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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
News from North Carolina
Yes, this is the same heading as the April 7 issue, but the content is different. From April 8-12, a group of IPIC-ISU Extension folks spent time in North Carolina learning about that state’s pork industry, its land grant university’s extension and support system, and the relationship between Smithfield Foods, Inc. and Murphy-Brown, LLC, just for starters. Our group of 15 learned from Todd See and others about North Carolina State University and NC-State Extension staff responsibilities and opportunities; we’re in awe of Sampson Community College’s Steve Mathis (he’s dean of occupational programs, division chair of agricultural and industrial programs, and department chair, one of two instructors in the livestock and poultry technology area; he custom designs training and certification programs for agricultural industry companies and has developed a new two-year program in agricultural sciences after which many students choose to continue their education at NC State); we appreciate the full day that Murphy-Brown folks spent with us providing current company and industry philosophy and information, courtesy of Matt Culbertson; and we acknowledge the importance of industry companies like Goldsboro Milling and Maxwell Foods as presented to us by Bob Ivey. We gained a wealth of knowledge and the professional benefit of hearing directly from colleagues of a different background. In a word, the trip was amazing. Of course the biggest benefit will be to our clients and consumers, as we share what we learned and how to use that information with you. We plan to make use of the positive connections and applicable information we now have with this varied group of experts, and look forward to providing details and photos in the days to come.

NEWS
U.S. pork exports continue to rise
According to figures released by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF,) February marked the fifth consecutive month of record-breaking exports (including variety meats) for the U.S. pork industry. For the two-month period of January-February 2008, pork and pork variety meat exports were up a total of 41 percent, to 671.6 million pounds (304,651 metric tons) valued at $685 million. Because pork production is more than 10 percent higher than last year, USMEF research and analysis manager Erin Daley said that without the exports, the domestic market would need to “absorb the equivalent of an additional 60,000 hogs per day, which would drive prices down significantly.” You can read the USMEF news release at this URL http://snipr.com/24r3f
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What's a producer to do?
German slaughterhouses request the use of traceability marks on pigs imported from The Netherlands. However, marking animals is forbidden in The Netherlands. Those from The Netherlands who export pigs say the procedure provides a good way of identifying the meat's origin because it remains on the carcass after slaughter. Because several exporters to Germany come up against the problem, the Dutch Livestock Trade Board has asked its government to investigate a possible compromise with German officials. You can read this release on the Pig Progress Web site here http://snipr.com/256uo

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No restriction of U.S. pork imports to Australia
Earlier this month, Australia's Productivity Commission (APC) recommended that no restrictions be placed on U.S. pork imports, and that's good news for American producers. Australia has experienced economic woes, and some pork groups there wanted to limit imports, either by instituting quotas or imposing tariffs of up to 62 percent on imported pork. The findings of the APC show no cause-effect relationship between U.S. imports and Australian pork producer financial difficulties. The Australian government had the final decision on this issue. Read more in an article on the National Pork Producers Council web site http://www.nppc.org/wm/show.php?id=777&c=1.

IT'S A DATE
Continuing. PQA Plus™ certification sessions. A two-hour training session for pork producers or individuals who need PQA Plus™ certification. Cost is $25 and preregistration is encouraged. See IPIC Web site for locations, times and specific contact information http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPlus.html

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Continuing. Food Safety Quality Assurance Training and Testing sessions. See IPIC Web site for locations, times and specific contact information http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/FSQA08.html

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May 19-20. Ultrasound Training and Certification Conference. Sponsored by the National Swine Improvement Federation. Contact Tom Baas at tjbaas@iastate.edu for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?
Video camera is valuable management tool
Professional Swine Management (PSM), a division of Carthage Veterinary Service in Illinois, has installed video cameras in some of the company's facilities in a variety of settings. This might sound like "Big Brother's Watching", but PSM's Director of Operations for Sow Production Bill Beckman says everyone who works in one of the camera-monitored facilities knows the cameras are there and no one has objected to that use. In addition to being able to tell whether employees know their responsibilities and are doing their jobs correctly, the cameras offer looks at more than workers. Video feeds allow views of animals, procedures, farm visitors, ventilation and feed equipment, and more. In fact, video is a well-used option for demonstrating new processes and keeping track of biosecurity concerns. Read more about how PSM uses its video system in this article on the National Hog Farmer Web site http://snipr.com/256ys

FOR THE RECORD
ISU meat science grad student is author
You probably know that graduate students need to write in order to receive their desired degree. In animal science, that writing takes place as a thesis (for M.S.) and dissertation (for Ph.D.) But one ISU
animal science grad student has taken a side road. Armitra Jackson (doctoral student in meat science) says her book, “The Birthday to Remember Forever,” is the first in a planned 10-book series, “Eating Safe with Ace and Mace.” All 10 books will be based on the importance of food safety, and directed toward children in kindergarten through fourth grade. The next book is scheduled for release with the next year. In a news release about the books, Armitra says the main characters learn the importance of safe food handling while preparing for Ace’s birthday party. When she’s not writing these books, she’s working with research on food safety and foodborne pathogens. Read the ISU news release about Armitra here http://snipr.com/257ao

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