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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
NEWS NOW is turning 11
Twelve days from today, NEWS NOW will turn 11 years old. While that’s an entire lifetime for some species, we think we’re just getting started in our effort to bring you news and interesting bits of information from IPIC, ISU and the animal science department, the pork industry, and agriculture in general. And as much as things change, we know some things remain. For example, in the first issue on April 30, 2001, the following was part of the first item, “The Iowa Pork Industry Center (together with other ISU partners and industry partners) will offer a one-day conference in September to address the development of value added niche market opportunities for pork producers. Be sure to monitor the IPIC web-site for further information as this program develops.” Of course, that was the introduction to the “Niche and Value-added Marketing: What’s in it for You?” seminar on Sept. 18, 2001. And, that seminar’s follow-up session led to the Pork Niche Market Working Group.

So, we reiterate our ongoing goal to bring you credible, trustworthy, unbiased and current sources of information. We welcome your comments and questions, and encourage you to share your suggestions and concerns. Please use my contact information at the bottom of this newsletter. Thanks for being part of our first 11 years!

NEWS
The value of agricultural research
Research can help provide vital information -- basic and/or applied -- which in turn can lead to a positive return on investment for the funder. Agriculture is a key part of the nation's economy, and ag research promotes possible solutions in the areas of human and animal health, energy, environment, rural development, trade, and food safety. The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) offers a commentary, “Investing in a Better future through Public Agricultural Research,” that will help members of Congress, the administration and the general public understand the high "rate of return" agricultural research has delivered nationally and globally, and why funding truly is in the public interest. The 12-page report is available only online as a pdf document at this URL http://www.cast-science.org/websiteUploads/publicationPDFs/Ag%20Research%20final%20QTA2011-1171.pdf

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PQA Plus® numbers keep growing
Way to go, Iowa! Your PQA Plus® numbers rock! According to a release from the Iowa Pork Producers Association, more than 14,000 Iowans have been certified and nearly 5,500 pork production sites have been assessed through the Pork Quality Assurance Plus® program. Just four years ago at World Pork Expo, the PQA Plus® program was announced as a voluntary continuous improvement program that outlines good production practices in the areas of food safety and animal well-being. Iowa producers heard the message and have responded. Individuals are certified first, and they then invite PQA Plus® advisors to conduct objective site assessments on their farms. IPIC/ISU Extension swine program specialists are certified PQA Plus® advisors and schedule individual certification sessions and site assessments on an as-needed basis. If you’re interested in going through the PQA Plus® training, or it’s time to recertify contact your specialist http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ag/fsswine/fsswine.html or Tyler Bettin at IPPA by email at tbettin@iowapork.org or by phone at 800-372-7675.

PRODUCTION TIP
Effective rodent control pays dividends
As weather changes, don’t forget to check the rodent control you’re using for your buildings. Effective rodent control relies on keeping rodents out, preventing access to feed and baiting/trapping. Diligent rodent control should be a routine task on the farm because rodents can compromise biosecurity and health of the herd. Develop a customized plan of preventing entry, storing feed and cleaning spills, and effective baiting. Then, write down the actions on a calendar and check your calendar and your buildings on a regular basis. Keep track of what works and what doesn’t, and ask your ISU Extension swine program specialist for assistance. http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ag/fsswine/fsswine.html

IT’S A DATE
Continuing. FSQA training and testing sessions for Iowa 4-H’ers. See the IPIC web site here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/FSQA11.html for date, location and contact information

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Continuing. PQA Plus® and TQA® producer certification sessions. See the IPIC web site here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPlus.html for date, location and contact information.

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April 27. Science With Practice spring semester poster presentation. Kildee Hall atrium. 3:30 to 5 p.m.

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May 4. PQAPlus® advisor certification session. Ensminger Room, Kildee Hall, ISU campus. Cost is $75 per approved applicant. Registration deadline is April 25 with fee due from approved applicants by time of session. Read more in this news release http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/pqa-plus-advisor-training-offered-may-4 Download the application form here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPapp050411.docx

DID YOU KNOW?
Berkshire report maintains wide appeal
Yet again, the Berkshire Production Marketing Report that now-retired ISU Extension swine field specialist Larry McMullen authored five years ago for the Pork Niche Market Working Group is atop the list of most-downloaded files from the IPIC website. In March, the Web Trends tracking program registered 2423 downloads from 412 visits. This equates to 6.5% of the total number of downloads for our website during the month. Now that’s impressive! If there are specific reports or other information you’d like to see on our site, let us know.

FOR THE RECORD
More than meat
Most Americans who go to their local grocery store to pick out the best looking pork chop or a nice package of bacon probably don’t even think about where the rest of the pig went. In the U.S. alone, about 9 billion animals are slaughtered annually, with coproducts (also known as byproducts) as a large part of the meat and poultry industry. In addition to the commonly recognized leather, pet food and fertilizers, some coproducts are helping fuel the renewable energy field. Case in point: the Tyson-Syntroleum joint venture called Dynamic Fuels is now converting non-food grade animal fats produced or supplied by Tyson Foods (such as beef tallow, pork lard, chicken fat and greases) into high-quality renewable fuels. To read about this and other coproduct opportunities and examples, read this news article on the Meat and Poultry website:


NEWS NOW from the Iowa Pork Industry Center www.ipic.iastate.edu
Editor Sherry Hoyer, phone 515-294-4496, shoyer@iastate.edu
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