



University of Minnesota
SWINE EXTENSION
Update

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Volume 8

Contents:

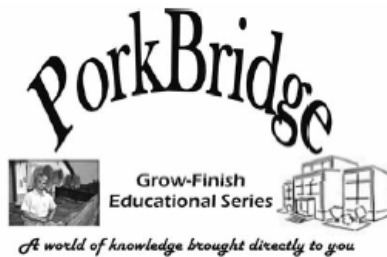
1. **Sign Up Period for New Educational Series, "PorkBridge"**, ends Nov 27th
Program provides information on grow-finish management from experts to your own home or barn
2. **Professional Swine Managers Conference Coming to Mankato**
Two-day event to be held November 17-18
3. **Artificial Insemination Swine Course will be held Dec 1-2 in Waseca**
Intensive 2-day training course teaches basics, new technologies, and best production and management procedures for AI in swine
4. **Regional Control of Swine Diseases**
Dr. Peter Davies discusses how a coordinated regional control effort may be necessary to control some swine diseases, such as PRRS
5. **Have You Had Your Flu Shot Yet?**
The National Pork Board recommends that all people working with pigs get a flu shot this fall to help reduce the risk of infecting the pigs they care for
6. **USDA Quarterly Report Indicates Inventories are Steady**
Despite 20 consecutive months of profit, producers appear to be holding back from increasing breeding herd size.
7. **Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Program - How Do I Become PQA Certified?**
Changes in buying requirements from John Morrell and Central Livestock this past month has had some producers asking the question

1. Sign Up Period for New Educational Series, "PorkBridge", ends Nov 27th

Don't have a lot of time to attend a seminar or conference, but still interested in gaining knowledge in grow-finish pork production? A new educational series, entitled "PorkBridge", allows pork production owners, managers and employees in Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota to increase knowledge and skills in grow-finish production without having to leave home or the farm.

Offered as a two-state pilot program to a limited audience last year in Ohio and Nebraska, the program has been expanded to provide desired information to more people involved in pork production. The program combines electronic information viewed on computer with live oral presentations via phone by experts in the topic areas. The week before each session, subscribers will receive a CD containing that

session's topic-specific presentation, along with a short homework assignment and information on accessing the live speaker presentation. Each session is one hour in length, beginning either at noon or 7 p.m. Session times will be filled on a first-come, first-filled basis.



Cost for participating in this subscription-only series is \$125, which covers materials and phone calls for all six sessions. Multiple individuals can participate at a site, thereby reducing cost per person. The program runs from December 2005 through October 2006. Session dates, speakers, their university affiliations and topics are as follows.

- Dec. 8, 2005 Mike Brumm, University of Nebraska, Impact of out-of-feed events and water restrictions on grow-finish performance
- Feb. 9, 2006 Locke Karriker, Iowa State University, The basics of on-farm necropsy
- April 6, 2006 Rick Stowell, University of Nebraska, The basics of ventilation controllers
- June 1, 2006 Robert Thaler, South Dakota State University, Keeping pigs eating in hot weather
- Aug. 3, 2006 Alex Ramirez, Iowa State University, The basics of grow-finish biosecurity
- Oct. 5, 2006 Lee Johnston, University of Minnesota, Animal welfare considerations in grow-finish facilities

Mark Whitney of the University of Minnesota is the series leader and will be the moderator for all sessions. Those interested in registering or learning more about the program can access material at the U of MN Extension website at www.extension.umn.edu/swine or contact Mark Whitney at (507) 389-5541 or whitn007@umn.edu.

2. Professional Swine Managers Conference Coming to Mankato Nov 17-18

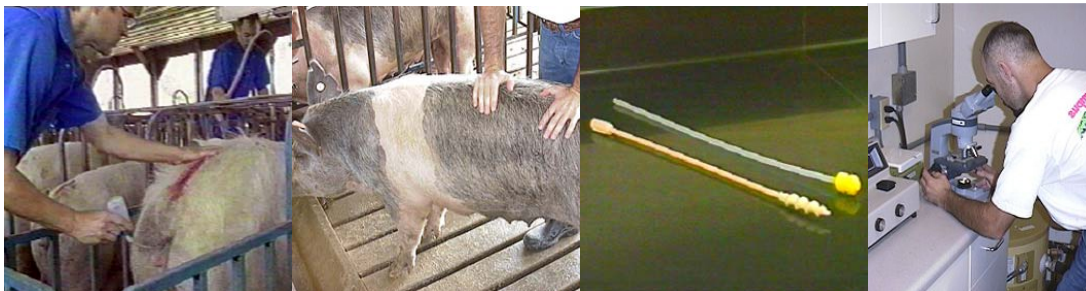
Managers and owners of swine breeding and farrowing units, mark you calendars for a conference coming up in Mankato, MN on November 17 and 18, 2005. Sponsored by the National Pork Board and University of Minnesota Extension Service, the 2-day event will provide information on a variety of topics from speakers throughout the United States, including:

- Gilt Pool Management (Dr. Todd See, NCSU)
- Induction & Control of Estrus (Dr. Sam Baidoo, UMN)

