work at another farm. All his wages were given back to his parents, and eventually, they were able to scrimp and save for a homestead of their own. He left Europe with a Grade 5 education, and that’s what he will die in Canada with.

As Canada dealt with the NAFTA negotiations, we saw the results of the “they’re all the same” and “lesser of two evils” mentality, and it is rightfully frightening. That attitude, in the past, has taken for granted that people will tell some white lies to achieve power, but that they will have the baseline credentials needed to lead. This is not the case in the United States currently, and we are paying the price. Despite lacking morals, values, skills, experience or the raw talent to lead a nation – much less one of the most powerful countries in the world – Trump was elected. He was elected by a lazy electorate that was attracted to platitudes instead of policy, and to conspiracy instead of reality.

Let me tell you about this “fake news” myth that Trump has created to cover up his own ineptitude. Journalists – real journalists that work for real news agencies – can’t fake news. Sure, they can make errors, but newspapers, television networks and other media gather and verify information. For example, when I write articles, I record every single interview, and I keep it – forever. We keep records of our information sources, and statistics come from reputable authorities.

What Trump has done is the equivalent of a kid coming home from school with a bad report card, claiming that the entire school is conspiring against him, and that he has completed his assignments and they are failing him anyway. Never mind that the teachers keep records, and have literal examples of

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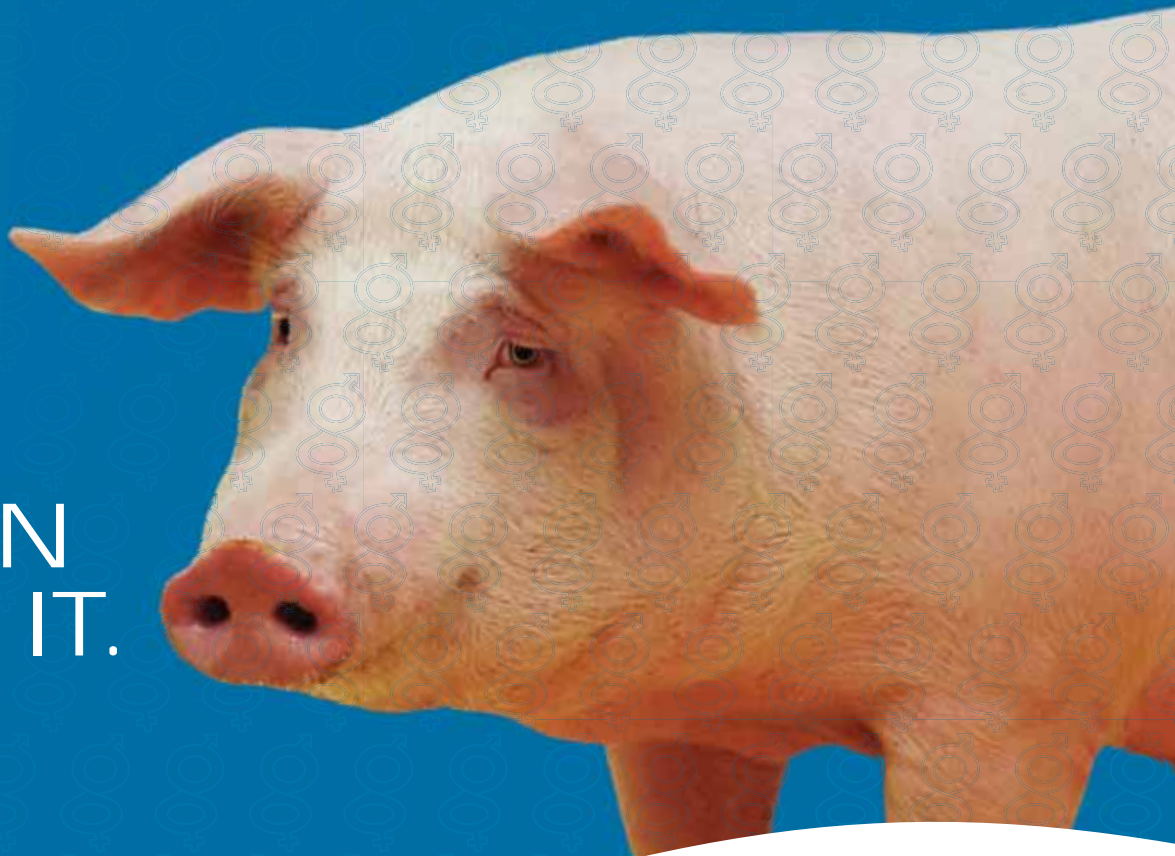
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his shoddy work and sketchy attendance record – but the kid throws a tantrum tells mom and dad that it’s simply not true. Fake news, he says, and is rewarded with Twinkies and soda for an afterschool snack.

This is what we are dealing with. This is the kind of person that we managed to negotiate a sophisticated trade agreement with. You can’t negotiate with a terrorist, and you certainly can’t deal in reality with someone that believes facts are created and destroyed by sheer will and imagination. At the end of August, a statement made off the record by Trump was leaked in which he said any deal with Canada would be, “totally on our terms” and that he had no intention to compromise. He also said that although Canada was working hard, all he had to do was threaten auto tariffs to get his way. We were dealing with a predator drunk on power, backed by voters that seems to idealize bullying while somehow still clinging to a persecution complex. It is like a graphic horror re-make of the children’s classic, *The Emperor’s new Clothes*.

In agriculture today, we speak often of sustainability, and we have learned that despite the vastness of this country, we must guard our resources carefully. We have even come to realize that everyone has an interest in how we use our land, whether it is deeded or not. This has made us better, and it is

making our industry better every day, too.

It is the same with democracy. It isn’t an infinite resource that will always take care of us whether we take care of it or not. We have a duty and a responsibility to nurture it. And when we subscribe to the notion that “every politician lies and is just the same” we sacrifice our own moral code for the ease of apathy. Every politician is not the same. If we truly believed that, we wouldn’t invest in a justice or penal system because “everybody steals and commits crimes”.

The ugliness and divisiveness of the American political system, and indeed, of suburban America has come to light since November 2016, and it isn’t flattering. In rural Alberta, since Trump’s election, I have started to see confederate flags hanging from rear truck windows. I see Canadians wearing “Make America Great Again” ball caps, and then I know they too are drowning in the fake news Kool-Aid. And that’s scary, because the only way we can turn this ship around is with facts, reality and evidence. But when half the populace is already inoculated against the cure, how do you fight back?

I’m not sure you can. I think you hang on, hope for the best, and pray you don’t choke on a bully’s Twinkie. ■

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Canadian Hog JOURNAL

HOT ISSUES

Pork industry sweating over African swine fever

Though the spread of the virus in China is making big international news, it is also in Eastern and now Western Europe too.

By Sheri Monk

African swine fever is a highly contagious hemorrhagic viral disease of pigs. It is endemic to Africa, and in African wild pigs, but they aren't harmed by it. Domestic pigs, however, are another story.

"Our best tool today and probably for the foreseeable future is to keep it out," says Dr. Egan Brockhoff, managing partner at Prairie Swine Health Services in Alberta, and the veterinary counselor for Canadian Pork Council.

On August 3, China reported its first incidence ever known of the virus and by September 18, there were 21 confirmed cases across seven Chinese provinces.

Our best tool today and probably for the foreseeable future is to keep it out.

~ Dr. Egan Brockhoff

"It is certainly a concern that it is moving across the most hog dense country in the world and it certainly puts the Chinese pork sector at high risk, and puts all of southeast Asia at high risk.

This is a disease that has no vaccines," Brockhoff said.

African swine fever is an interesting, byzantine virus with relatively little known about it in comparison to diseases most producers will be more familiar with.

"Biosecurity is the only control measure for this disease. It's quite different than PED or the PRRS virus where you can create immunity just from natural exposure. We don't get the same luxury with African swine fever. It appears that pigs don't develop sufficient immunity, but why that is, nobody knows," said Brockhoff.

The mortality rate fluctuates, depending on the virulence of the strain in question.

"Many pigs do survive an infection and that depends on the strain of African swine fever they get. There are some very dangerous pathogenic strains and there are more mild strains

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The red ears you see are common signs of classical swine fever and African swine fever. Photo courtesy of Dr. Egan Brockhoff.

and there's everything in between," he said. "Many pigs may survive the exposure and some of those pigs go on to become chronic shedders of the disease. You usually end up culling the entire population whether they die or they don't die."

Though the press has been covering the outbreak in China closely, African swine fever is also in Russia and has moved

quickly through Europe since 2017 – 744 cases were reported in Europe in just July and August.

"If we look at what has happened in Eastern Europe, those strains look at least moderately aggressive and so there's no reason to expect that this will be any different. This does not look like a mild strain from what we have seen so far."

This isn't the first time the virus has swept through large land masses, leaving a swath of destruction behind it.

"It wasn't until the world introduced European domestic pigs to Africa that the disease was identified and then through bad biosecurity mankind has moved the virus all over Europe and over," said Brockhoff. "This virus has circulated through the world before and it has been stopped before. This virus was in Cuba, and Central and South America. Europe eventually got the virus under control and eradicated, everywhere in the Americas did as well, and Asia didn't have the virus at all. It was then just isolated again to Africa, but in 2007, man moved the virus up to Georgia (Europe) from shipping waste, and from Georgia into Eastern Europe and up to Russia. Once it got there, there was a big bang and it really got moving."

By 2012, it was in several Eastern European countries, and by 2014 it was in Poland, an EU member state. Compounding the problem, the virus is now well-established in the wild boar populations of Eastern Europe.

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“And that’s just a great way to keep that active reservoir to keep the virus in a country. For farms in Eastern Europe that had outdoor pigs, the risks just went through the roof. And Canada has a huge wild pig population. There’s a very large wild pig population in the United States, so we definitely want to keep the virus out of that reservoir,” he said.

Belgium is the first Western European country to have an outbreak, and Brockhoff says that news rocked the industry.

“Belgium is a game changer. They are a Western European country and a major pork player in the world. They have found the virus in European wild boar populations in Belgium, so this is significantly concerning.”

Brockhoff travels to China to perform consulting and veterinary training work where he frequently encounters classical swine fever – and the signs and symptoms are identical.

“The pigs always start with high fever, you may or may not get hemorrhage out of the nose or the rectum, and when the pig dies you are going to find redness all over the body to various degrees. Sometimes I find all the internal surfaces of the pig are bleeding and sometimes you do a complete post-mortem and you only find one organ with just a subtle amount of hemorrhage,” he explained.

Clinical signs include:

- Redness of skin, ears, belly, legs
- Respiratory distress
- Vomiting
- Spontaneous abortion
- Bleeding

“Typically you will see death within a week, and it has a long incubation – anywhere from five days until two weeks,” he said.

That means the window of spread is huge, and the time to contain it is thus very narrow. By the time a producer notices something is wrong, it can have spread near and far.

“With PED, the incubation is short. You can have an incubation of one day, or even less than a day and that gives you time to quarantine and shut the farm down.”

Shorter incubations also make disease trace-backs easier because of the lack of time that has elapsed, thus limiting contact and transmission points such as marketings, traffic, transportation and visitors.

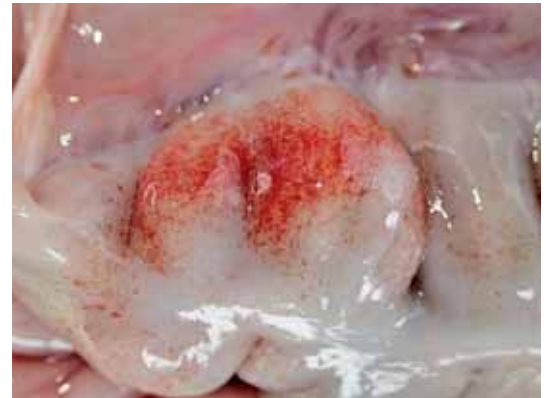
Brockhoff says in places that regularly experience classical swine fever – for which there is a vaccine – African swine fever could easily be dismissed as the classical variety.

“You could go for awhile thinking you are dealing with a classical swine fever outbreak, or you might wonder if your guys forgot to vaccinate a batch,” Brockhoff said.

It’s a tough virus, and one that can tolerate a wide range of conditions. It can survive being frozen, cured, air-dried and salted. Cooking, however, does kill it.

In Africa, where the virus originates, some species of soft ticks serve as intermediate vectors of the disease. But since it can be spread through direct and indirect contact between pigs, ticks aren’t a mandatory link in the chain.

“I don’t think anybody knows specifically yet if our tick populations are



These show the hemorrhaging that is very common with both classical and African swine viruses. Photos courtesy of Dr. Egan Brockhoff.

capable of hosting the virus or if any ticks are capable of hosting the virus in North America. China has more than 100 known species of ticks in that country alone,” said Brockhoff.

But it’s not ticks the Canadian industry needs to fear – we need to fear ourselves and others.

“For us, African swine Fever is a human driven disease. A human will have to bring an infected meat product or a human will have to be exposed and not decontaminate themselves before they expose themselves to a Canadian domestic pig. Human-driven biosecurity breaches are our number one risk,” Brockhoff said.

