Nebraska pork talk

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Nebraska pork talk

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BLT & G Wrap

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
12 slices bacon, crisply-cooked	Spread each tortilla on one side with some cream cheese; top with some salsa and shredded lettuce and spread evenly. Place three slices bacon on each tortilla; top with some guacamole and roll up to serve immediately.
4 8-inch flour tortillas	
4 ounces cream cheese spread	
1/2 cup chunky salsa	Serves 4.
1 cup iceberg lettuce, shredded	
1/2 cup guacamole	

pork checkoff

Portions of Nebraska Pork Talk are partially funded by Nebraska pork producers and their checkoff investments.

Annual Ag Sack Lunch Program Makes Field-to-Fork Connection

The annual Ag Sack Lunch Program is wrapping up its fifth successful year of educating Nebraska fourth-graders about where their food comes from and the importance of agriculture to the state's economy.

The program includes a free sack lunch, which features nutritious foods produced in Nebraska, a 20-minute presentation by "Ag Ambassadors" on the vital role agriculture plays in the state's economy and a fact-filled card game that students can take home, which helps carry the agriculture centered message home to their families.

"The lunch makes it a very special day for the students and something they will remember," said Pat Mercer, fourth-grade teacher at Cathedral of the Risen Christ in Lincoln.

Each year, over 20,000 students visit the State Capitol Building in Lincoln as part of their fourth-grade curriculum. Teachers are invited to sign up their classes for the program when they visit the State Capitol. This educational program is sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB), the Nebraska Corn Board (NCB) and the Nebraska Pork Producers Association (NPPA).

Many fourth-graders visiting the State Capitol Building in Lincoln participated in the fifth annual Ag Sack Lunch event during the current school year. Here, Ag Ambassador Abby Wehrbein, a UNL student from Plattsmouth, tells students about the importance of agriculture to the state's economy as they enjoy their sack lunches consisting of Nebraska-produced foods.

"The Ag Sack Lunch program continues to be a very important piece of our agriculture literacy efforts," said Victor Bohuslavsky, Executive Director of the Nebraska Soybean Board. "Agriculture is Nebraska's number one industry, so it is vital that we educate the next generation of consumers about the significant role it plays within their communities, families and futures."

Kyla Habrock, NPPA Youth Education Director agrees. "This program provides a strong early foundation to increase consumer knowledge and influence positive purchasing decisions in the future," she said.

The students are engaged with interactive presentations by "Ag Ambassadors," University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who are passionate about agriculture and can relate personal stories while sharing information about the importance of agriculture in Nebraska.

"The students really enjoyed their day in Lincoln and the lunch was a great way to start our field trip," said Kristi Bult, a teacher at Hartington-Newcastle Public Schools. "They played cards on the way home on the bus. The girls [Ag Ambassadors] did a great job with the presentation. We will continue talking about agriculture in school, too."

Kelly Brunkhorst, NCB Executive Director, added that "It is a great opportunity to highlight Nebraska agriculture and help students make the field-to-fork connection. It is exciting to look back over the last five years of the program and the nearly twenty-five thousand fourth-grade students from across the state who have had the opportunity to learn about agriculture during their school's visit to the State Capitol."

Ag Ambassadors for the 2014-15 school year included University of Nebraska-Lincoln students Hannah Gaebel, Ashland; Valerie Kesterson, Bridgeport; Jennifer Keyes, Springfield; Emma Likens, Swanton; Kate Likens, Swanton; Trent Mastny, Clarkson; Lacey Uden, Juniata; Abigail Wehrbein, Plattsmouth; Emilia Woeppel, Firth; Sarah Wollenburg, Beatrice; and Morgan Zumpfe, Friend. All are working toward agriculture-related majors, ranging from ag-journalism and ag-education to ag-leadership and agribusiness.

NPPA Legislative Report

By Trent Nowka, NPPA Lobbyist

The Nebraska Legislature concluded its work for the year on May 31, 2015, adjourning a day earlier than the originally scheduled June 5th date. The session has been labeled by many as one that was "unpredictable and historic". At the beginning of the session, observers thought the session would be more conservative based on the decisive number of Republican senators who had been elected (21 of the 25 legislative races were won by Republicans). However, the session ultimately was filled with unpredictable outcomes as senators quickly showed their independence of political labels when they began voting on issues. The session was also historic in the legislation that was adopted. Few would have predicted senators would have repealed the death penalty, increased the gas tax and granted licenses for children of undocumented immigrants.