- The Electrical Network of a Livestock Farm (Jacques Deiones, Nuvolt Corp.)
- Ventilation Management (Dr. Steve Pohl, SDSU)
- Biosecurity and Sanitation (Dr. Scott Dee, UMN)
- Feeding Management during Gestation (Dr. Mark Whitney, UMN)
- Employee Management & Training (Dr. Bob Morrison, UMN)
- Troubleshooting: Farrowing Rate & Litter Size (Dr. Rob Knox, U IL; Butch Baker, NSCU)
- Factors Affecting Sow Longevity (Dr. Ken Stalder, ISU)
- How to Post Pigs (Dr. Chad Stahl, F.A.C.T.S.)
- Emerging/Re-emerging Disease Problems (Dr. Barbara Straw, MSU)
- Preparing for a Welfare Evaluation (Dr. Chad Stahl, F.A.C.T.S.)

The conference will be held at the Midwest Wireless Civic Center and Downtown Holiday Inn in Mankato, and is one of ten conferences sponsored by National Pork Board and being held throughout the United States this fall. Cost for the program is \$100/person in advance or \$125/person at the door. Contact the National Pork Board at (800) 456-PORK for more information or to register.

3. Artificial Insemination Swine Course will be held Dec 1-2 in Waseca



Successful management of the breeding herd begins with successful breeding practices. A variety of human and environmental factors, in addition to the sow's own genetic potential, affect the efficiency with which sows are bred, and also affect subsequent farrowing success and litter size. Artificial insemination is used in nearly all modern swine breeding herds, compared to hand or pen mating systems. Artificial insemination offers economic advantages, while improving genetic makeup of offspring, when used correctly. New information on methodology and updates in technology continue to improve the efficiency of its use.

This two-day intensive workshop is designed to give participants an increased understanding of the factors involved to successfully breed females using modern artificial insemination techniques. The course is appropriate for people with a limited knowledge of breeding swine as well as veterans wishing to review the basics and stay abreast on recent developments. Topics that will be covered in the workshop include:

- *Anatomy and Physiology* : Hormonal patterns; regulation of ovulation and pregnancy; important characteristics of the gilt/sow reproductive tract
- *Heat Detection and Breeding* : Timing of insemination; steps to improve ability to detect estrus; importance in overall breeding herd efficiency; fertility factors; number of services; catheters
- *Intrauterine Insemination* : Demonstration of new technique; explanation of differences to conventional AI
- *Sow Nutrition* : Feeding the sow for productivity and longevity; sow vs. gilt nutrition; effect on puberty and litter performance; feeding to achieve desired body condition; use of fiber
- *Semen* : Handling; storage; extension; shelf life
- *Reproductive Problem Solving* : Opportunity for further discussion of specific on-farm reproductive issues

Classroom instruction is provided on the first day of the program, lasting from noon - 9 pm. A hands-on session, conducted at the Southern Research and Outreach Center in Waseca, is conducted the second day of the program from 8 am to noon. The hands-on session incorporates numerous activities relating to material covered in the classroom portion of the course in order to maximize student learning and understanding.

University of Minnesota faculty and educators and swine industry experts provide instruction for the course. Cost of the program is \$100 per person, and includes learning materials, lunches, breaks, instructor fees, and biosecurity clothing for hands-on training sessions. For more information, contact Dr. Mark Whitney, swine extension educator, at (507) 389-5541. Individuals wishing to register for the workshop should contact the Minnesota Pork Board at (507) 345-8814.

4. Regional Control of Swine Diseases

Most of the more problematic swine diseases affecting the Minnesota swine industry can spread readily among farms in an area, unrelated to the movement of animals. There is growing consensus among the veterinary community that coordinated regional efforts will necessary to effectively combat diseases like PRRS, rather than isolated efforts on individual farms which are often frustrated by the reappearance of a disease. Although the veterinary profession has centuries of experience in mounting control programs, and has had numerous successes (brucellosis, TB, hog cholera, pseudorabies, etc), these efforts have almost invariably been implemented under government regulatory authority. If the industry aspires to tackling some of today's thornier disease problems (particularly PRRS) outside the regulatory umbrella, we need to systematically identify the major obstacles and seek the solutions.

To that end, several research projects (funded by the Minnesota Pork Board, National Pork Board, and other sources) at the Swine Disease Eradication Center, University of Minnesota, are addressing various pieces of the regional control puzzle. This article poses one question - how can the pig industry harness new developments in areas such as communications technology, information management, etc. and apply them to the challenge of managing swine health? To read the full text of this article, access the U of MN Swine Extension website at: www.extension.umn.edu/swine.

5. Have You Had Your Flu Shot Yet?

The Pork Checkoff recommends that all swine farm workers get a flu shot in anticipation of the flu season, which runs from October to May. Dr. Liz Wagstrom, assistant vice president of science and technology for the Pork Checkoff, said, "Producers and swine farm workers can reduce the risk of bringing the flu to the farm and infecting the pigs they care for by getting a flu shot."

Influenza viruses can be classified as type A, B and C. Type A influenza can be passed between people and pigs. "The flu shot contains two type A viruses that we want to prevent from spreading," Wagstrom said. "The vaccine also has a type B virus in the mix, but this type of virus is not of concern to the health of our pigs. Humans will develop antibodies against the flu virus two weeks after taking the flu shot."

Wagstrom recommends other practices to reduce infection of pigs with human influenza viruses. Among them is modifying sick-leave policies that encourage workers to stay away from the farm if they are suffering from acute respiratory infections. "Virus shedding is at its peak when the clinical illness is most severe but can last as long as the symptoms do and that is from three to seven days," Wagstrom said.

Good building ventilation and good hygiene also will reduce transmission of the flu viruses. Wagstrom said, "To prevent pigs and humans from other species' influenza viruses, producers also should look at bird-proofing their buildings, treating the water if there is a chance it can be contaminated with bird fecal material, protecting feed from birds and enforcing biosecurity practices such as the use of farm-specific clothing and footwear."

Through an influenza fact sheet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said all people can get a flu shot beginning Oct. 24. Priority groups, including people over 65 years of age, children younger than 23 months of age, pregnant women and people suffering of a chronic illness or caring for infants can get the flu shot or an alternative vaccine before this date.

For more information, a fact sheet titled "Influenza: Pigs, People and Public Health" is available from the Pork Checkoff. The fact sheet is available by calling 800-456-PORK and on the porkboard.org Web site under Hot Topics and Producer/Public Health.

6. USDA Quarterly Report Indicates Inventories are Steady

The *Quarterly Hogs and Pigs* report, issued by the USDA on September 30th showed September 1 inventories of market hogs and animals kept for breeding to be nearly unchanged from a year ago. Modestly higher farrowing intentions for the December-February quarter, and expected trend increases in litter rates and dressed weights, point to commercial pork production of 21.1 billion pounds next year, an increase of about 2 % from expected 2005 production. The price of 51-52 % lean hogs is expected to average between \$43 and \$47 cwt live in 2006.

Glen Grimes and Ron Plain, Ag Economists with the University of Missouri, indicate that the USDA inventory numbers are very close to estimates, but that the results are still surprising. Producers have now had 20 consecutive months of profit, and yet the breeding herd remains essentially unchanged from one year ago. They indicate that this is the best financial period for hog producers since 1990-1991.

Grimes and Plain are forecasting hog slaughter to be up 1.3% in the 4th quarter of 2005, then down 0.1%, up 0.8%, up 2.0% and up 2.3%, respectively, for the 1st through 4th quarters of 2006. They forecast price received to be near or below breakeven by end of next year. Because they expect retail pork demand to weaned, the price forecast reflects a larger than normal decline given expectations for a fairly modest increase in slaughter.

To view the full reports released by the USDA or Grimes/Plain, or to review other USDA market reports and market outlooks/commentary, access the U of MN Swine Extension website at: www.extension.umn.edu/swine, and click on the "Market Information" link located along the left-hand column.

7. Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Program - How Do I Become PQA Certified?



The National Pork Board introduced the Pork Quality Assurance Program in 1989 as a management education program emphasizing good management practices in the handling and use of animal health products, and encourages producers to review their approach to their herds' health programs. By completing this program, producers demonstrate their commitment to "quality assured" pork production.

PQA educators (generally veterinarians, extension personnel, or adult ag instructors) can meet with producers individually or as a group. The PQA course takes only 1 - 2 hours to complete, involves reviewing 10 good production practices, and following attending the class, producers fill out a producer education form that the PQA

educator can then enter into the PQA database to certify course completion and PQA status. Producers must recertify every 3 years to retain PQA status.

The PQA program is technically voluntary, but most packing plants now are requiring producers that sell pigs to them to be certified in the program. This is because the program helps packing plants comply with their HACCP requirements, and the program specifically addresses pre-harvest food safety issues.

The easiest way for producers to become PQA certified or recertify is to arrange a meeting with their herd veterinarian. If producers prefer not to conduct the PQA session with their herd vet, or cannot, there are several other options.

- Producers with internet can access the PQA producer website from the National Pork Board at: <http://www.porkboard.org/PQA/default.asp>. By entering their zip code, they can obtain a list of PQA certifiers in their area.
- Producers may also call the National Pork Board hotline at (800) 456-7675 to request the names/numbers of PQA certifiers in their area.
- Finally, producers can contact their local buyer or auction barn to see if any PQA sessions are scheduled in their area.

Questions?

The U of MN Swine Team is available to provide assistance or instruction for your next training session. Whether you desire certification in National Pork Board programs such as Swine Welfare Assurance Program (SWAP), Trucker Quality Assurance (TQA), Pork Quality Assurance (PQA), or would like instruction in a specialized phase of production, timely topic, or information on new technology and research results, the Swine Team may be able to help. It is our goal to bring University research to the Minnesota Pork Industry, ensuring the continued sustainability and competitiveness of producers and allied industry. Periodically check our events calendar on the U of MN Swine Extension website (www.extension.umn.edu) for upcoming workshops and seminars, or contact Dr. Mark Whitney, Swine Extension Specialist, to arrange for a specific or specialized program.

Please email or call me if I can be of assistance:

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