He also says feed is a potential risk, and advises producers to only buy from reputable, commercial feed mills.

“If you’re buying your feed ingredients from a commercial feed mill and all your ingredients have been sourced from a large multi-national that has operations in China, you’re probably quite safe. If

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you're buying your feed ingredients from some guy that's just selling it off the back of their truck and they're just pulling it in as a bulk product in China, and it's not going through any of these high-quality assurance locations then that's a risk."

If you're buying your feed ingredients from a commercial feed mill and all your ingredients have been sourced from a large multi-national that has operations in China, you're probably quite safe. If you're buying your feed ingredients from some guy that's just selling it off the back of their truck and they're just pulling it in as a bulk product in China, and it's not going through any of these high-quality assurance locations then that's a risk. ~ Dr. Egan Brockhoff

The bottom line is that producers must be hyper-vigilant when it comes to the biosecurity of their farms.

"We have Eastern Europeans working on our pig farms in Canada. And now it has spread significantly in Europe. One traveller

from an affected area with affected pork and maybe they have a little backyard flock and they throw some of that food waste that came from an affected zone into that backyard flock and there you go," Brockhoff said, adding that there are discussions with the government with how to educate Canadians and visitors entering the country about the extreme risk of bringing back meat products. "One little mistake can become a huge issue. It would only take one. One little mistake." ■



Dr. Egan Brockhoff works with Chinese veterinarians in biosecurity training during a recent trip to China. Photo courtesy of Dr. Egan Brockhoff.

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New trade deal may bring relief for producers hit by low prices

Producers can thank Trump for the summer slump, but the worst may be over thanks to the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement

By Sheri Monk

On September 30, just before the midnight deadline, Canada came into an agreement with the United States and Mexico to sign a new North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) – although the new agreement will also have a new name – the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

At press time, on October 1, most of the country was waiting for the details of the agreement – and hoping they’d be more palatable than its new name. However, what was immediately clear is that Canada’s dairy farmers weren’t happy with what was known.

American farmers will reportedly re-

ceive increased access to Canada’s dairy industry, valued as being worth approximately 3.6 per cent of the current dairy market. But all supply managed commodities may lose some market share as the U.S. is given greater access. Some analysts feel losing the “Class 7” dairy ingredient pricing strategy, which helps mitigate the effects of skim milk surpluses, may result in even greater losses for Canada’s dairy industry than the increased access in the deal.

Although much of Canada is breathing a sigh of relief that Canada wasn’t left out of the agreement – Mexico and the U.S. resolved their outstanding differences back in August – it’s hard to find anyone that feels good about the negotiation process this time around.

“One of the challenges I have had, and I think others have, is just trying to sort out what’s just ongoing rhetoric and what is actually something that he’s hard and firm on. He says it today, but stay tuned for tomorrow,” said John Ross, executive director, Canadian Pork Council, on President Trump’s modus operadi. “The negotiations this time have been extraordinarily difficult given the almost randomness of the U.S. position, the insistence on very, very large asks, and not really a great deal of willingness to sit down and negotiate in the traditional sense.”

While trade talks are typically tumultuous, under Trump they were especially turbulent, and loaded with threats and insults. The uncertainty and tension created by this tough talk helped added fuel to an already volatile market fire – and producers paid the price.

“We have had the underlying tariff uncertainty, the question around NAFTA and how it will be resolved, so another level of uncertainty on the internation-

al trade side. And last but not least, we have African Swine Fever working its way through Europe and China. There’s lots going on in the market that we don’t have a good handle on,” Ross explained. “It’s been quite a challenge.”

And when it rains, it pours. On top of the intangible market factors, the U.S. was recently dealing with a supply glut.

The negotiations this time have been extraordinarily difficult given the almost randomness of the U.S. position, the insistence on very, very large asks, and not really a great deal of willingness to sit down and negotiate in the traditional sense.
 ~ John Ross, Canadian Pork Council

“Notwithstanding all that trade uncertainty, the United States also has an awful lot of pigs coming at it right now. U.S. packers have a lot of choice that they can select from and I think that’s probably reflected in the price as well. Some of those plants in the U.S. maybe didn’t come into their second shifts or ramp up quite as quick as folks thought, and now we have a pile of pigs looking for a home,” Ross said.

Of course, when it doesn’t rain – and it doesn’t rain for a long, long time, there’s a drought. And Darcy Fitzgerald, executive director of Alberta Pork, says the current pricing crisis is akin to a drought.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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1. Goodreads: Temple Grandin Quotes. <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/422878-we-raise-them-for-us-that-means-we-owe-them>. Accessed August 8, 2017.
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Alberta Pork's Darcy Fitzgerald wants producers to receive fair prices – especially when packers and retailers are making money.

“During a drought, there’s absolutely nothing you can do about it in the moment when you have no water, so the only thing you can be prepared for the next time is to start doing all the work you should have done before – and that’s where we are when it comes to pricing.”

In other words, the summer’s crash was an acute symptom of a chronic disease.

Fitzgerald is frustrated by the lack of trickle in a pricing scheme built on the backs of producers.

“We have a system that really doesn’t work very well. We are seeing very low prices for producers, yet the packer makes money and at the retail level, I haven’t seen a change in price. We are told that there’s a high demand for Canadian pork. We are seeing a shortage of supply in Canada and we just don’t see what translated into the old economics 101 – supply and demand,” said Fitzgerald.

Summer should be the time of year when producers can make a little extra cash to help get them through the rest of the year, but Fitzgerald says that just didn’t happen.

“We were seeing losses of \$10,000 or \$11,000 per load of pigs every week going into the market at a time when they should have been making money,” he said. “There obviously must be a problem. I mean it’s a highly sought-after pork product that starts off with a pig that has great genetics, is raised with a whole bunch of standards and rules, and yet it just doesn’t fetch a price that would reflect what’s going on in the marketplace.”

Fitzgerald says some producers were forced out of the business over summer, and those kinds of human losses are difficult to reckon with.

“We start to see producers get out because they can’t afford to go in the hole and work their way out and explain to their banker that they’re going to lose a couple hundred thousand dollars. Or they keep eating into their savings until they can’t anymore and then what?”

In order to deal with the next acute pricing crisis, Fitzgerald says Alberta Pork and producers are initiating conversations with packers.

“It comes down to a relationship with the packer, and our producers want a healthier

relationship and a healthier economic future. I do believe that some packers will begin to address the issue with producers, and there is no better time than now to have that conversation.”

While some packer strategies may include building captive supply, others would prefer to source from producers.

“There are packers who want to work with producers that don’t want to own pigs. And we want to work with the packers to grow them the kind of pig that’s going to help their business,” Fitzgerald said.

We were seeing losses of \$10,000 or \$11,000 per load of pigs every week going into the market at a time when they should have been making money.
~ Darcy Fitzgerald, Alberta Pork.

So far, Alberta Pork, along Saskatchewan Pork and Manitoba Pork, have had discussions with Donald’s Fine Foods and Maple Leaf Foods – two of the four federal packers Alberta producers work with.

“We have spoken to a couple of the packers, and I think they understand that there is a fundamental problem. They have had some dialogue with producers about how they can get

through this tough time and hopeful together they will look at ways they might change business in the future,” Fitzgerald said, adding they, like other provincial producer groups, have also spoken to their provincial agriculture minister about the current U.S. tariff issues impacting Canadian hog pricing and compounding the pricing problem.

Alberta Pork has also started publishing average prices, comparing eastern to western Canada, as well as the United States. “If we looked at the Alberta price for hogs, we are probably receiving, on a three-year average, between \$8 and \$10 less than what producers in eastern Canada are paid. And so, that’s a starting point for our discussions with packers. Why would producers in eastern Canada get significantly more money than producers in Alberta?” he asks.

Fitzgerald says it simply doesn’t add up. Alberta grain feeds its pigs, resulting in a high-quality pork that is desired in the marketplace, and Alberta is located close to seaport access with the fastest routes to Asia. “We are geared for the Asian marketplace so why would we get paid less?” Fitzgerald asked. “We are seeing consistently – and in Alberta especially – that we are getting a really low return and it just doesn’t make sense. If producers and packers can work together on the pricing issue there will certainly be positive opportunities for both in the future... but if they can’t work this out both parties will be at risk.” ■



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Trade trip to Japan yields promise and pride

By Sheri Monk

In early March, the very week the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership was signed, a trade delegation of pork producers visited Japan. Scott Peters, executive member with Manitoba Pork, said the experience was amazing.

“There were representatives from every province. We all got along really well, which was excellent,” he said.

The overwhelming feeling of the journey was celebratory and optimistic – and for good reason.

“There is a lot of untapped potential. There is still a tremendous amount of opportunity that’s left out there,” said Peters.

Canada’s beef and pork sectors have invested in branding that doesn’t supersede individual corporate branding, but instead constructed a national foundation for all brands to build from.

It gave us such a sense of pride, and we were proud and pumping our chests a little bit. ~ Scott Peters, Manitoba Pork

“The Canadian meat quality is what they are after. The marbling and the texture and the fact that there’s no odour in the meat is huge for them, and that goes right down to how they prepare the meat,” Peters explained, adding that there is a dish called shabu-shabu that is extremely popular at lunch, and often for supper as well.

“It is extremely thinly-sliced meat, even thinner than the bacon we would eat here and the reason why they like that is they just throw it into boiling water for seriously, just 10 seconds, pull it out and eat it. It’s unbelievable – it’s just delicious,” he said. “The reason they can do that with Canadian meat specifically is because the marbling creates just the right texture of meat and they can slice it very thinly. I don’t want to slam our American friends, but their meat is softer, just due to genetics and feed, so it doesn’t slice as well.”



Chilled, packaged pork like this is becoming more and more popular – and consumers want Verified Canadian Pork. Photo courtesy of Scott Peters.

Though Japan already has a very developed economy, increasing middleclass affluence is driving chilled meat sales at grocery stores, pulling consumers from the traditional open-air markets that are more familiar.

“The chilled meat sector is growing there exponentially and away from the open-air markets – it’s just evolving into something that is more like what we would take for granted in the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

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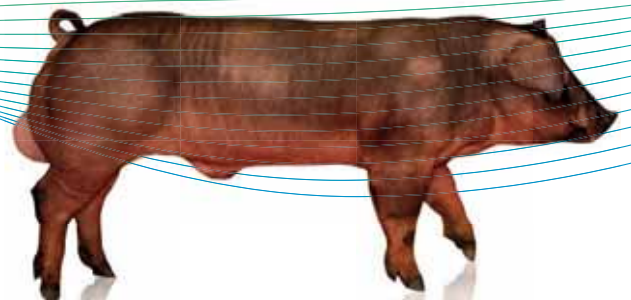


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Trade and Commerce



HyLife has opened a small restaurant in Japan for the business crowd, and it has reportedly built up quite a following. Photo courtesy of Scott Peters.

North American market,” Peters said. The way they sell meat in Japan is interesting because they’ll have little televisions, right at the meat counter, and there will be a 30-second blurb on how to prepare the meat.”

Of course, the Canadian product displays its Verified Canadian Pork (VCB) sticker so shoppers can easily find the high-quality product they’re looking for. While in Japan, Peters



Sometimes called “wet” markets, open markets like this are still common. However, chilled pork at grocery stores is becoming more widely available as consumer wealth goes up. Photo courtesy of Scott Peters.

and the rest of the delegation had opportunities to talk shop with Japanese meat buyers, and he says it was eye-opening for him to learn what a game-changer the VCB program was for the industry. Verified Canadian Pork was launched while the trade deal was still being negotiated.

“It brought the conversation to a whole new level and they said, ‘Yeah, we’ll take it and we will take more of it because it’s specific to Canadian pork, and this is exactly what we want on our shelves.’ This is what they want to eat, this is what they are eating in the restaurants, this is what they are eating at home, and so it changes the conversation completely and it bumped up our sales,” said Peters.

With more than 70 per cent of Canada’s pork being exported to more than 100 countries, foreign trade is of critical importance, and with Japan being the second-largest export market for pork products, it’s difficult to overstate the magnitude that its market represents.

One of the highlights of the trip for Peters was touring a packing pack, which included a frigid, 20°C stop in the freezers.