Many observers believed property tax reduction would be the number-one priority for the 2015 session. Numerous proposals were introduced to reduce property taxes, including measures to reduce agricultural land values from 75% to 65% of market value. However, senators had concerns with the proposals since studies showed that the reduction in value would provide little, if any, tax relief to landowners in over 130 of the state's 245 school districts.

As an alternative to reducing property values, senators decided to appropriate an additional $64 million more per year to the Property Tax Credit Cash Fund. This increase will bring the total amount available for property tax credits to $408 million for the biennium, which will allow for a credit equal to approximately $95 per $100,000 of valuation, a $30 increase over the current level.

During the interim period, the Legislature's Education and Revenue Committees will be working together to examine options of increasing state-aid to schools to offset property tax use and reduce property taxes. It is the intention that the committees will draft legislation for consideration during the 2016 legislative session.

Senators also adopted a measure to provide personal property tax relief. LB 269, as introduced by Sen. Mike Gloor of Grand Island, exempts the first $10,000 of personal property for each personal property tax return filed with a county assessor. The bill also excludes the listing of personal property for assessment purposes which has a value of less than $1,000. LB 269 will provide approximately $20 million in personal property tax relief statewide.

Introduced by Sen. Watermeier of Syracuse, LB 106 requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a committee of experts to create an assessment formula matrix that county officials may use when considering livestock operation siting permits. The committee comprising of representatives from county board members, county zoning administrators, livestock production agriculture, the University of Nebraska and other experts are to develop a matrix within one year after the effective date of the bill.

The assessment matrix is to assist producers in completing permit applications and county officials in scoring conditional use permits or special exception applications. Criteria used for the matrix could include size and type of livestock operations, proximity to neighboring residences and public use areas, manure storage, odor control practices and public support.

An effort to repeal a prohibition of meat packing companies owning swine failed to be adopted after senators failed to invoke cloture to cease a filibuster during Select File debate. LB 176, as introduced by Sen. Ken Schilz of Ogallala, would have allowed a swine processor or packer to enter into an oral or written agreement with a person who owns, leases or holds a legal interest in a livestock operation. Packers would have been able to own swine, but individual producers would be required to retain ownership of the facilities and land.

Senators invoked cloture during General File after eight hours of debate on a 34-9 vote (33 votes are required) and the bill was advanced to Select File on a 28-10 vote. However, the following morning, after an additional four hours of Select File debate, Senators refused to stop the filibuster on a 31-11 vote. The proposal will be carried-over for consideration again during the 2016 legislative session.

State senators approved a measure by Sen. Schilz that provides financial assistance for rural and livestock development. LB 175 authorizes the Department of Agriculture to award grants to counties designated as livestock friendly. The grants are to be used for strategic planning and improvements to public infrastructure. The tax credit cap allowed through this program was raised from $30,000 to $150,000.

The bill also changes the availability of tax credits for livestock modernization projects. The bill expanded the definition of livestock production to include egg and dairy production. It also increased the amount of tax credits available for projects approved for livestock production, or livestock modernization or expansion to $500,000 for calendar year 2016, $750,000 for years 2017 and 2018, and $1 million for 2019 and each year thereafter.

Senators are scheduled to reconvene on January 6, 2016, for a 60-day legislative session. They will immediately begin debating some of the 300 bills that will be carried over from the 2015 session. They are also anticipated to introduce approximately 450 new bills for consideration (the average number of bills introduced during a 60-day session).

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Heart to Heart

It was tender, juicy pork tenderloin all around for walkers participating in the American Heart Association's Heart Walks on April 25 in Lincoln and May 9 in Omaha. A combined total of 7,000 walkers raised approximately $730,000 that will help fund $2.8 million in 15 new and continuing heart research studies in Nebraska.

The National Pork Board's Pork Trailer rolled into town for both events with "Chef Glen" at the helm grilling while NPPA Staff and volunteers handed out over 325 pounds of Hormel pork tenderloins, pork coupons and talked to consumers about the heart-healthy profile of today's leaner pork.

One consumer in particular made an impression at the Omaha event. 11-year old Trevor Lesinski of Omaha has become a frequent visitor to the pork trailer over the past two years. His mother, Kim, told NPPA staff that Trevor is a rather finicky eater but since trying a sample of tenderloin at the pork trailer in 2014, pork has became one of Trevor's favorite foods.

