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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
Warm thoughts and best wishes from IPIC
Winter doesn’t officially arrive for nearly a week, but here in central Iowa it might as well be winter right now. Bitter cold and strong winds mean wind chills below zero. ISU students shiver as they quickly traverse campus to get to their semester final tests this week. Salvation Army bell ringers and Santas are familiar faces at many of our retail areas. Travel plans are being finalized for holiday trips. And, as usual, NEWS NOW takes a break at the end of the calendar year. We hope NEWS NOW remains a positive addition to your world, and ask that you consider forwarding the newsletter to someone on your own e-mail list and encourage them to follow the “subscribe” directions at the end of this message. Remember that we don’t keep names, addresses, phone numbers or any other contact information – just e-mail addresses – so potential subscribers can be assured they won’t be solicited or bothered by anything else. Even though this newsletter will be on break, IPIC continues to be available to you by phone, fax and e-mail. Contact us with your questions, concerns and suggestions as they arise. We’re planning a fine 2009 and hope to see you in the new year.

NEWS
U.S. pork exports remain high in October
Despite expectations of decreased activity due to the economic downturn, U.S. pork exports have remained high this fall. In fact, the pork and pork variety meat numbers for October -- 425.4 million pounds valued at $487 million -- are the third-highest monthly volume and the highest monthly value yet. The first 10 months of 2008 showed a continuing strong market with volume up 67 percent. In Japan alone, pork exports are up 27 percent in volume and 35 percent in value. You can read more in this update on the U.S. Meat Export Federation Web site http://snipr.com/8ahwr

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SignFSIS offers more ways to receive free USDA info
USDA’s FSIS provides online information, including videos and audio files, to help people understand more about a variety of food safety and related topics. Much of that same information is available for vision-impaired and hearing-impaired folks as well. According to the description on the Web site here http://snipr.com/89c1y, “SignFSIS video-casts in American Sign Language featuring text-captioning are designed to inform deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers about foodborne illness and raise the level of awareness of the dangers associated with improper handling and undercooking of food.” And this page
http://snipr.com/89cuy offers audio broadcasts on many of the same topics. There’s a link on both pages to register for automatic notifications of additions to those pages. The latest addition to both? Holiday eggnog and food safety concerns, of course.

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Internship opportunities at NPB
It’s December and you know what that means? At least for college students, this is the time to start planning summer internships. Those interested in careers in pork production or who simply want to learn more about the industry from a different perspective are encouraged to check out the following opportunities at the National Pork Board’s Clive, Iowa office. All are full-time paid internships and will run twelve weeks, from May 18, 2009 through approximately Aug. 14, 2009. NPB will hire one person for each of these positions: Science and Technology, Marketing, Communications, and Producer Services/Outreach. Applications should include cover letter and resume, and writing samples for the communications position. All are to be submitted via e-mail. Read more information about the positions and application process on the NPB site http://snipr.com/7pfba

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IPIC known around the world
One of the ways we evaluate our online presence (www.ipic.iastate.edu) and implied respect for being an accurate and current source of pork industry related information is through two Web use tracking programs, WebTrends and Google Analytics. No person or individual computer is identifiable to us through either of these programs, so please don’t be concerned that we’re violating your privacy by collecting these bits of information. Google Analytics offers a great deal of categories and time ranges for compiling usage numbers, and I’m amazed at the information it provides. For example, in the past year, the IPIC Web site has been visited by people from 118 countries/territories. Ranked by the average time per visit, the top ten are Mauritius, Slovakia, Barbados, Laos, Iraq, Bahamas, Austria, Greece, Bulgaria and Argentina. All were well over 6 minutes per visit. From Dec. 15, 2007 to today, the percentages of new and returning visitors were 54% and 46% respectively. In the past month, those percentages were slightly reversed, with 51% returnees versus 49% new folks. This is important because it can show that people who’ve used our site in the past feel confident in returning for additional information. There are lots of ways to look at and analyze the data from these programs, and we thank you for being part of our continuing Web success (even though we don’t know which of the statistics are specifically from your visits.)

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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.

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Dec. 17. Pork Niche Market Working Group. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. IPPA offices in Clive. See the PNMWG Web site for more information http://snipr.com/703wg

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Dec. 18. IPIC Advisory Board. 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Kildee Hall, ISU campus, Ames. See current members on our Web site here http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/about.html We are in need of a producer for a three-year term on the board. If you’re interested or know someone who might be, let us know at ipic@iastate.edu

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Jan. 28-29. Iowa Pork Congress. Hy-Vee Hall, Iowa Events Center. Des Moines. See IPIC in the Iowa State University area, booth 1127 along the north side of the building. See links to the exhibitor listing, seminar schedule, new product showcase and more on the IPC Web site http://www.iowaporkcongress.org/

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DID YOU KNOW?
ISU faculty interviews on PRRS-related topics
Following the International PRRS Symposium in Chicago earlier this month, Boehringer Ingelheim sponsored a seminar: "Foundations of Area and Regional PRRS Virus Control." Chuck Zimmerman of AgNewsWire interviewed two speakers from ISU: Jeff Zimmerman and Derald Holtkamp. You can read more and listen to those interviews on the AgWired Web site. Look for “Testing For PRRS Exposure” http://snipr.com/8bad6 and “PADRAP Now Online” http://snipr.com/8bajh

FOR THE RECORD
Year 3 of Smithfield-funded grants now available
The third year of a 10-year program for Smithfield Foods, Inc.-funded grants is now under way through the Iowa Attorney General’s office. Applications are due Jan. 30, 2009 for swine industry projects related to increasing profits, helping independent producers compete, making market information available, protecting the environment, and other goals. A news release on the site http://snipr.com/89b23 reminds people that $100,000 is available for this coming year. The request for applications and appendices documents are available on the AG site here http://snipr.com/89b4z Funded projects from 2008 included two new: 1. Golden Hills Resource Conservation & Development of Oakland, Iowa, was awarded $16,348.20 to demonstrate growth response to a new natural swine nutrition supplement made from an ethanol syrup co-product; and 2. The Boone Community School District FFA was awarded $25,824.96 to construct a mobile swine laboratory that will allow the public to view and learn about commercial and sustainable swine farrowing operations. Two others received funding to continue work from 2007. If you’re interested or want more information, call the AG’s Farm Division at 515-281-5351 or e-mail the office at FARM@ag.state.ia.us.

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