“We searched all the boxes from Canada and there was a stack of Olymel boxes, a couple of HyLife boxes and Maple Leaf boxes. All these producers were looking for their boxes, of where they sold to. It gave us such a sense of pride, and we were proud and pumping our chests a little bit,” he laughed. ■

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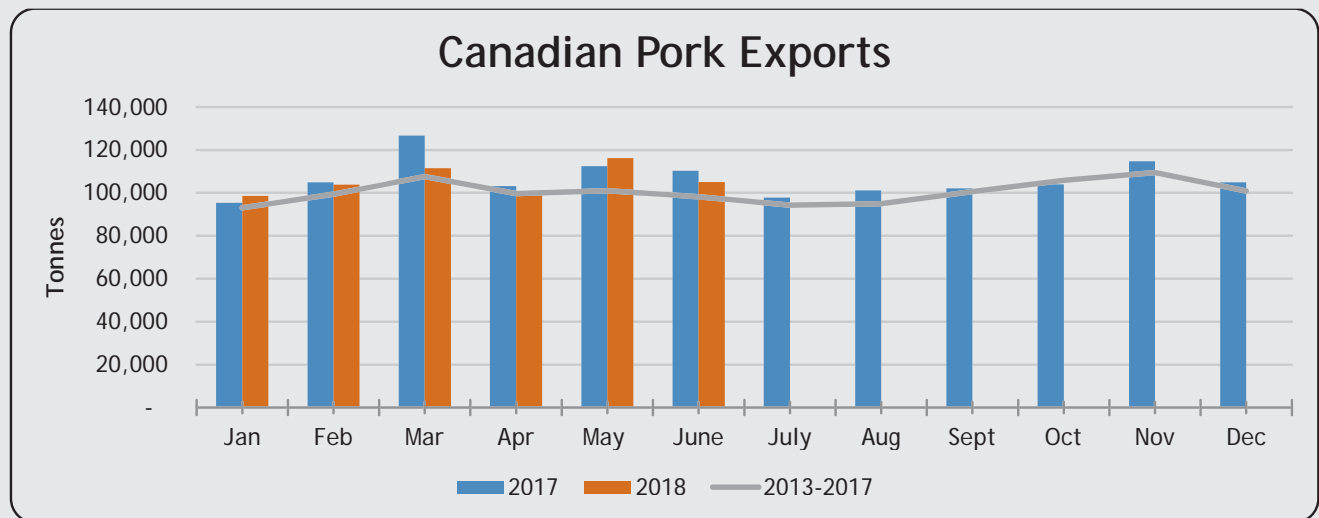
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CANADIAN PORK EXPORTS



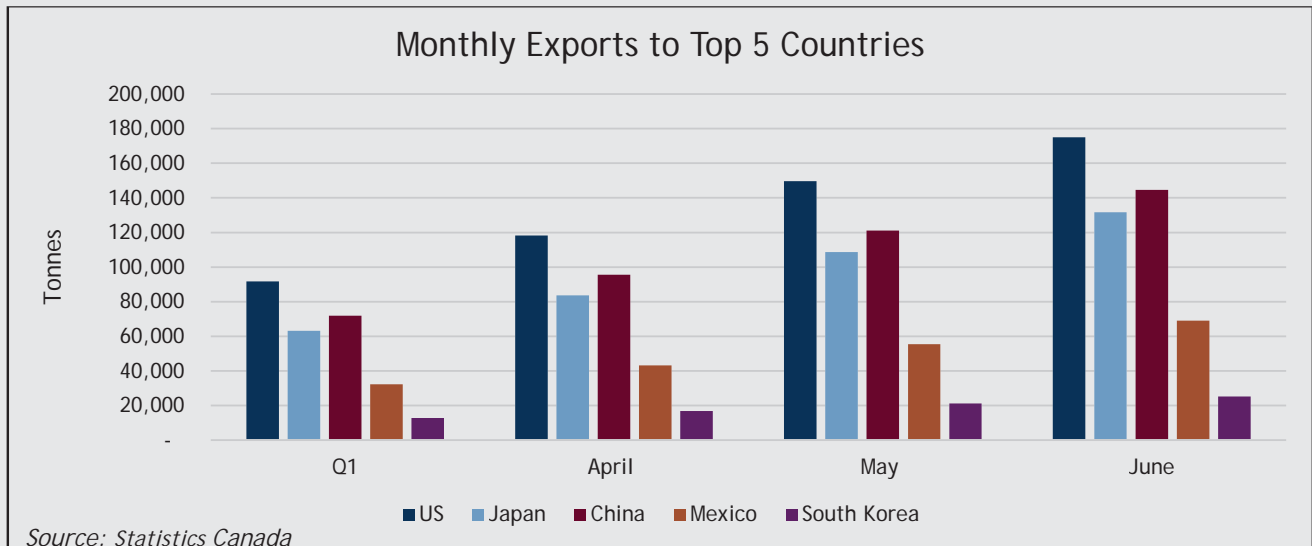
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	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average
Jan	295,457	295,943	0.16	274,038	95,306	98,605	3.46	93,044
Feb	323,474	310,037	-4.15	286,549	104,933	103,880	-1.00	99,373
Mar	378,985	344,513	-9.10	319,565	126,627	111,469	-11.97	107,633
Apr	318,440	296,091	-7.02	290,157	103,160	100,441	-2.64	99,618
May	351,859	339,255	-3.58	299,001	112,379	116,132	3.34	100,991
June	353,057	323,687	-8.32	302,898	110,220	104,989	-4.75	98,159
July	326,472			299,850	97,746			94,343
Aug	326,524			293,243	101,149			94,987
Sept	308,986			309,095	102,057			100,593
Oct	314,139			322,661	103,942			105,842
Nov	355,102			325,523	114,765			109,472
Dec	328,593			308,209	104,960			100,900
Total	3,981,088	1,909,526		3,630,791	1,277,244	635,516		1,204,955



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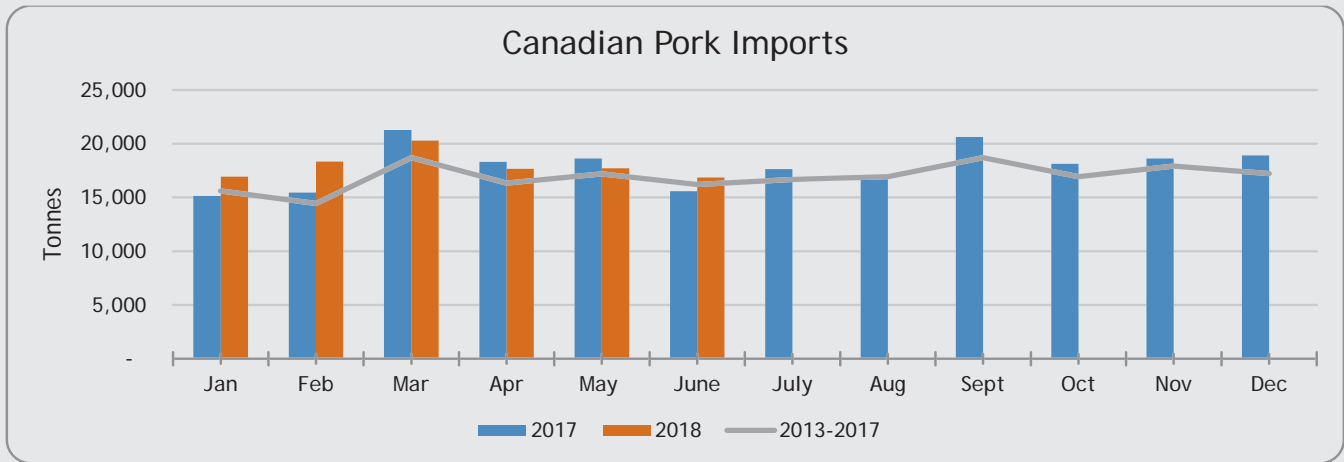
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2018 Top 10 Pork Markets - June								
	Tonnes				'000 CDN \$			
	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total	Fresh	Frozen	Offal*	Total
US	107,658 -14%	24,406 17%	28,166 3%	160,230 -7%	407,625 -23%	72,396 5%	41,146 10%	521,167 -18%
Japan	84,066 -79%	22,248 -81%	16,834 -52%	123,148 -78%	465,553 14%	95,367 -19%	37,312 6%	598,232 7%
China	25 0%	111,058 -5%	32,032 -72%	143,115 -19%	81 62%	193,900 -12%	62,827 -44%	256,808 -23%
H. Kong	256 -24%	1,872 108%	1,118 -35%	3,246 10%	1,427 -17%	4,093 94%	1,869 -32%	7,389 12%
China / H. Kong	281 -22%	112,930 -4%	33,150 -46%	146,361 -19%	1,508 -15%	197,993 -11%	64,696 -44%	264,197 -22%
Mexico	37,130 14%	4,721 0%	23,802 28%	65,653 17%	60,144 9%	10,251 16%	26,258 22%	96,653 13%
South Korea	5,316 61%	14,846 36%	5,020 -3%	25,182 30%	30,391 29%	46,682 52%	9,753 6%	86,826 37%
Australia		5,969 -38%	775 3%	6,744 -35%		20,134 -43%	1,336 26%	21,470 -41%
Philippines	520 0%	22,262 38%	3,991 -17%	26,773 27%	1,332 0%	51,162 36%	5,189 -14%	57,683 31%
Taiwan	767 0%	18,254 20%	2,285 -29%	21,306 14%	1,804 0%	41,857 9%	4,271 -22%	47,932 7%
Chile	218 0%	3,166 -53%	326 -70%	3,710 -53%	516 0%	7,953 -58%	498 -76%	8,967 -58%
Cuba	588 519%	1,126 20%	96 -67%	1,810 37%	1,819 534%	3,502 16%	175 -58%	5,496 48%
Total Top 10	236,544 1%	229,928 0%	114,445 -18%	580,917 -45%	970,692 -4%	547,297 -6%	190,634 -18%	1,708,623 -7%
All Countries	200,174 4%	201,939 -3%	103,216 -13%	520,252 0%	811,560 -2%	482,246 -9%	171,969 -14%	1,465,775 -6%

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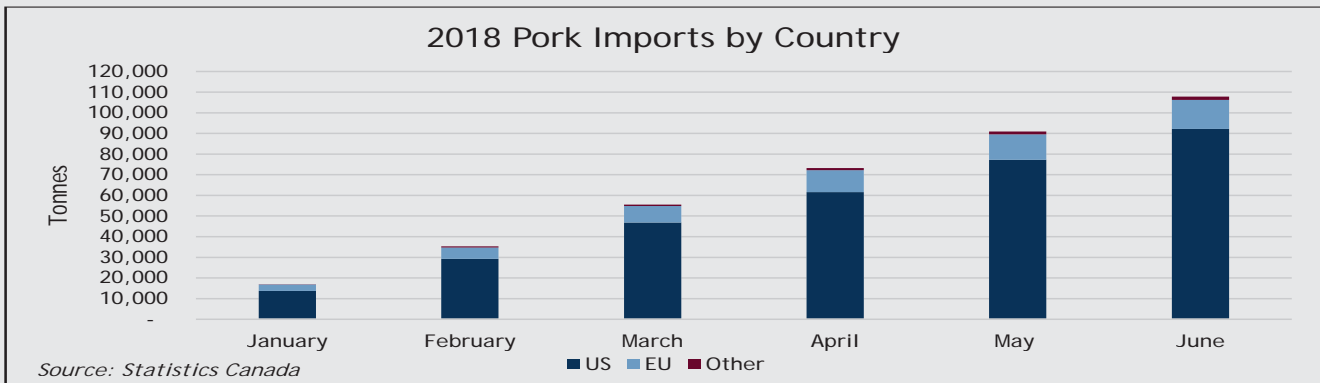
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	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average	2017	2018	% change	2013-2017 Average
Jan	94,798	96,803	2.12	86,753	15,146	16,942	11.86	15,620
Feb	82,594	96,403	16.72	78,312	15,457	18,349	18.71	14,442
Mar	124,412	115,555	-7.12	104,292	21,292	20,286	-4.72	18,708
Apr	107,855	98,283	-8.87	94,391	18,316	17,654	-3.61	16,346
May	119,878	100,669	-16.02	104,182	18,638	17,730	-4.87	17,195
June	102,722	103,122	0.39	98,281	15,575	16,867	8.30	16,214
July	116,827			105,425	17,638			16,687
Aug	105,456			104,122	16,963			16,942
Sept	117,080			108,335	20,633			18,704
Oct	104,444			99,607	18,138			16,936
Nov	105,679			102,598	18,623			17,924
Dec	109,999			101,734	18,901			17,224
Total	1,291,744	610,835		1,188,033	215,320	107,828		202,942



