

THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE

- Emerging market opportunities workshop

NEWS

- Sausage sales stay strong
- Denmark's first transgenic pigs are born
- Hogs for Hens
- Cooler pigs means better feed intake, higher wean weights

IT'S A DATE

- PQAPlus certification sessions
- 4-H FSQA sessions
- Advanced Swine Reproduction Seminars

DID YOU KNOW?

- East Coast magazine says Iowa farm has "best bacon"

FOR THE RECORD

- China was largest U.S. pork importer in 2008

THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE

Emerging market opportunities workshop

The slowing economy means hard choices by producers and consumers, yet offers possibilities to those who perhaps needed a little push to start down a new path. One such push is in the form of a daylong workshop sponsored by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. The program, set for Monday, March 30 at the Gateway Conference Center in Ames, features keynote and break-out presentations by leaders of projects funded through the Leopold Center's Marketing and Food Systems Initiative and value chains partnership, and the coordinator of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders Network. One of the featured working groups is the Pork Niche Market Working Group. Topics include livestock production and Iowa agritourism, local and regional food distribution, saving energy and labor on farms, and new tools to building food businesses. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., the opening session is at 8:30 a.m. and the keynote address is from 3 to 4 p.m. The entire program is free and open to the public, but *registration is required by March 19* to ensure lunch. See the online registration form and a link to the program agenda on the Leopold Center's Web site here

<http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/workshop.htm>

NEWS

Sausage sales stay strong

Just as bacon secured its place in the restaurant industry, another processed product is making its way up the consumer choice sale. According to Chicago-based market research firm Information Resources Inc., for the year that ended Nov. 30, 2008, dinner sausage sales in a retail category (that excluded Wal-Mart) were up more than 4 percent over the previous year. And, breakfast sausage and ham sales also increased by more than 3 percent during that same time period. Why the surge in purchases? National Pork Board has helped with sausage promotions, including coupons, recipes and in-store tastings. People who want to save money by dining more at home will use foods they know and are familiar with, and sausage can easily fit the bill. Also, some restaurants are adding sausage dishes to their menus. And, a recent report from the market research firm Packaged Facts indicates the U.S. market for deli and other refrigerated meats could grow at a compound annual rate of 2 percent, for the next four years.

Denmark's first transgenic pigs are born

Using technology developed at their institution in 2007, researchers at Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Research Centre Foulum, have announced the birth of their first transgenic pigs. Initially,

scientists were not sure whether their novel cloning method would affect pig physiology. The pigs born to one of the transgenic clones in February of this year appear healthy and normal. That's good news for the scientists who use these pigs to study Alzheimer's disease and its development. You can read more in a news release from Aarhus University here <http://sn.im/d0bui> and a news piece on the International Nordic News Web site here <http://sn.im/d0ciy>.

Hogs for Hens

This partnership between the Iowa Pork Producers Association and Pheasants Forever helps producers improve aesthetics and appearances of facilities, and establish pheasant habitat and increase pheasant numbers. Farmers work with Pheasants Forever wildlife biologists to determine appropriate plans, including tree and native grass plantings to support wildlife habitats. Cost-share options can lower out-of-pocket costs for producers and decrease landscape maintenance. To learn more, contact IPPA at 800-372-7675.

Cooler pigs means better feed intake, higher wean weights

A recent Dutch research study shows that using a cooling system can provide positive results for sows, their pigs and the producer's bottom line. The 2006-2008 study was funded by the Dutch product board for livestock and meat, and Nooyen Pig Flooring. A cool floor system was studied to see whether it provided adequate heat relief to change a sow's physiological condition. Temperatures can be high enough (higher than 71 degrees Fahrenheit, according to this study) that makes it difficult for sows to emit much of their body heat. This can result in lower feed intake, leading to less or lower quality milk production, possibly resulting in slower piglet growth. In this study, the cool sow system consisted of a steel grid with solid floor elements and a cool water circuit (22°C/71°F) underneath the lactating sow's shoulders and neck. What happened? Higher feed intake by sows during lactation, ave. 0.3 kg/day; lower sow weight loss in summer; wean weight was higher, especially in summer; and the next litter yielded one more live pig on average. You can read more about this study on the Web site of PigProgress.com here <http://sn.im/d2tih>

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IT'S A DATE

Continuing. PQAPlus certification sessions. See the IPIC web site here <http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPlus.html> for date, location and contact information.

Continuing. FSQA training and testing sessions for Iowa 4-H'ers. See the IPIC web site here <http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/FSQA09.html> for date, location and contact information

March 19, 20. Advanced Swine Reproduction Seminars. Topics include case studies featuring common reproductive failures, air filters and ventilation systems, parity segregation, disease management and monitoring strategies. Registration is at 9:30 a.m. with a 10 a.m. program start. Preregistration is required to ensure pork loin lunch. For more information, contact Dave Stender at 712-225-6196 or 712-261-0225. These are three separate programs with identical content.

- March 19. Waverly, Iowa. Civic Center. Preregister by calling Mark Storlie at 563-425-3331.
- March 20. Norfolk, Nebraska, Community College. Preregister by calling Don Levis at 402-584-3816.

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DID YOU KNOW?

East Coast magazine says Iowa farm has "best bacon"

Vande Rose Farms from Oskaloosa, Iowa took top honors in an applewood-smoked bacon taste test held by Cook's Illustrated magazine, and no one from the company knew it was being considered. An article in the Des Moines Register describes the contest and company, and includes information on other Iowa-based pork companies involved with the second annual Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival. The event was held

in late February in Des Moines. Vande Rose representatives have participated in the Pork Niche Market Working Group of which IPIC is a member, and ISU Extension swine specialist Terry Steinhart worked with the company during its start-up period. You can read the Des Moines Register article here <http://sn.im/dghnt>

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FOR THE RECORD

China was largest U.S. pork importer in 2008

At 1.925 million metric tons (4.2 billion pounds), China became the single-year record holder of pork imports from the U.S. Officials with the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) say the numbers show the extent of influence China can have on world markets. However, this strong showing in 2008 is unlikely to be repeated this year. China's herd is increasing in size dramatically due to increased profitability, subsidies for producers and lower hog prices. You can read more in this article on the USMEF Web site http://www.usmef.org/TradeLibrary/News09_0203a.asp

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NEWS NOW from the Iowa Pork Industry Center www.ipic.iastate.edu
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