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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
PQA™ Plus – perhaps not what you thought
With the announcement of the new Pork Quality Assurance™ Plus program at World Pork Expo earlier this month, many questions have risen regarding the new structure and distinction from the former PQA III. IPIC’s Colin Johnson addresses the most common questions here. If you have more questions, please submit for possible future use. shoyer@iastate.edu Also, IPIC will likely have information on our Web site that will include Q&A and training schedules.

A brief intro: PQA III is no longer available; however, current PQA certification is valid for three years from last issue. Producers who need updated PQA certification will now be certified only through the PQA™ Plus program.

1. What’s the difference between PQA III and PQA™ Plus?
   PQA™ Plus expands the animal well-being component of the original PQA III content. PQA™ Plus, like PQA III, has a producer education component, but it adds an on-site assessment of animal well-being. PQA™ Plus merges the concepts of the former PQA and SWAP programs, food safety and animal well-being in two steps:
   -- Individual certification through education (termed PQA™ Plus Certification)
   -- Farm site assessment (termed PQA™ Plus Site Status)

2. How do I locate a PQA™ Plus Advisor?
   A list of veterinarians, Extension specialists and adult agriculture educators trained as PQA™ Plus Advisors will be available in the near future at http://www.pork.org or by calling the Pork Checkoff Service Center (800) 456-7675.

3. How can I achieve PQA™ Plus “Certification”?
   When recertification for PQA is needed, producers will go through the new program with their veterinarian or ag educator who has been trained in the program. “PQA™ Plus Certification” is the education and training session of the program. This meets the needs of many packer buying requirements. PQA™ Plus Certification encompasses the former PQA III with slight revisions to the 10 Good Production Practices (GPPs) and heavy emphasis on GPP #10, Providing Proper Swine Care to Improve Swine Well-Being.
4. How can I achieve PQA™ Plus “Site Status?”
After receiving PQA™ Plus certification, producers may obtain “PQA™ Plus Site Status” for a production site by having an assessment of animal well-being related issues of that production site. Site Status is the second component of PQA™ Plus. PQA™ Plus Advisors perform the on-site assessment and provide a report to the producer. Or, producers can self-assess their site after receiving training and endorsement from a PQA™ Plus Advisor. A NAIS Premises ID Number is required for the site assessment.

5. What is referred to by the term “PQA™ Plus Audit?”
A third component of PQA™ Plus is a potential “audit.” Producers should not be concerned by the audit element. The goal of the audits is to measure the effectiveness of the welfare assurance program, not to find farms not in compliance. An audit is selected from a statistical sample of operations with “Site Status” and will be performed by a third-party. The opportunity for an audit is designed to provide customer credibility in the PQA™ Plus program.

NEWS
SowBridge to begin this fall
Producers, managers, employees and industry professionals associated with sow herd operations will want to consider registering for the new "SowBridge Breeding Herd Education Series" set to begin this fall. Modeled after the popular "PorkBridge" series, SowBridge uses a distance learning method that combines electronic information viewed on computer with live presentations over the phone. The idea is that attendees can increase their knowledge and skills without needing to leave the comfort of their home or farm office, and no Internet access is required. SowBridge is designed to aid in day-to-day activities and enhance profitability of herd or unit. Presentations will be held the first Wednesday of the month from October 2007 through September 2008. Subject material is designed to cover topics and issues applicable to modern operations and systems of all sizes. Specific topics and speakers are being identified now. Coordinator Mark Whitney of University of Minnesota and Ken Stalder of Iowa State University say they anticipate great interest in the program because only one subscription is required per site. Farm managers and owners can sign up for the program and have several employees take in each presentation over the noon break. The program can promote interaction within the group afterward, stimulating discussion on how subject matter presented during the session affects them and their operation. Each program is 45 minutes long and begins at 11:30 p.m. Central Time (12:30 p.m. Eastern Time.) Cost for the year-long subscription is $250. The week before each session, subscribers receive a CD containing that session’s presentation and information on accessing the live speaker presentation. Subscribers call into a toll-free conference line to listen to and interact with presenters. If you’re interested in participating, or in learning more, e-mail me at shoyer@iastate.edu

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New look for IMMAG Web site
The Iowa Manure Management Action Group (IMMAG) has unveiled a new Web site and a new link to the new site. Based at Iowa State in the agronomy department, IMMAG's new look is now available at www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/homepage.html. Web site manager Angie Rieck-Hinz says users will be better able to find the information they want through a better organization of the site's content. Iowa publications and research being done in the state will be highlighted on the site, and its FAQ page will be reviewed and updated as necessary. You can see that page here http://www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/faq.html What if you forget the new URL? Angie says the old one will immediately redirect you to the new site, but urges everyone to change their favorites/bookmarks setting to make sure IMMAG is really just a click away.