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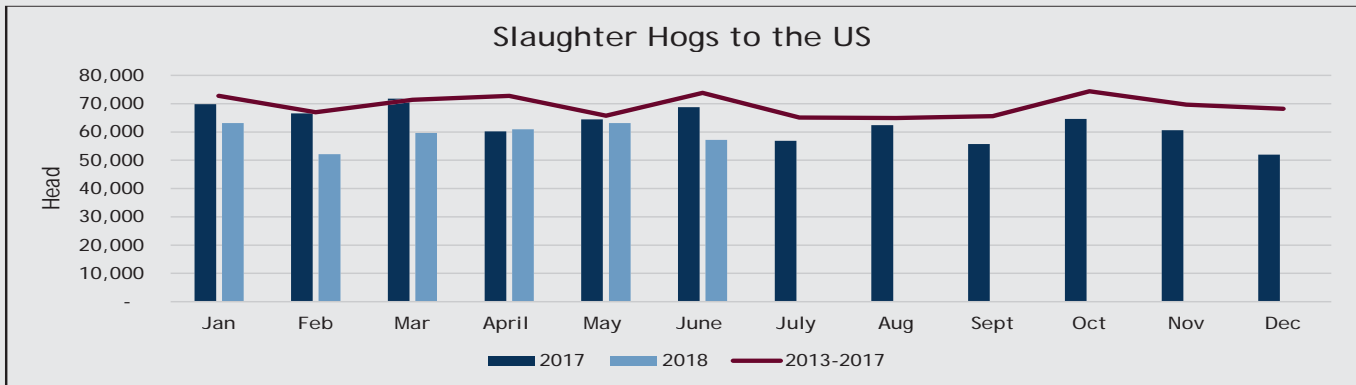
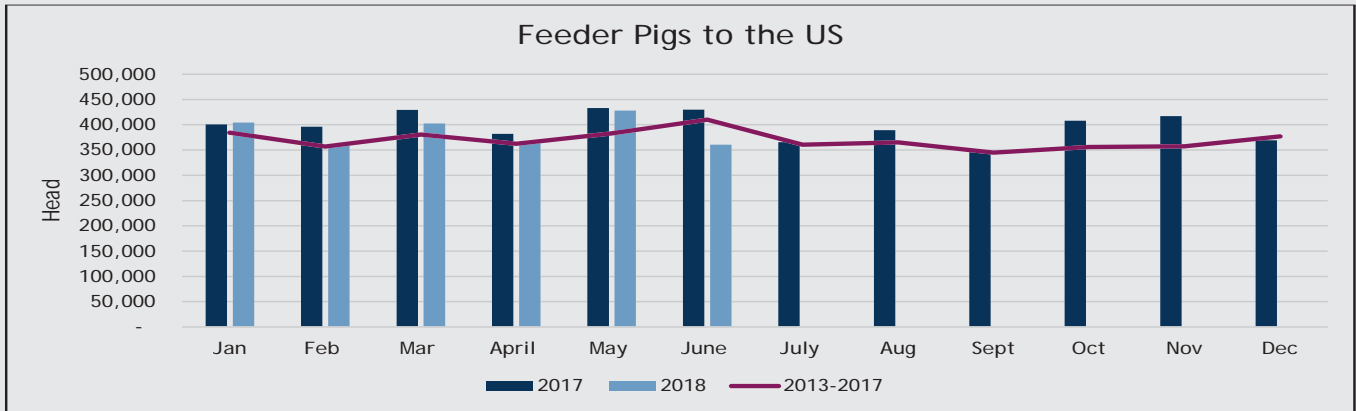


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Jan	400,831	404,171	0.83	384,419	69,784	63,129	-9.54	72,713
Feb	396,056	360,742	-8.92	356,960	66,573	52,139	-21.68	66,941
Mar	429,495	402,611	-6.26	380,587	71,808	59,678	-16.89	71,343
Apr	381,717	367,194	-3.80	362,433	60,197	60,932	1.22	72,713
May	432,864	428,152	-1.09	382,706	64,468	63,119	-2.09	65,727
June	429,977	360,512	-16.16	410,040	68,752	57,201	-16.80	73,792
July	365,609			360,462	56,894			65,114
Aug	389,118			364,973	62,373			64,925
Sept	347,444			344,848	55,744			65,549
Oct	408,020			356,012	64,625			74,378
Nov	417,180			357,278	60,613			69,685
Dec	369,407			376,839	51,942			68,221
Total	4,767,718	2,323,382		4,437,557	753,773	356,198		831,103

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Industry News

Join the party in Quebec at Le Porc Show

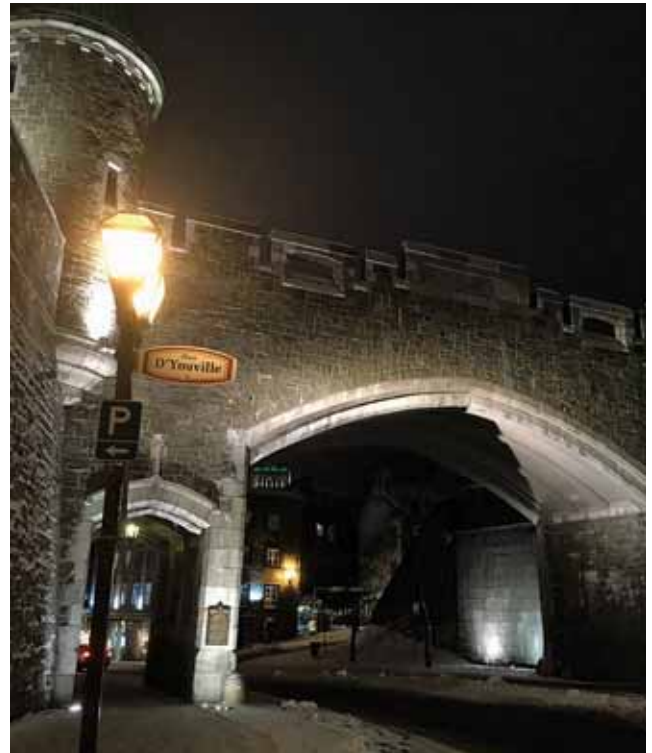
By Sheri Monk

Although it is considered tradition to give silverware as a gift for a five-year anniversary, don't worry about bringing any cutlery to Le Porc Show this year. The fifth rendition of the two-day event will take place December 11 and 12 in beautiful downtown Quebec City.

"Already it is the fifth year, and we think we have a good program," said Sébastien Lacroix, a member of Le Porc Show's steering committee.

Year after year, the show continues to draw impressive – and increasingly diverse – attendance.

"Last year we were 1,100 people. We started at 900 and now we are at 1,100. The hog price is always a challenge, but we think the people still see the value in the show," said Lacroix, adding that 25 per cent of the province's pork producers at-



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tended last year, and 12 per cent of attendees were from out of the province.

“We think that’s a really good thing for Le Porc Show. We put a lot of energy into being bilingual,” he said.

This year, the president’s address will be translated, as will the lunch-hour speakers.

“Maybe we can say we will be 100 per cent bilingual now. It is produced by Francophones, but we will do our best,” he laughed.

As usual, the show will begin with an opportunity to mingle, visit the 70 trade show booths and enjoy food and drink, but this year it will begin at 3 p.m.

“The first day we will try to taste different parts of the pig so we will start with the head and different bites from the nose, the tongue, and the ears,” said Lacroix.

At 4 p.m., a three-member panel representing the production of more than 10 million pigs from across North America will weigh in on the realities, challenges and issues facing the industry today. Featured are Claude Vielfaure of HyLife Ltd., Dr. Luc Dufresne of Seaboard Foods, and Luc Ménard of F. Ménard Inc.

“After that, people will be invited to go to the booth area for networking. And we still have restaurant partners in the area so people will be invited to go to the restaurants,” Lacroix explained.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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Following the opening, many of the speakers, exhibitors and attendees travel the short distance to old Quebec City, making their way to world-famous restaurants featuring authentic Québécois dishes.

The next morning is packed full of speakers, including Brett Stuart of Global AgriTrends.

“Brent has a good flow as a speaker and for an economist it is always good to have someone that will keep the interest of the crowd. It will be very interesting with the politics and trade in the U.S. right now. What is funny about Brent is that his wife is Canadian and he is American,” he said.

Le Porc Show continues to support

La Tablée des Chefs, an organization that helps feed undernourished families, and educates youth about nutrition and food preparation. The worthy cause will receive \$5,000 generated from the lunch during the event.

In the afternoon, there are three workshops for participants to choose from on the topics of business management, health and livestock management and marketing.

The afternoon concludes on an uplifting note with industry awards and an inspirational speaker.

Le Porc Show is well-known for its flair at the closing evening celebrations. This year they begin at 5 p.m. with cocktails. The party begins in earnest at six, and again this year, nightclub-esque lights, a dance floor, and live entertainment

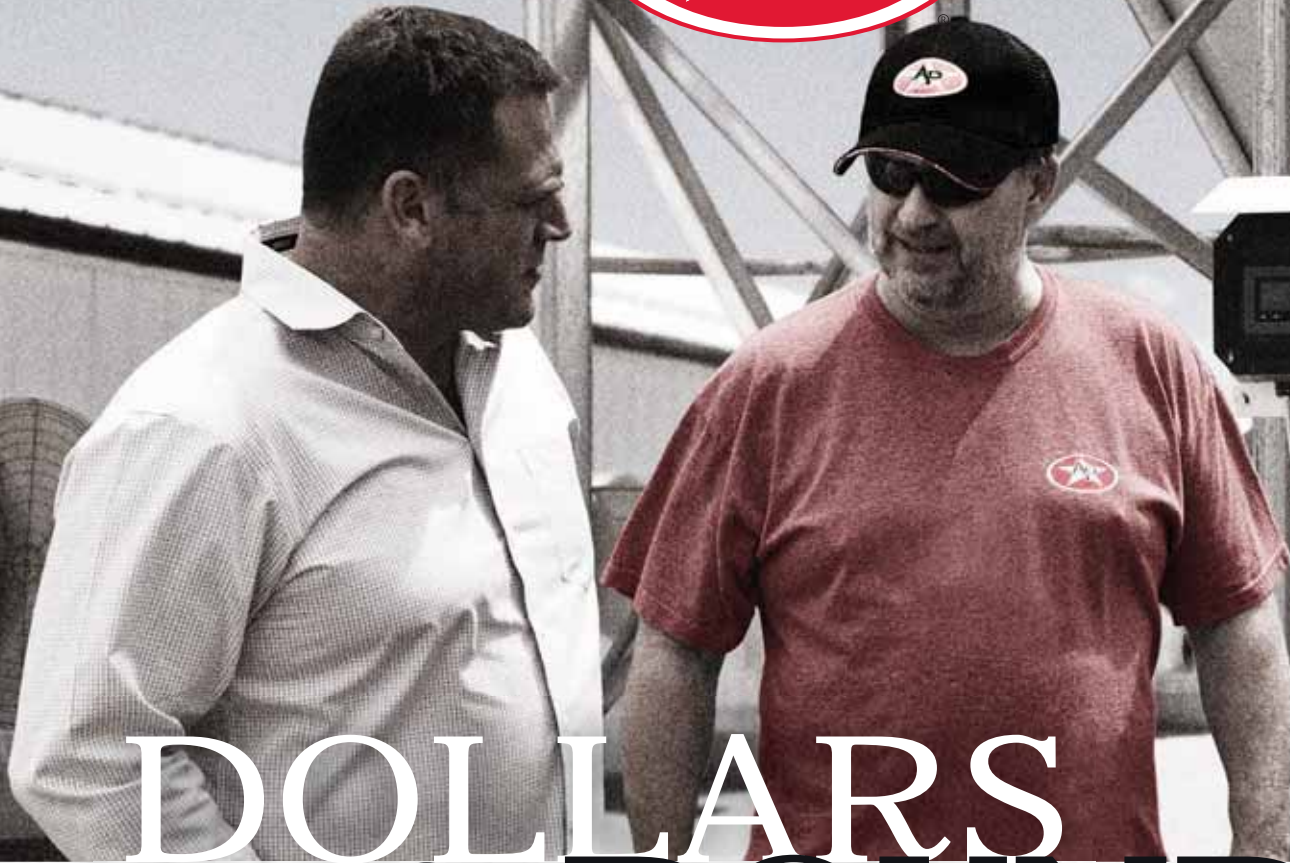


are on the agenda. There will also be two food stations featuring local pork grown and processed on-farm, and plenty of beverages to choose from. The party will also feature dishes created and prepared by students from a local culinary college who competed for a chance to showcase their work at the event and win a scholarship. And aficionados will be relieved to hear that the ever-popular bourbon and bacon pairings will be back.

“Last year we had apple bacon, maple syrup bacon, black chocolate bacon and each is paired with a bourbon,” Lacroix said. “People love the party, and we will have a good one this year.”

Information on the event, including how to register, can be found at leporcshow.com. ■

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Hog industry applauds new investment in research

It was announced in June that over the next five years, up to \$18.5 million dollars will be invested by the federal government and industry partners in research to further the development of the Canadian pork industry.

Swine Innovation Porc and the Canadian Pork Council (CPC) welcomed Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (AAFC), Lawrence MacAulay's announcement this morning, highlighting that up to \$12.7 million will be invested by the federal government. Swine Innovation Porc and its partners will also contribute \$5.8 million, making a total investment of up to \$18.5 million in research over a five-year period.

"The Canadian swine sector will benefit enormously from this investment," stated Stewart Cressman, chair of Swine Innovation Porc, who was on hand for the announcement in Sherbrooke, Québec. "We want to thank Minister MacAulay for this significant investment, which shows AAFC's commitment to support industry-led research. We are confident that the outcomes from program's research projects will help increase the competitiveness of the Canadian pork industry in terms of animal welfare, the environment, as well as animal health and nutrition."

CPC's second vice-chair, René Roy, was also present for the announcement. Mr. Roy highlighted the need for ongoing research in the swine industry so that producers can continue to innovate and produce high quality pork for domestic and international markets. "Producers rely on science-based research to guide the innovations that help the industry grow. This funding is essential so that the Canadian pork industry can continue to compete with other important producers in the world, such as the United States and the European Union, and set the standard for wholesome pork."