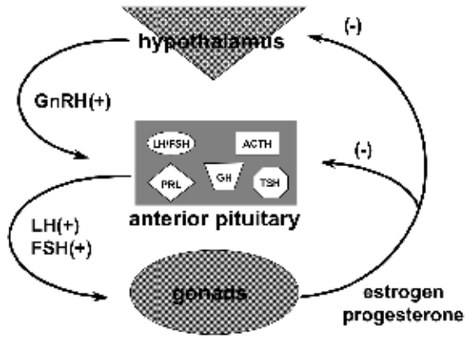
Trevor Lesinksi, Ben Wilwerding, Adam Meisgeier

Can a "reproductive hormone" predict appetite in first parity, lactating sows?

Sow reproduction is regulated through a hormonal system called the reproductive axis or hypothalamic-pituitary-gonadal (HPG) axis (See Figure 1). Neurons within the hypothalamus of the brain release gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) that travels a short distance through a highly-specialized vascular system to the anterior pituitary gland. Here, GnRH binds to its receptor, a specific docking site for the hormone that stimulates a biological response, on gonadotrope cells. The end result of this interaction between GnRH and its receptor is the release of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinizing hormone (LH) into the bloodstream, which then travel to the ovaries (gonads). FSH promotes follicle development and estrogen production, whereas LH triggers ovulation and subsequent release of progesterone from the corpus luteum (CL). The production of estrogen and progesterone from the gonads (ovaries) can then provide negative feedback to both the hypothalamus and anterior pituitary gland to reduce the amount of GnRH, FSH and LH that are secreted. In other words, the reproductive axis is a "check and balance" system that regulates the production of reproductive hormones.

Recently, a new twist on the hormone, GnRH, has been isolated. This novel form of GnRH has been named "GnRH2." Unlike the classical form of GnRH that is critical to reproduction, GnRH2 is correlated to many non-reproductive processes within the body. Although never investigated in the pig, GnRH2 has been linked to the interaction between nutritional status and reproductive behavior in females of other species. When feed intake is deficient, females utilize nutrients for maintenance of essential systems within the body rather than using those precious resources for reproduction. Treatment with GnRH2 restored reproductive behavior in females that were nutrient deprived.

Perhaps one of the most inefficient segments of swine production is the inability of first parity sows to rebreed. One contributing factor to reduced rebreeding rates in first parity sows is the extreme negative energy balance that they experience during lactation. Therefore, we performed an experiment in the Animal Science Building at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in which first parity, lactating sows were fed all they could eat or 80% of all they could eat (restricted diet) during a 25-day lactation period. At weaning, blood samples were taken to determine GnRH2



levels in the blood and sows were examined daily for return to estrus. We wanted to determine if sows with restricted feed intakes would: 1) secrete different levels of GnRH2 into the blood and 2) exhibit reduced wean-to-estrus intervals. Upon completion of this experiment, wean-to-estrus interval was not different between the two treatments. However, there were differences between feed intake groups for GnRH2 levels in the blood. Interestingly, sows with a restricted feed intake during lactation had significantly higher GnRH2 levels than females fed all they could eat. In a second experiment, feed intake during a 21-day lactation period was recorded for first parity sows that were part of the normal farrowing schedule at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Agricultural Research and Development Center (ARDC) Swine Unit. On the day of weaning, a blood sample was taken to determine GnRH2 levels in the blood and females were examined daily for return to estrus. In this experiment, we wanted to determine: 1) if we could correlate feed intake with GnRH2 levels in the blood and 2) if sows with reduced GnRH2 levels in the blood would have extended wean-to-estrus intervals. Again, we were unable to establish a relationship between GnRH2 levels and wean-to-estrus intervals. Similar to our first experiment, however, we detected a significant negative correlation between feed intake and GnRH2 levels in the blood. Sows with elevated levels of GnRH2 in the blood had reduced feed intakes during lactation. Thus, in two independent studies, we determined that first parity sows with reduced feed intakes during lactation exhibited elevated GnRH2 levels in the blood. Although more experiments are necessary, we are excited by the possibilities of these findings. Eventually, this could lead to new management techniques for first parity, lactating sows. For example, the addition of GnRH2 to lactation diets to improve appetite or GnRH2 treatment of sows with reduced appetite during lactation may improve rebreeding rates during this critical period of swine production, reducing feed costs and increasing profitability of pork producers.

"Recently, a new twist on the hormone, GnRH, has been isolated."

Dr. Brett R. White is an Associate Professor within the Department of Animal Science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The author would like to thank members of his research laboratory: Rebecca Cederberg, Amy Desaulniers, John Harms, Chanho Lee, Ginger Mills, Bill Pohlmeier, and Sara Stauffer. In addition, thanks to the employees at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Agricultural Research and Development Center (ARDC) Swine Unit for their assistance with our experiments; the students enrolled in the Animal Science 150 course supervised by Dr. Bryan Reiling for their help with farrowing, piglet processing and animal care; and the Nebraska Pork Producers Association for their generous support through research funding for these studies.