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A new angle on healthful pork
Efforts to increase pork consumption in Korea are taking a healthful turn, and one that sounds quite appetizing as well. As people adapt their buying habits to include more foods that are better for them, producers also are adapting both their production and marketing strategies. The trade agreement between Korea and the U.S. means lower priced imports from the U.S., so Korean farmers are including more flavorful inputs to promote the quality of the domestic product in hopes that quality will triumph low prices. Two of the newer products: Tangerine pork and Hongju pork. Earlier this month, Jeju Island authorities said that hogs fed tangerines contain more vitamins and less cholesterol than ordinary hogs. And, sometime this year Jin Island in South Jeolla Province will introduce beef and pork from animals fed remnants of the red-colored liquor Hongju, that's made of a mixture of rice and medicinal herbs. According to Sunchon National University, meat from these animals contains less cholesterol and thinner fat. To whet your appetite even more, check out this article on the Web site of The Hankyoreh, an independent newspaper in Seoul, Korea. http://snipr.com/1nj5k

IT’S A DATE
Continuing through the end of June. Food Safety Quality Assurance training and testing sessions for 4-H'ers. See the list of dates and locations on the IPIC Web site here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/FSQA07.html

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June 26-28. Iowa State 4-H Youth Conference. Iowa State University campus, Ames. IPIC will offer three pork-related workshops to attendees and chaperones. See more here http://snipr.com/1irhq

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June 29. Beginning swine artificial insemination workshop. 10 a.m. Iowa Lakes Community College, Emmetsburg. Cost is $20. Read a news release here www.ipic.iastate.edu/information/Beginning.AI.607.release.doc Download the registration brochure here www.ipic.iastate.edu/events/Beginning.AI.607.pdf Contact Dave Stender for more information by e-mail at dstender@iastate.edu or by phone at (712) 225-6196.

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June 29. PQA™ Plus Advisor Training. Johnson County Fairgrounds, Iowa City.

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July 2. PQA™ Plus Advisor Training. Northwest Iowa Community College, Room 118A, Sheldon.

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July 17. Lauren Christian Pork Chop Open. Veenker Memorial Golf Course and Farm Bureau Pavilion, ISU campus, Ames. Golf begins at 10 a.m. at Veenker and dinner is at the Pavilion at 5 p.m. Cost is $75 per person or $300 per four-player team. Download the registration form here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/events/LCPCO.Regform07.pdf

DID YOU KNOW?
Scoop on Poop at Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines, Iowa
Where else but Iowa (sorry for the pun) would you expect to see a science-based exhibit on livestock waste? That's right, the stuff that animals leave behind (sorry, just another pun) is the subject of a summer-long exhibit at the Blank Park Zoo in Iowa's capital city. The "Scoop on Poop" was created by the exhibits department of Clyde Peeling's Reptiland in Allenwood, Pennsylvania, a zoological institution accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, and took more than three years from idea to reality. In addition, zoo attendees will be able to view "Iowa’s Manure Cycle" exhibit. It's sponsored by Iowa agricultural including the Iowa Pork Producers Association, Farm Bureau Federation of Iowa, Iowa Manure Management Action Group, and the Agribusiness Association of Iowa. You can read about the "Scoop on Poop" on the Zoo's Web site here http://snipr.com/1n9zr and read more about "Iowa's Manure Cycle" on the Web site of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship here http://snipr.com/1na09
FOR THE RECORD
New comment period open for COOL
A comment period for mandatory Country of Origin Labeling in the U.S. has been reopened for 60 days, and both proponents and opponents of the proposed final rule are invited to submit general comments on the proposed rule for beef, lamb, pork, perishable agricultural commodities, and peanuts. The USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service asks those submitting comments to consider the provisions of the Interim Final Rule for fish and shellfish and whether the definitions and requirements in the interim final rule can also be applied to beef, lamb, pork, perishable agricultural commodities, and peanuts. You can read the published notice in the Federal Register here http://www.ams.usda.gov/cool/LSCOOLPRreopen.pdf Comments are due Aug. 20, 2007. To comment, follow the link from this main page http://snipr.com/1njmr

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