This funding contribution is part of the AAFC's Canadian Agricultural Partnership, AgriScience Program - Clusters. It encourages research and innovation to take place to enhance the profitability and sustainability of the agricultural sector. Swine Innovation Porc will use this investment to implement its national knowledge transfer and research and development strategies under the program title of "Swine Cluster 3 - Inno-



Swine Innovation Porc



Canadian Pork Council
Conseil canadien du porc

vating for a Stronger Pork Sector." The goal of this program is to accelerate the pace of innovation, drive sustainable growth, strengthen competitiveness, and maximize the resilience of the sector.

The up-to-\$18.5 million Swine Cluster 3 program will be the third such program led by Swine Innovation Porc. "Swine Innovation Porc has proven its ability to drive national research programs," noted Stewart Cressman. "We are ready to officially launch this new program so researchers can begin working on ways to help the industry be even stronger."

Since 2010, the objectives of research funded through the Swine Cluster program have focused on reducing the cost of production, increasing product differentiation and enhancing knowledge transfer. The total investment over eight years amounts to \$31.7 million and has resulted in the completion of 35 different projects and over 1,000 communication activities. ■

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Industry News

Get your fall on at the Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium

By Sheri Monk

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

The kids are back in school, pumpkin spice is everywhere, and the pressure to slink into a bikini (or mankini, if that's your thing) has been replaced with the comfort of bunny hugs.

What's that, you ask? Well, if you don't know what a bunny hug is, you clearly need to spend some more time in Saskatchewan.

"To me, a bunny hug is a pull-on cotton sweatshirt with a hood and kangaroo pocket to keep your hands warm," explains Kim Browne with Sask Pork.

The rest of the world refers to such a sweatshirt as a hoodie, but the rest of the world isn't quite as unique as Saskatchewan.

But don't worry – there's an incredible opportunity to spend some quality time in the province, and it's just around the corner. The 2018 Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium will be held November 14-15 at the Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre.

The 41st annual event brings another expert panel of speakers delivering practical information on emerging technologies, advancements in swine nutrition, and production efficiencies in finishing and in nurseries. But that's not all – you'll get the latest on the global pork market and participate in the wider discussion of the value of social licence, and why we need to keep sharing our stories with consumers.

"We have some well-known returning speakers but also some new faces and presenters this year! The conference opens with Trent Loos of Nebraska with *Loos Tales from the Farm* who is well known for his passion for connecting urban consumers to

where their food comes from," Browne said. "I'm often asked who the keynote speaker is. That is difficult to answer since as conference co-ordinator, I think everyone on the program is essential or key to the success of the symposium."

Last year, the symposium was celebrating milestones, which resulted in a large attendance of nearly 300 people.

"Our 40th anniversary of the symposium along with the long service awards for 40, 50 and 60 years of hog production seemed to attract people who hadn't had the opportunity to attend the event in recent years," Browne said.

As for this year? The format will be largely the same, but packed with the sincere hospitality that Saskatchewan is so well-known for.

"We try to offer a balance of practical information and global topics, but also to touch on hot topics as they arise. We also want to provide time for networking which is important. Though not new, the tradeshow element continues to offer our sponsors and exhibitors an opportunity to engage producers one-on-one over the two days."

For information on the Saskatchewan Pork Symposium contact Kim Browne, Symposium Coordinator, at (306) 343-3506 or by email info@saskpork.com and don't forget to bring your favourite bunny hug. ■



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Enrichment for sows - increasing positive behavior

Submitted by Prairie Swine Centre

There is no denying that enrichment for pigs has been slow to catch on with pork producers. Besides the cost of materials and the time needed to install, clean or repair enrichments, producers may ask, “what’s the big deal about ‘pig toys’?” However, there is now an impressive amount of research showing the benefits of providing enrichment in to pigs, from reduced aggression to fewer damaging behaviors and increased growth.

On Canadian farms, interest in enrichment has grown recently due to changes in the Code of Practice requirements, stating that ‘Pigs must be provided with multiple forms of enrichment... to improve the welfare of the animals through the enhancement of their physical and social environments.’ This change, along with increasing adoption of group housing for sows led a team of Canadian researchers, directed by Dr. Laurie Connor at the University of Manitoba, to study how best to provide enrichment to sows in groups.

Most studies on enrichment have looked at grow-finish pigs because this is the stage when most damaging behaviours appear, such as tail biting or flank sucking, and the effects can

be devastating. A few studies have been done on sows, with the general conclusion that feeding fibrous materials such as straw or hay is best. Pigs are highly attracted

to items that are both manipulable and consumable, and for feed-restricted sows the increase in gut fill is an added bonus.

On European farms, producers are required to provide 300g (about half a pound) of fibre per sow per day. But North American producers are reluctant to provide straw, largely due to biosecurity concerns and the potential for straw to clog liquid manure systems. Studies in Canada have therefore focused on object enrichments that could be provided in slatted or partially slatted pens.

Between 2014 and 2017, three studies were done to evaluate sows’ interest in a variety of enrichments, including wood suspended on chains, cotton rope, loose straw and a dispenser for chopped hay. The enrichments were tested on two research



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farms, one with free-access stall housing and one with ESF. The way that the items were presented also varied. For example, comparing provision of one constant enrichment to a rotation of three enrichments, or varying the number provided at once from one to three enrichments per group of 28 sows.

While sows interacted with all of the enrichments, not surprisingly, loose straw (placed on a solid floor) was the most preferred. Not only was the straw consumable, it spread out over a larger area, allowing more animals to interact with it at the same time, compared to hanging enrichments. Between the object enrichments, rope was slightly preferred over wood enrichment. Rotating multiple enrichments resulted in more sow interaction than provision of a single enrichment, confirming that sows appreciate a degree of novelty in their daily routine.

The researchers hypothesized that dominant sows in a group may obtain greater access to enrichment than subordinates, so the impact of sows' social status on enrichment use and stress physiology was observed.

In both free-access stalls and ESF housing systems, dominant and subordinate sows used the enrichments equally. However, in the ESF barn, subordinate sows had higher cortisol levels than dominants, suggesting greater social stress in the ESF system. Sows in the ESF barn also used the enrichments about three times more frequently than those in free-access pens. Because the two barns had different management and genetics, it is impossible to know what caused this difference. Sows in ESF are generally more active, but genetic differences cannot be ruled out and should be studied.

In the third study, chopped hay was provided in small hoppers in the free-access pens, and was compared to wood enrichments. Again, the use of fibre attracted more sows, but because it was held in a small hopper only a few sows could access it at once. This study found that dominant sows had more access to the hay feeders than subordinates. Higher lesion scores were also observed when chopped hay was given, indicating that aggression can increase when sows are competing for a more desirable enrichment, so providing adequate levels of enrichment is important.


Overall these studies underscore why diffuse and consumable enrichments like

straw are both attractive and effective for sows. Providing a number of enrichments and dispersing them throughout the pen will help to reduce any negative effects of social status. Researchers will continue to explore the potential benefits of various fibre sources, and to look for practical enrichments that promote sow interaction while posing minimal risk to biosecurity or liquid manure systems.

Following the trials, multiple farms with group sow housing participated in an extension study. Producers were used to seeing sows lying quietly for most of the day, and were surprised to see the sows' strong attraction to enrichments. Most of all they enjoyed watching the sows interacting with enrichments. So, while the production benefits of providing enrichment to sows may be hard to measure, the satisfaction of seeing sows busy and interacting in a positive way is ample reward for some. ■


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Dear Trace E. Pig



Dear Trace E. Pig,

I'm a small hobby producer, but people have told me that I still need to register with Alberta Pork. Is this true? It seems like a lot of red tape for someone with fewer pigs than fingers, but I want to do the right thing. Please help.

Signed,

Enthusiastic Pig Farmer

Dear Enthusiastic Pig Farmer,

Your friends are right – you DO have to register with Alberta Pork. If you own a pig, regardless of purpose, you are required to register. This includes hobby producers and even those of us who like to keep pigs as pet companions.

Here's how registration works:

Anyone who is in care and control of swine are required to register with Alberta Pork.

Alberta Pork will provide two important numbers to producer upon registration. One is the Alberta Pork producer number and the other is the tattoo or herd mark number. The herd mark number serve as the approved swine identifier and plays a crucial role in the ability for producers to comply with the *Alberta Swine Traceability Regulation (STR)* and the *Health of Animals Act*.

In addition, Alberta Pork will also ensure that all producers are provided with the necessarily materials (manifests, tags, etc.) and information to perform traceability.

There is **no cost** to register with Alberta Pork. Producers simply need to fill and complete a producer registration form and a premises registration form. These can be found on the Alberta Pork website under the register tab.

Why is registration important?

Along with ensuring producers have the necessary tools to perform traceability, registration is the first step in ensuring all producers are educated and informed on their responsibilities. Traceability is a program that only works so long as producers and industry participate. In addition, it also allows Alberta Pork to capture all the premises that potential house swine so that in the event of an outbreak, we are better able to assist producers and industry to respond. Not knowing which premises carry swine decrease industry's ability to mitigate and response to the disease appropriately.

How can I help as a producer?

Spread the word! The rule of thumb to remember is that disease doesn't discriminate, therefore all pigs matter.

For more information or help with registering, you can contact Christina Carley, Alberta Pork's Traceability Coordinator for information.

And don't forget to send me in your questions relating to traceability, biosecurity or anything else in our industry. Your name will be kept confidential, and I will do my best to help. ■

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Feeding field peas to weaned pigs

Jose L. Landero^{1,2}, Lifang Wang¹, Eduardo Beltranena^{1,3}, and Ruurd T. Zijlstra^{1*}

¹Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB; ²Gowans Feed Consulting, Wainwright, AB;

³Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Edmonton, AB ruurd.zijlstra@ualberta.ca

Take Home Message

Pork producers are always looking for ways to reduce feed costs without compromising growth performance of pigs. Alternative feedstuffs are especially essential in times when low or even negative margins are ahead or happening due to a combination of high prices for traditional feedstuffs and low pork prices. Feeding nursery pigs with up to 40 per cent field peas can replace up to 30 per cent soybean meal (SBM) and 10 per cent wheat in diets formulated to equal net energy (NE) value and standardized ileal digestible (SID) amino acid content without reducing overall growth performance after a seven-day adaptation. Field peas can have an important impact on reducing feed cost per tonne and per pig.

Past research on feeding field peas

Canada is the largest producer and exporter of field peas in the world. Yellow and green field peas from white-flowered cultivars are the most widely seeded and produced for both human consumption and animal feeding. Field peas have been fed to young pigs in the past to partially replace expensive SBM. Due to concerns about anti-nutritional factors (ANF) in peas that depress feed intake and growth, recommendations from over 20 years ago suggested to include maximally 10 to 15 per cent field peas in diets for nursery pigs weighing less than 20 kg. Some recent trials tested greater dietary inclusion of field peas, but that reduced growth performance. For yellow and

green field peas, ANF are relatively low indicating that reduced growth performance in earlier studies was likely related to nutrient imbalances, because diets were not formulated to equal NE and SID amino acid content. In addition, genetic improvements have reduced ANF in field pea, thus, we need to examine the feasibility of including field pea in diets for nursery pigs.

Nutrient profile of field peas

The field pea sample was a yellow cultivar grown in Alberta and sourced from a commercial feed supplier. The sample contained 22.6 per cent crude protein, 1.62 per cent lysine, 6.8 per cent crude fiber and 9.2 per cent acid detergent fibre, so it provided 51 per cent less protein and 45 per cent less lysine, but 33 per cent more fibre than SBM. Content of ANF was lower in field peas, providing 36 per cent less tannins, 50 per cent less trypsin inhibitory activity and 27 per cent less phytate than SBM, indicating that ANF in this yellow field pea sample was less a concern for animal feeding. However, peas other than green and yellow that are darker in color such as Maple, Austrian and Marrowfat must be avoided for swine feeding because they contain more tannins that reduce nutrient digestibility and utilization and thus growth performance of pigs.

Weaned pig trial set up

The trial was conducted at the Swine Research and Technology Centre of the University of Alberta (Edmonton, AB). Starting one week after weaning at 19

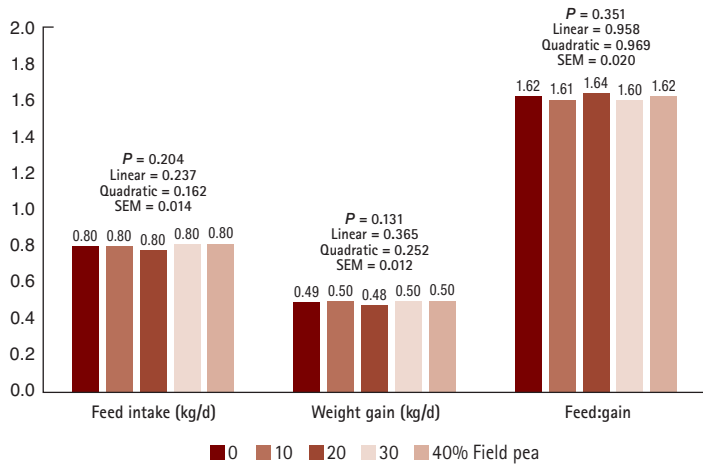
days of age, 260 pigs (initial body weight 8.5 ± 0.9 kg) were fed Phase 1 diets for two weeks (day 1–14) and sequentially Phase 2 diets for 3 weeks (day 15–35). The experimental diets consisted of a wheat-based control diet and four diets containing 10, 20, 30 or 40 per cent field pea that were formulated by replacing up to 30 per cent SBM and 10 per cent wheat with field pea. Diets were pelleted and formulated without antimicrobials or growth promoters to provide 2.45 Mcal NE/kg and 1.23 per cent SID lysine in Phase 1 and 2.35 Mcal NE/kg and 0.99 per cent SID lysine in Phase 2. Other amino acids were formulated as an ideal ratio to lysine. Pigs had free access to feed and water throughout the entire 35-day experiment. Individual pig body weight and pen feed disappearance were measured weekly. An indigestible marker was included in the feed, and feces were collected to calculate total tract digestibility of protein and energy in the feed.