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Knowledge Transfer

By Danielle O'Neel

The 2015 Pork Leadership Program participants headed to Iowa for our 2nd Seminar of the year. This seminar was focused around several objectives we set as a group during our 1st Seminar including:

- Meeting National Pork Board Leaders
- Meeting other agriculture industry leaders that influence pork
- Understanding each group member's contribution to the pork industry

We started the seminar by spending the day at National Pork Board learning the history of the organization. With Ernie Barnes, Director of Producer Services, we learned more about the Pork Checkoff, from its voluntary nickel origins in the late 1960's to the impact it has on the industry currently in funding research, education and promotion. Ernie stated what he likes about this program is that the producers make the decisions. They have the idea, and the National Pork Board staff gets to break it down and smooth it out to be put into action. We were then able to meet some of these "action-makers" as we were introduced to some of the NPB staff in the areas of Animal Science, Chris Hostetler and Domestic Marketing, Jose De Jesus.

Although we as members all have careers within the industry, being a positive advocate that can discuss and educate about the pork industry is just as important. We learned about this aspect from Bryn Jensson, Manager of Marketing and Outreach, through Pork Checkoff's Neighbor to Neighbor Program. This program addresses some of the key issues the industry faces today including antibiotics, public health, environment, animal rights activists and the changing industry structure. Through the implementation and practice of programs such as PQA® Plus, TQA® and the We Care Ethical Principles, it shows that people in the pork industry strive to take the extra steps of showing that the industry is conscious about its ripple effect on their livestock, consumers and the earth. This session helped arm us with the information and tools for sharing that information we need when approached by our neighbors with questions and concerns.

In today's tech-savvy world, it's not enough to be able to simply talk about the pork industry – we must be able to do it through multiple mediums. Social Media training with Claire Masker, Manager of Public Relations, helped prepare us for just that. From posting pictures to promote the industry to addressing controversial issues, we always need to think of the ripple effect a documented post or blog may have on the industry and how it will be interpreted. This topic led right into handling crisis and media training with Cindy Cunningham, Assistant Vice President of Communications. Cindy challenged us to think about potential vulnerabilities to the industry that could happen at our own jobs and encouraged us to be proactive in how to prevent such vulnerabilities and to also be prepared to address them if they would happen.

Our final highlight of the day was a private tour of the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates. This was a real treat as we learned about the origin of the World Food Prize as well as admired some of the history of Iowa and agriculture through displays and artwork in the building. Part of this artwork

PORK LEADERSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
Ali Steuer Prochaska, Jennifer Ruby, Alan Stephens, Sandra Kavan, Mike Wisnieski, and Danielle O'Neel pose outside the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates after completing their private tour.

that created an impact was Howard G. Buffet's 40 Chances Photography which opened our eyes to the hunger, poverty, conflict and water issues in the world today.

Anticipation was high as our second day started at the DuPont Pioneer Innovation Center with Dan Hansen, Visitor and Stakeholder Outreach Consultant. We were excited to learn about another agriculture industry that holds a great influence on ours. Ultimately, both industries have the same goal: to feed the world sustainably. Since DuPont Pioneer products are used to feed our livestock, it is important to know the science and thought behind the seed we are using to grow our animals.

Science is the name of the game with this company. Entering their lab, we quickly realized the level of innovation DuPont Pioneer puts behind its products. From manual sample collection in the field to robotic technology in the lab, it is all part of what keeps the company ahead of the game in producing premier crops. Part of this process also includes GMOs, which provided great discussion within our group since it has a ripple effect on the pork industry. We finished our tour at the Mendel Greenhouse Complex to see some of these crops and research projects in motion. Our visit at DuPont Pioneer ended with a discussion panel consisting of individuals in different areas within the company. In this panel we discussed some of the issues addressing the industries and how we need to be a proactive voice in the community and educate the public.

The final stop for our seminar was in Omaha at Standard Nutrition Company, where Pork Leadership Program participant, Mike Wisnieski works as the Director of Livestock Marketing. Owner, Bill Dyer, shared the history of the company from its beginnings on "belief in a product" to its integrity as a growing leader in animal nutrition today. Standard Nutrition started as a single product for all species and now through innovation and development provides nutritional supplements for beef, dairy, swine and poultry. Bill stated that, "You never know what's possible if you don't take risk". He also credits their achievements to the core values they built and continue to build their company around. