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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
Positive pork industry news from China
Agfeed Industries, Inc., the largest commercial hog producer and the largest premix feed company in China, announced record financial results for the quarter ended June 30, 2008. Not only that, but Agfeed officials say they expect the positive financial numbers to continue through the rest of this year. What makes this business so successful while U.S. producers are going through rough economic times? Especially when you consider that China produces more than six times the number of hogs annually that the U.S. does: 600 million-plus head in China compared with 100 million in our country. First, Agfeed is the epitome of vertical integration in that country’s swine industry, with controlling interest in 25 commercial hog farms, strategically located in two key consumer markets with high income and high pork consumption levels, and five feed manufacturing plants located in close proximity to these farms. Second, hog production is free from income tax, freeing up more income for the company and its producers. Third, hog producers receive full payment upfront from wholesale buyers, generating significant cash flow and encouraging repeat business. Fourth, raw materials costs are falling, which means lower cost-of-production and higher profits. The company’s 2007 net income of $6.7 million was up 467% from 2006. And, according to information on the Agfeed Web site (http://snipr.com/3fgxr) the China Feed Industry Association says that China will surpass the U.S. as the world’s largest animal feed market, reaching $50 billion in annual sales by 2010. Just so you know, this company is a NASDAQ Global Market listed (Stock Symbol: FEED) American company that’s headquartered in China. This is quite a different approach and scenario from current U.S. industry numbers. What’s in our future? Perhaps a start is to look at the Chinese industry.

NEWS
2008 London Swine Conference proceedings
If you’re looking for new current information (and who isn’t?) take a look at the proceedings from the 2008 London Swine Conference held earlier this year in Ontario, available at this URL http://snipr.com/3fgtk
You can choose from 28 listed presentation and break-out session papers, or download the entire proceedings. Speakers include John Lawrence and Jeff Zimmerman from Iowa State University, and Mike Brumm of Brumm Swine Consultancy in Minnesota. Topics range from border closure contingency plans to pig flow to anaerobic digestion as an alternate fuel source.

Danish university to develop smart farrowing pen
Scientists of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Aarhus Skov A/S are developing a system designed to reduce piglet mortality through climate control and monitoring. The system will register the condition and activity of the animals, and pass on that information to the farmer. Based on past data, the system can predict when a sow is expected to farrow. That message is given to the farmer and to a climate control system that ensures more heat in the pen. The researchers also would like to develop sensors to measure conditions such as the location in each pen of the sow and her piglets, and how they are doing. The research project also will investigate whether it is most practical to measure conditions by using sensors, chips in the ear or video surveillance. You can read more about the four-year project on the Aarhus Web site http://snipr.com/3fcit

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New educational media and formats from FSIS
The USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service now has a special Web site for consumers and others to learn about the latest information via print, audio and video. Specifically called, “Food Safety for Meat, Poultry and Processed Egg Product Inspection” this page features a variety of ways to receive information. You can sign up to receive audio broadcasts, listen to the audio versions or read the script, and view food safety videos, all options on this page http://snipr.com/32fo4. The first podcast, dated April 15 of this year, is introduced by FSIS Administrator Al Almanza. He describes this new method of offering information, including how to use the audio feeds, posted audio, video and the written script.

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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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Began Aug. 5. Hog Margin Maker Workshop, various dates and locations. See the list here http://www.ifbf.org/New_rm.pdf Free for IFBF members with this coupon (http://www.iowafarmbureau.com/New%20Dim_coupons.pdf) otherwise the cost is $25 per person. This hands-on workshop will cover price risk management tools, including hedging, options, Livestock Gross Margin and Livestock Risk Protection insurance.

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Continues through Aug. 18. Iowa State Fair. This year’s theme is, “U Gotta Love It” See links to schedules, grandstand lineups and more on the homepage here http://www.iowastatefair.com/. Make your plans now to attend.

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DID YOU KNOW?
New pork industry scholarships
At least 16 “Pork Checkoff Pork Industry Scholarships” will be awarded this fall through a new program sponsored by the Pork Checkoff and swine industry partners. To be eligible, students must currently be a college sophomore, junior or senior and majoring in animal science or a related field, and either considering a graduate degree program in a swine science discipline or planning a career in the pork industry. The top applicant will be awarded a $10,000 scholarship, the first runner-up will be awarded a $5,000 scholarship, and at least 14 more applicants each will receive a $2,500 scholarship. Application deadline is Sept. 15, 2008. More information and links to the online form and sponsor list are on the Pork Checkoff Web site here http://snipr.com/33oi8

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FOR THE RECORD
Info on the IPIC Web site
According to the program that ISU Extension uses to track traffic on the extension Web servers, the IPIC Web site received nearly 51,000 hits in July. While this number itself might not be large enough to break any records, there is a related number of which I’m very proud. Of those nearly 51,000 hits in July, only 3
failed to reach their destination. In other words, less than one ten-thousandths of a percent of the hits were “dead ends” for visitors. We strive to keep timely and accurate information on our site, and to make sure links to internal and external sources are active and correct. Though the tracking program can’t track external URLs, it does monitor every on-site link and connection attempt. So, the visitors from 72 countries around the world who came to www.ipic.iastate.edu in July were able to reach virtually every page or location on our site that they wanted. That’s good news. Now if you’ll excuse me, I need to track down those 3 URLs which stand in the way of 100% accuracy and completion for our Web visitors.

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