What we found

Increasing the dietary field pea from 0 to 40 per cent linearly decreased the total tract digestibility of crude protein from 82.7 to 77.1 per cent for Phase 1 diets, but only slightly decreased from 84.3 to 83.4 per cent for Phase 2 diets, indicating that young pigs had less ability to digest field pea storage protein, e.g., albumin. Increasing the dietary field pea reduced total tract digestibility of energy from 86.5 to 84.5 per cent for Phase 1 diets, but was not affected for Phase 2 diets, indicating young pigs have difficulty to digest field pea fiber.

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Figure 1. Growth performance of weaned pigs fed diets with increasing dietary inclusion of up to 40% field pea in substitution for up to 30% soybean meal and 10% wheat



Overall, feeding up to 40 per cent field pea to nursery pigs did not affect feed intake, weight gain, and feed conversion (Figure 1). However, feeding up to 40 per cent field pea to nursery pigs linearly reduced growth rate in the first week despite maintained feed intake, resulting in poor feed conversion. In the last week of the trial, increasing field pea inclusion did linearly increase growth rate for pigs. Final pig weight was 25.8, 26.0, 25.2, 26.1 and 26.2 kg for pigs fed 0, 10, 20, 30 and 40 per cent field pea, respectively, and was not affected by field pea inclusion.

Cost vs. benefit

Using current market prices (\$/tonne) for main ingredients in September 2018, wheat 255, field peas 242, soybean meal 528, canola oil 1,100 and L-lysine-HCl 2,025, increasing dietary inclusion of up to 40 per cent field peas in substitution of SBM reduced feed cost per tonne by up to \$64 for Phase 1 and \$73 for Phase 2. This reduction in feed cost per tonne combined with no differences in overall growth performance and final pig weight, reduced feed cost per pig by \$0.68, 0.99, 1.56 and 2.08 when field peas were included at 10, 20, 30, and 40 per cent, respectively.

Recommendations

Yellow field pea is a locally produced crop that is a source of energy and protein in pig diets to replace SBM and reduce feed costs. Results from this trial showed that increasing dietary inclusion of field peas reduced growth rate and feed efficiency in the first week of the trial, but not during the rest of weeks. We suggest to phase-feed nursery pigs starting with 10 per cent field pea, and subsequently increase field pea inclusion up to 40 per cent in diets if the field pea price is attractive. Finally, diets should be formulated based on NE value and SID amino acid content to maintain growth performance.

Acknowledgements

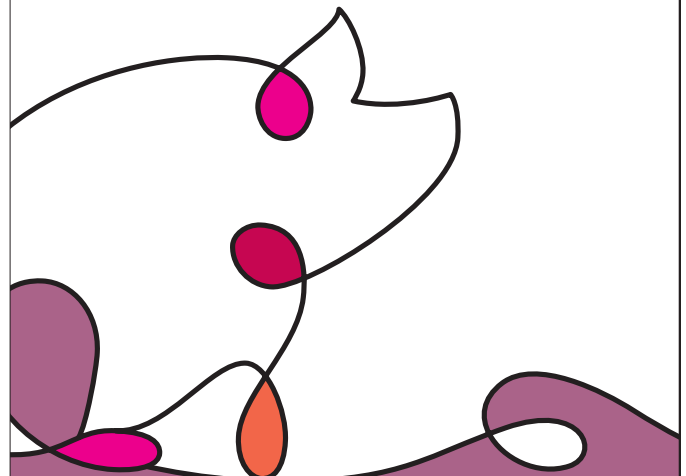
We appreciate funding for this research from Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund, Alberta Pork, Danisco Animal Nutrition and Canola Council of Canada that sponsored a multi-trial project. ■

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Pigs and space

By Geoff Geddes for Swine Innovation Porc

While the Muppet sketch *Pigs in Space* was full of humor, improper space allowance for pigs is no laughing matter. In fact, few aspects of a pork operation impact so many areas, including behavior, stress, social interaction and productivity. So it's surprising that little research has been done on the effects of space allowance on nursery pigs. Fortunately, that void is now being filled by the project "determining the optimum space allowance for nursery pigs".

"This study was sparked by the recently revised 'Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs,'" said Dr. Jennifer Brown, research scientist, ethology at the Prairie Swine Centre.

Though a lot of good data exists on the impact of space allowance on grower-finisher pigs, the same can't be said for weaners.

Knowing your limits

"Conventional production gives weaners less space than grower-finishers based on body size, but is that adequate or should it be changed? The code assigns the same k factor to both; however, the wider allowance at the end of the nursery phase means that weaners can be crowded a bit more. We wanted to get additional science

around this question to determine if the limits in the code are good or need to be changed."

The study examined six different space allowances for nursery pigs and was performed in two phases – Phase 1 at a research barn and Phase 2 at two commercial farm sites. Data was collected on productivity, piglet postures, injury and room climate.

A tale of two phases

For phase I, the effects of space allowance were compared in large and small pen group sizes (10 and 40 pigs per pen) over four seasons. Additional data on piglet stress physiology and immune competence were also collected.

Phase 1 showed no impact of different space allowances on average daily gain (ADG), but there was an effect on pig behavior. Most notably, pigs spent more time sitting at lower space allowances. That behavior is not common for pigs and is thought to indicate stress. Many studies suggest sitting shows discomfort and a feeling of being crowded, thereby impairing animal welfare.

The clearest impact of crowding in Phase 1 appeared in week five in the nursery.



Swine Innovation Porc

The underlying importance of overlying

Part of the reason we thought nursery pigs could cope with less space compared with older pigs is that they tend to overlie. Over time, however, that overlying behavior dropped off so that in week five, pigs that were given the highest space allowance did very little overlying. That suggests that overlying is not their preferred posture in the late nursery phase and that greater space allowance allows more normal behavior.

While Phase 2 (commercial farms) studies showed similar consequences for behavior, it also showed clear effects of space allowance on ADG. Pigs given the highest space allowance exhibited the best ADG, and pigs at the lower space allowances had lower gains, especially from the midpoint of their time in the nursery until they exited.

"Preliminary results from phase 2 suggest that the space allowance of $k = 0.0335$, as specified in the 2014 Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs, is reasonable. Overall, our findings indicate that the code is on track and if you have a lower space allowance than the code designates, you should look closely at your operation to ensure pigs aren't crowded or kept in the nursery longer than necessary. Otherwise, you can expect reduced gains, behavior problems and animal welfare issues with nursery pigs," said Brown.

Final results will be available later this year when all analyses are completed. Still, it seems safe to conclude that while *Pigs in Space* is good for a chuckle, the impact of optimal space allowance on your pigs and your profits will leave you grinning from ear to ear. ■

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Effective water conservation in finishing barns

Submitted by Ken Engele, technology transfer manager, Prairie Swine Centre

In order to reduce water wastage in finishing barns, a trough with side panels and an integrated nipple drinker was shown to be a beneficial option compared to standard nipple drinkers. At the farm scale, a reduction of manure is to be expected when this option is used.

This article presents the results obtained from an on-farm demonstration activity carried out in a finishing barn in Saskatchewan by the Prairie Swine Centre. A similar project was also carried out in a nursery barn in Quebec by the CDPQ (Centre de développement du porc du Québec).

Water is an essential nutrient in pig growth and sometimes can be an easily overlooked part of pig production. Research has found that finisher pigs waste 25% of water from nipple drinkers, even when they are properly adjusted (700 ml/min and positioned 5 cm higher than the shoulder height of the smallest pig)¹. However, on commercial farms, water wastage from nipple drinkers is reported as high as 40 to 60%. The difference between these results may partly be attributed to the improper drinker height and flow rate on farms. Recent audits of 24 farms across Canada indicate that approximately two-thirds of nipple drinkers (in finishing) provided water volumes that exceeded the pig's requirement. In some cases, measured values were more than double of the required flow rates.

Water Conservation

Barn evaluations of selected water conservation measures indicated that, relative to conventional nipple drinkers, the use of a drinking trough with side panel (and constant water level) saved a significant (60%) amount of water mainly due to reduced water wastage, without adversely affecting pig performance². With the promise associated with this

innovation, based on the results of work conducted at Prairie Swine Centre², it was decided to implement the trough with the side panel setup on a commercial farm to understand if similar water savings can be achieved.

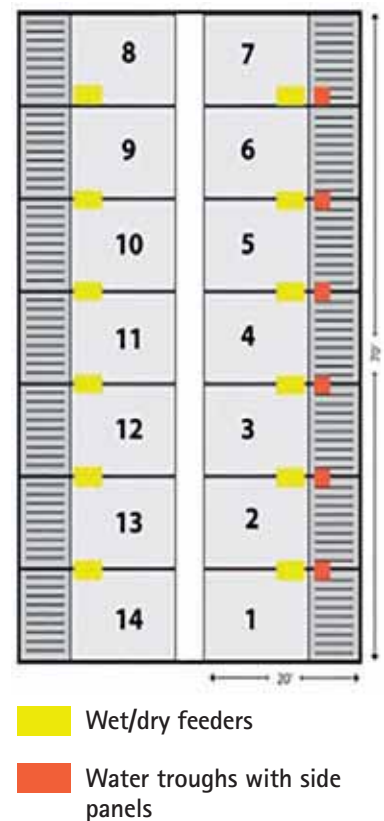
As seen in Figure 1, a single room was split into two distinct areas with pens 8 to 14 containing a wet/dry feeder and single nipple drinker per pen, which represents a typical room setup. Pens 1 to 7 also contained a wet/dry feeder however the water source was modified to include a trough with side panels integrated with the nipple drinker (Figure 2). In order to measure water disappearance, water meters were installed for each system within the room, and water disappearance rates were measured for two room turns (12 weeks/turn) between May and October 2017.

Economics

The following example provides an overview of potential savings for one specific site in Saskatchewan. Over the 24 weeks that the demonstration project was carried out, water disappearance in pens 1 to 7, where troughs with side panels were installed, was 20% lower

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50

Figure 1. Room layout and setup for demonstration at the commercial farm



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when compared to the traditional nipple drinker setup.

Assuming that finishing pigs consume 7 litres of water on a daily basis, the difference in total water disappearance over one year would be 89,250 litres for 170 pigs (Table 1). Also, assuming a manure disposal rate of \$0.0175/gal and that the (water disappearance) difference winds up in the manure pits, this would translate into a total additional manure disposal cost of \$343 for 170 pigs or \$57/pen.

For this specific site, the producer could expect a 2 to 3.5-year payback on an investment when implementing troughs with side panels in finishing barns. It must be noted that potential water savings and costs are very farm-specific. For example, some farms may be part of a rural water utility and need to also include the cost of water in their analysis. Every producer should take the opportunity to assess potential savings related to manure disposal, water use, and pumping costs on a regular basis.

Potential Savings

Manure Disposal

Manure application rate - \$0.0175/gallon

Additional manure volume - 89,250 L or 19,658 gallons

Additional application cost - \$343.57 for 170 pigs over 350 days.

Water Use

Cost of water - \$10.00 per 4,546 litres (1,000 gallons) or \$0.0022 /litre

Additional water cost - 89,250 L @ \$0.0022/L = \$196.33 for 170 pigs over 350 days.

Installation Costs

Labour: 2 employees @ \$20/hour @ 10 hours = \$400 total labour cost to install a trough with side panels integrated with the nipple drinker in 7 pens.

Materials and Supplies

Trough with side panel (custom fabricated, aluminum) - \$100 /pen

Additional hardware and fittings \$10 /pen

Total installation cost - \$1,170 for 7 pens or \$167 /pen



Figure 2. Installation of the water trough with side panels at the commercial farm

Table 1. Economics of water disappearance

	Water System	
	Nipple drinker with side panels	No side panels
# of Days	350	350
# of pigs	170	170
L/Pig	7	8.5
Total Water Disappearance (L)	416,500	505,750
Difference (L)		89,250

Implementation

As with any new technology, proper implementation and training is key to ensuring proper assessment of its use. One of the first questions often asked by staff is: “Will it make my life easier?” After all, this would be the ultimate goal of adopting any new technology. By reviewing the results of the demonstration site, several distinct advantages and disadvantages have become evident.

Conclusion

Based on the results generated from the demonstration project, the producer involved will continue to utilize the trough with the side panel setup within the facility. For this producer, the most interesting advantage was the significant water savings combined with the associated reduction in manure volume produced in the pens where the trough with side panels were installed.

Other Considerations

Research indicates that finishing pigs waste more water when the flow rate is higher¹. Audit results also show approximately two-thirds of finishing nipple drinkers provide flow rates higher than required by pigs³. Producers are well aware of the advantages associated with fine-tuning their water management, however they sometimes lack the resources – time – to ensure it is being carried out on a timely basis. Perhaps incorporating this innovation on the farm can act as an insurance policy when it comes to water management and reducing water wastage.

For Further Reading

¹ Reducing Water Wastage from Nipple Drinkers by Grower-Finisher Pigs (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/reducing->

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages in implementing troughs with side panels

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant water savings • Reduced manure volume • Installed with off-the-shelf components • Improved biosecurity – less traffic to the barn site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some sites require manure removal in spring and fall. If water wastage can be reduced farm-wide, manure removal may be reduced to a single application per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One more thing to wash - corners • Higher potential contamination of water in the trough

water-wastage-from-nipple-drinkers-by-grower-finisher-pigs/
² Developing Strategies for Water Conservation in Swine Production Operations (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/developing-strategies-for-water-conservation-in-swine-production-operations/>

³ Water Management: Auditing Best Management Practices - Part 8 (English) <http://www.prairieswine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Part-8-Water-Management.pdf>

For more information on this project, please contact Ken Engele at Prairie Swine Centre: ken.engele@usask.ca

This project was funded by Swine Innovation Porc within the Swine Cluster 2: Driving Results Through Innovation research program. Funding was provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the AgriInnovation Program, provincial producer organizations and industry partners. We would also like to acknowledge the support of Fast Genetics (Spiritwood, Saskatchewan) for participating as a demonstration site in the project. ■

From Innovation to Adoption: On-farm demonstration of Swine Research

The demonstration activity presented in this article was conducted within Swine Innovation Porc’s (SIP) Swine Cluster 2 research program. One of the objectives of this program was to accelerate the speed of adoption of new technologies and strategies by end-user: Canadian hog producers.

The results of other on-farm demonstrations carried out within the framework of the SIP program are available on Prairie Swine Centre’s website: <http://www.prairieswine.com/from-innovation-to-adoption/>

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- **Judy Hodge**, Swine Health Professionals - [Disease Prevention and Handling Vaccines](#)
- **John Patience**, Iowa State University - [How Can I Improve Feed Efficiency in the Barn?](#)
- **Brett Ramirez**, Iowa State University - [Why the In-Barn Environment Matters](#)
- **Egan Brockhoff**, Prairie Swine Health Services - [African Swine Fever and the Threat to Canadian Swine Herds](#)

Concurrent Sessions

Valerie Duttlinger DVM, Swine Management Services - [Keys to Finishing Success](#)

Ryan Tenbergen, Demeter Services Vétérinaires - [Back to Basics: Better Starts in the Nursery](#)

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A world of information

Enhanced DDGS aims to perk up the pigs

By Geoff Geddes for Swine Innovation Porc

If you think your spouse is grouchy before their morning coffee, try dealing with thousands of low-energy pigs. Neither one is a pretty picture, but the latter can be ugly for your bottom line, which is where DDGS (distillers dried grains with solubles) comes in. This co-product of ethanol production from cereal grains is used to provide energy and amino acids for pigs while reducing feed costs.

Like everything in pork production, though, there's a trade-off. While DDGS offers much-needed fat and protein, it has a high fibre content which prevents pigs from properly absorbing the energy it supplies. And as producers know only too well, more fibre means more manure to deal with.

Compounding interest

That's why a new low fibre, high protein DDGS from an Ontario company is drawing interest, and why researchers are taking a closer look.

"We wanted to know how much amino acids and energy pigs could digest from this new DDGS," said Dr. Elijah Kiarie, assistant professor, McIntosh Family Professorship in Poultry Nutrition in the Department of Animal Biosciences at the University of Guelph.

In examining two samples from the company, Dr. Kiarie found they contained 40 per cent more protein and 30 per cent more lysine than the DDGS currently on the market.

A growth industry

"Lysine was critical to measure as it's the most important amino acid for pigs. Because a lack of lysine can limit growth, we must ensure it is present and highly digestible in pig feed, and we found that was the case with the new DDGS."

The next question for researchers was how much digestible energy the company's DDGS samples contained.

"Feed accounts for 60-70 per cent of pig production costs, and the most expensive nutrient is energy, followed by protein/ami-

no acids. Together, those two nutrients comprise 90 per cent of feed costs, so reducing your expenses means focusing on energy and amino acids."

The values for the new DDGS were impressive, with energy digestibility of 83 per cent compared to 71 per cent in the conventional DDGS.

Crunch time

Given the importance of feed costs to producers, the higher content of digestible protein/amino acids and energy compared to conventional DDGS holds promise pending a crunching of the numbers.

"We need to understand the economics of feeding this DDGS to pigs – what will it cost? What does it mean when you put it in a practical diet in terms of growth performance, feed conversion, optimal yield, lean yield and backfat? You may find the new DDGS costs 20 per cent more than the current version, but if it benefits some or all of these areas, along with reducing manure production, it may be worth it."

The findings thus far have already sparked some interest from industry. While corn and soy are fairly inexpensive right now, an increase could prompt producers to seek alternative feed ingredients, making the new DDGS an intriguing option.

Meanwhile, Dr. Kiarie and his colleagues are exploring other avenues of inquiry, looking at how they can apply their findings to all classes of pigs, including sows, and evaluating the potential of using the new DDGS in liquid feeding systems to provide even more value for producers.

So maybe you'll never see a pig at a Tim Horton's drive-through. But if further research on the potential of DDGS to boost energy bears fruit, it could go a long way to perking up your animals and your business. ■



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De nouvelles drêches pleines d'énergie

Rédaction : Geoff Geddes pour Swine Innovation Porc | Traduction : Élise Gauthier



Swine Innovation Porc

Si vous croyez que votre douce moitié est tout sauf un rayon de soleil le matin avant son premier café, que diriez-vous de vous retrouver parmi des milliers de porcs sans énergie? Aucune de ces deux situations n'est réjouissante, mais des porcs amorphes n'annoncent en plus rien de bon pour vos finances. Pour remédier à cette situation, on s'intéresse à de nouvelles drêches de distillerie sèches avec solubles. Ce coproduit, issu de la production d'éthanol à partir de céréales, est utilisé pour fournir de l'énergie et des acides aminés aux porcs tout en réduisant les coûts d'alimentation.

Cependant, comme souvent en production porcine, il faut faire des compromis. Bien que les drêches fournissent des éléments essentiels, du gras et de la protéine, elles contiennent aussi beaucoup de fibre. Cette fibre empêche les porcs d'absorber correctement l'énergie contenue dans les drêches. De plus, comme les producteurs le savent trop bien, plus de fibre signifie aussi plus de fumier à gérer.

Beaucoup de protéine

C'est pourquoi une nouvelle drêche avec peu de fibre et beaucoup de protéine, offerte par une compagnie de l'Ontario, suscite beaucoup d'intérêt et attire l'attention des chercheurs.

« Nous désirions savoir quelle proportion des acides aminés et de l'énergie de cette nouvelle drêche peut être digérée par les porcs, » explique Elijah Kiarie, professeur adjoint à l'Université de Guelph.

En examinant les deux échantillons fournis par la compagnie, Elijah Kiarie a constaté qu'ils contenaient plus de protéines (40 % de plus) et plus de lysine (30 % de plus) que les drêches actuellement disponibles sur le marché.

Digestibilité élevée

« Il fallait absolument mesurer la lysine puisque c'est l'acide aminé le plus important pour les porcs. Étant donné qu'un manque de lysine peut limiter la croissance, nous devons nous assurer que l'aliment servi aux porcs en contient et que cette lysine est très digestible. Nous avons constaté que c'est le bien cas de ces nouvelles drêches. »

L'autre question pour les chercheurs était d'établir la teneur en énergie digestible des échantillons de drêches fournis par la compagnie.

« L'alimentation représente de 60 à 70 % des coûts de production chez le porc, et l'élément nutritif le plus coûteux est l'énergie, suivi de la protéine/acides aminés. Ces deux éléments nutritifs constituent 90 % des coûts d'alimentation. Ainsi, pour réduire les dépenses, il faut se concentrer sur l'énergie et les acides aminés. »

Les nouvelles drêches possèdent des caractéristiques remarquables, la digestibilité de l'énergie est de 83 % comparativement à 71 % pour les drêches conventionnelles.

Calculs économiques

La teneur plus élevée en protéine di-

gestible / acides aminés et en énergie comparativement aux drêches conventionnelles rend ces nouvelles drêches très intéressantes. Toutefois, étant donné l'importance des coûts d'alimentation pour les producteurs, il faut faire les calculs économiques nécessaires.

« Il nous faut comprendre l'impact économique de ces drêches dans l'alimentation des porcs : combien ça coûtera? En pratique, qu'advient-il des performances de croissance, de la conversion alimentaire, du rendement en viande maigre et de l'épaisseur du gras dorsal lorsqu'on intègre cette drêche à une ration? Les nouvelles drêches coûtent 20 % de plus que les drêches conventionnelles, mais si elles sont avantageuses pour certains ou tous ces points, en plus de réduire la production du fumier, ça pourrait en valoir la peine. »

Les résultats obtenus jusqu'à maintenant ont déjà suscité l'intérêt de l'industrie. Bien que le maïs et soya soient assez peu coûteux présentement, une augmentation pourrait inciter les producteurs à se tourner vers des ingrédients alimentaires de remplacement. Les nouvelles drêches pourraient alors devenir un choix intéressant.

En attendant, Elijah Kiarie et ses collègues explorent d'autres pistes de recherche. Ils examinent, entre autres, comment ils peuvent appliquer leurs résultats obtenus chez les truies. Ils évaluent aussi l'utilisation des nouvelles drêches dans les systèmes d'alimentation liquide.

Enfin, peut-être ne verrez-vous jamais un porc prendre un café chez Tim Horton. Mais, si les recherches ultérieures sur le potentiel des drêches pour stimuler l'énergie portent ses fruits, cela pourrait contribuer à revigorer vos animaux et vos revenus. ■

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L'espace pour les porcelets

Rédaction : Geoff Geddes pour Swine Innovation Porc | Traduction : Élise Gauthier



Swine Innovation Porc

Si vous avez déjà visionné la vidéo « Porcs dans l'espace » mettant en vedette les marionnettes Les Muppet, vous avez probablement bien ri. Mais plus sérieusement, quand on parle d'espace et de porcs, le fait de ne pas allouer suffisamment d'espace aux porcs n'a vraiment rien d'amusant, bien au contraire. En fait, bien peu d'aspects de la régie en production porcine n'affecte autant d'éléments, que ce soit le comportement, le stress, les interactions sociales et la productivité, que l'espace alloué par animal. Aussi, il est surprenant que si peu de recherche n'ait été effectuée sur ce sujet pour les porcelets en pouponnière. Heureusement, cette lacune est désormais comblée par le projet « Déterminer l'espace optimal à allouer aux porcelets en pouponnière ».

« Cette recherche a été déclenchée par publication en 2014 du Code de pra-

tiques pour le soin et la manipulation des porcs, » précise Jennifer Brown, chercheuse spécialisée en éthologie au Prairie Swine Centre.

Bien qu'il existe beaucoup de données intéressantes sur l'impact de l'espace alloué aux porcs en croissance-finition, on ne peut pas en dire autant pour ce qui est des porcelets sevrés.

Mieux documenter les limites

« La production conventionnelle alloue moins d'espace aux porcelets sevrés qu'aux porcs en croissance-finition, en se basant sur la taille des animaux : mais est-ce adéquat? Est-ce que cela devrait être revu? Le Code propose le même facteur k pour les porcelets et les porcs en croissance-finition. Offrir plus d'espace à la fin de la phase de pouponnière signifie toutefois qu'au

début de cette phase, la densité animale peut être supérieure pour les porcelets récemment sevrés. Nous voulions approfondir cette question afin de déterminer si les limites présentées dans le Code étaient toujours bonnes ou avaient besoin d'être modifiées.

Cette étude a été effectuée en deux phases au cours desquelles six surfaces différentes pour des porcelets en pouponnière ont été examinées : la Phase 1 s'est déroulée dans une ferme de recherche, alors que la Phase 2 a été réalisée dans deux sites de production commerciale. On a collecté des données sur la productivité, la posture des porcelets, les blessures et le climat de la chambre.



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Les deux phases

Dans la Phase 1, l'impact de l'espace alloué a été comparé entre de grands et de petits groupes (10 et 40 animaux par parc) pendant quatre saisons. Des données additionnelles ont été recueillies sur la physiologie du stress et l'immunocompétence des porcelets.

« La Phase 1 n'a montré aucun impact sur le gain moyen quotidien (GMQ), peu importe l'espace alloué; mais un impact sur le comportement des porcelets a été noté. Plus particulièrement, lorsqu'ils avaient moins d'espace, les porcelets passaient plus de temps en position assise. Ce comportement n'est pas commun chez les porcs et semble être un indicateur de stress. Plusieurs études suggèrent que le fait de s'asseoir montre un inconfort et le sentiment d'être à l'étroit chez les porcelets, réduisant ainsi le bien-être animal. »

L'impact le plus clair du surpeuplement dans la phase 1 s'est manifesté au cours de la cinquième semaine dans la pouponnière.

L'empilement des porcelets

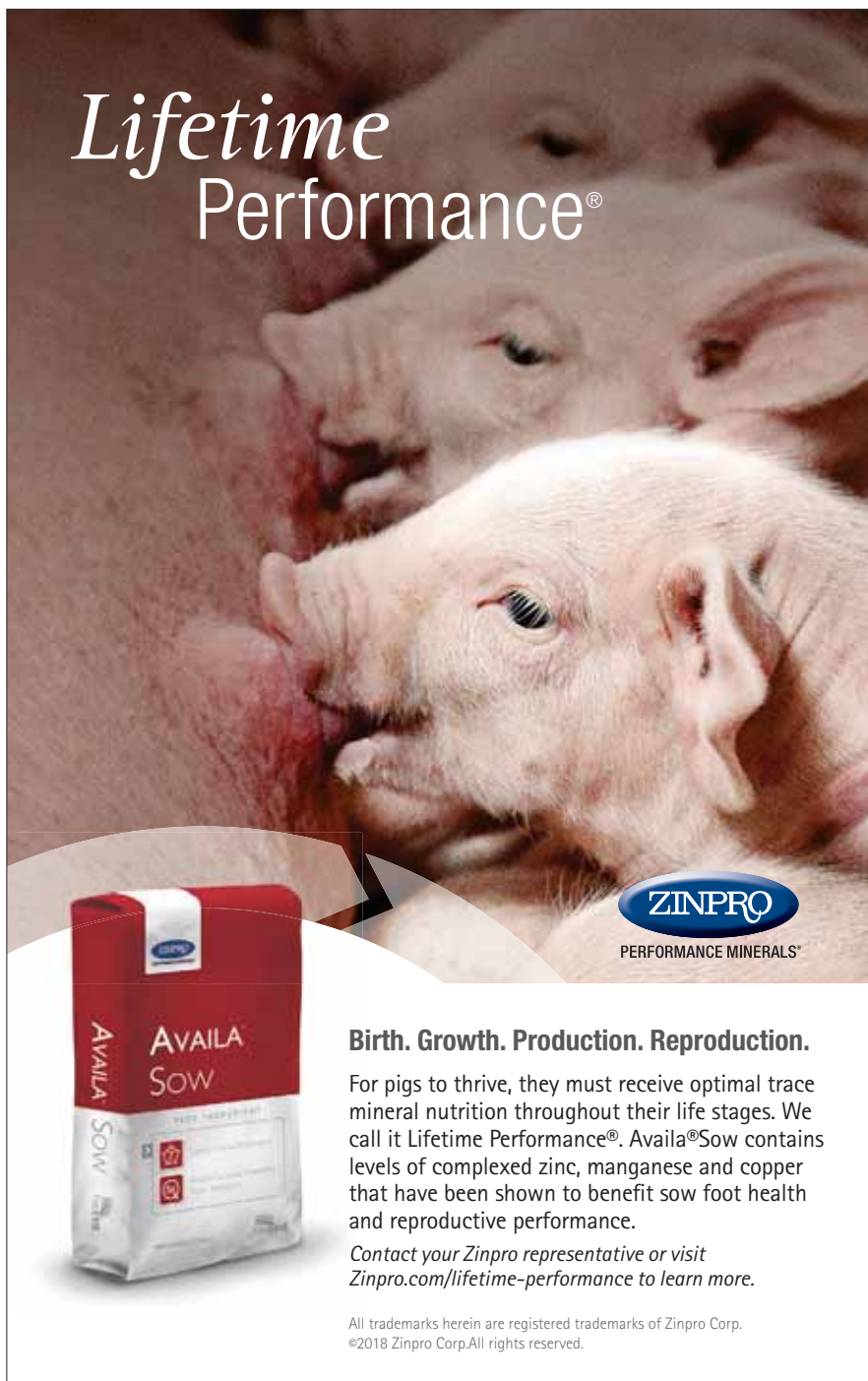
« Une des raisons pour laquelle nous pensons qu'un espace moindre pourrait convenir aux porcelets comparativement aux porcs plus âgés est qu'ils ont tendance à s'empiler, à se coucher les uns sur les autres. Avec le temps, cependant, ce comportement s'est atténué, de sorte qu'à la semaine 5, ceux qui avaient le plus d'espace se sont très peu empilés. Ce résultat suggère que l'empilement n'est pas leur position préférée en fin de phase de pouponnière et que lorsqu'ils ont plus d'espace, ils peuvent exprimer un comportement plus normal. »

Bien que les résultats de la Phase 2 (fermes commerciales) soient similaires en matière de comportement, ils montrent un impact clair de l'espace alloué sur le GMQ. Les porcelets ayant eu le plus d'espace ont obtenu les meilleurs GMQ, alors que les gains de ceux qui avaient moins d'espace étaient plus faibles, particulièrement à partir du milieu et jusqu'à la fin de la période en pouponnière.

« Il ressort des résultats préliminaires de la phase 2 que l'allocation d'espace de $k = 0,0335$, comme spécifié dans l'édition 2014 du Code de pratiques pour le soin et la manipulation des porcs, est appropriée. Dans l'ensemble, nos résultats indiquent que le Code est adéquat. Si l'espace que vous al-

louez est moindre que ce qui est suggéré dans le Code, vous devriez analyser ce point de près afin de vous assurer que vos porcelets ne sont pas trop à l'étroit ou gardés en pouponnière plus longtemps que nécessaire. Si c'est le cas, vous pouvez vous attendre à de moins bons gains de poids ainsi qu'à, des problématiques de comportement et de bien-être animal chez vos porcelets de pouponnière. »

Les résultats finaux seront publiés plus tard cette année lorsque toutes les résultats seront compilés. Par ailleurs, on peut conclure que si la vidéo « Porcs dans l'espace » peut vous assurer de passer un bon moment, l'impact d'un espace optimal sur vos porcelets et vos profits vous fera sourire. ■



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YOUR DAILY BACON

BY BUDDY SIMMONS

Wow, the time is nearly upon us again! We are of course speaking of the rapidly approaching holiday season, the time of celebration and merry-making. And of course, eating. A lot. So much eating. But before all that eating, there are often recipes shared, or tried for the first time, or suffered through year after year because your Aunt Betty thinks she's an undiscovered Iron Chef. But one consistent theme threads throughout the holidays – the one of overindulgence.

So, as our gift to you, we are going to provide Aunt Betty with some recipes that will make her feel like a star while simultaneously helping you avoid that second helping. And possibly the first.

This will be a bit of a departure for Your Daily Bacon, as not ALL the recipes will be pork related. And to convey the sheer repulsiveness of the culinary disasters we are sharing, we will be eschewing the usual memes and providing you with photos of the stomach-churning menu.

Most of these dishes are retro, developed at a time when it seems that edibility took a back seat to presentation and were designed to make your parties the talk of the town. Which we are sure that they did, just not in the manner intended (much like shag carpets).

So saddle on up to the up-chuck wagon, and take a gander at these offerings, just in time to consider for YOUR holiday

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60



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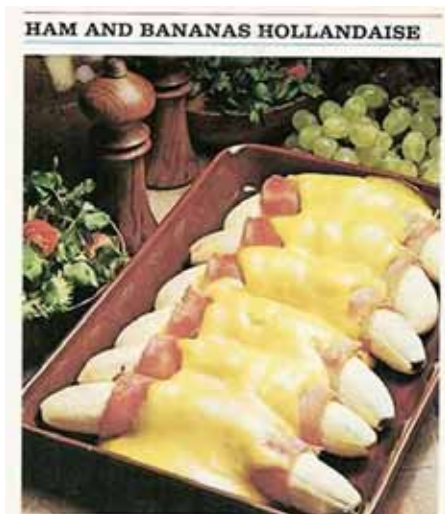
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extravaganzas! We'll lead with a couple rather unorthodox pork recipes, naturally. Keep in mind that while we at Your Daily Bacon believe that you can't really create anything horrible from pork, there CAN be exceptions to the rule that allow you to get close. Note that we are not providing the precise recipes, both for space considerations and a desire to not enable crimes against humanity during the holidays.



Ham and Banana Hollandaise. Uh, yum? Can I have coal in my stocking instead?

For example, who doesn't like ham? Well, some people may not, but it is a pretty safe bet that if you are reading this, you do not number among them. Further, bananas are a popular fruit. Self-

contained and easy to pack in a lunch, a lot of people enjoy them. But not all things complement one another. That's where ham and banana hollandaise steps onto the menu, originally from a popular house-keeping magazine from 1973.

It's simple. Get some bananas. Peel them, although we seriously doubt it could make a lot of difference, and sprinkle them with lemon juice. Next wrap the bananas in some ham slices and slather them with mustard. And then bake the mess for ten minutes, dousing them in Hollandaise sauce now and then.

We would think that the next step would be to remove from oven and deposit in trash can, but one man was not so lucky. He tried it, and this was his review:

"The finished dish smelled liked a banana slaughterhouse, but for the good of culinary archaeology, I dug right in. The result was OK going down, but two cans of Coke and a mouthful of Listerine did nothing for the lingering aftertaste."

That kind of says it all. But wait, there's more.

When is dessert not a dessert? When it involves bologna and cake – at the same time. Sure, it LOOKS sort-of like cake, but believe us, that's where the similarity ends. You take softened cream cheese and mix it with ranch dressing until it takes on a frosting-like consistency. Chill it a while in the refrigerator to give it a spreadable consistency. Then you cut a circle of bologna-sized piece of cardboard and wrap it in tinfoil. This is the base of your "cake". Just stack alternating layers of the cream-cheese frosting and slices of bologna, building something that reminds you of a cake. From a horror movie.

Then you frost the entire stack with more of the "frosting" and finally, get yourself a can of that processed cheese stuff. You use this to decorate your bologna cake just like a baker uses those bags of actual frosting, except when they do it they produce something that won't alienate them from their families for years.

To be really stylish, cut some pimento-stuffed olives into slices and place on top of the cake. Surround the olives with ci-



Remember, this is not cake covered with sweet frosting. Throw it out!

lantro leaves and voila! You now have the ugliest flowers ever topping your bologna cake. (Even though there are so many other green herbs, you will note that this recipe calls for cilantro – which tastes like soap and that approximately half the population has a genetic aversion to.)

Once complete, you are free to throw it away and go buy a fruit cake, which for the first time ever, now seems mouth-wateringly appetizing.

Here's one that originated in ancient Rome, according to our sources. ("Sources" for Your Daily Bacon means fishing the internet for a topic that we might think could be interesting and/or amusing and hoping we get a bite, so if you think we've reeled in some oddities, you should see some of the ones we throw back!)

We decided that this one was a keeper. We're unsure if it is still created, but we're certain it played a part in the fall of the Roman Empire. We present... uterus sausage. Now, in the face of things, given that sausage casings are often made from pork intestinal linings and nobody bats an eye, this one really isn't that weird, maybe. Everything is subjective, right?

It's a simple recipe, merely get yourself a pig uterus. Stuff it up with cumin, leeks,


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pepper, fish sauce, pine nuts, and ground pork meat. All that's left to do is toss it into some water, add oil and more fish sauce along with some dill and leeks and boil until done. It was not clear how long that would be, but probably as long as one would cook any other sausage.

Next on the menu is another sausage. This one is...well, we'll let you be the judge of its merits. We'll just say that we nearly tossed it overboard during the fishing expedition.

Grab your forks and prepare yourself for stuffed pig rectums!



Okay, we aren't exactly sure WHICH of the two sausages we described this is. But does it matter?

For this one, you'll need a calf mesentery. For you non-chefs or biology students, that would be the membrane encasing the intestines of a vertebrate – in this case a calf of course – that connects the whole works to the back wall of the abdominal cavity. Next, add the udder of a young beef. Soak in cold water for a while and then blanch in boiling water for 30 minutes, dry the mess off and cut into small pieces.

Next sauté some mushrooms (the recipe calls for a generous amount of those) along with some chopped parsley, and season with salt, pepper, nutmeg, and a glass of white wine. Then remove it from the heat and thicken with five egg yolks. Stir in the chopped calf mesentery and young beef udder and shove it into the pig rectum, a component you need that is pretty explicitly described in the name of this recipe. Tie of both ends, and poach for 45 minutes in stock mixed with white wine.



We're betting this is banned in Hawaii.

Although it's fun to laugh at food ideas that we don't find culturally appealing, 'tis the season to remember that while we laugh, there are many right at home and around the world who don't have enough to eat this holiday season. A big thank you to all those out there in the industry to help year after to year to combat hunger and fill food bank shelves and freezers.

We hope we have lit a spark or stirred the imaginations you and your aunt Betty. However, if you decide to invite us to your holiday festivities and choose to offer these dishes, please take no offense if we decide to stop at Burger King on the way there! ■



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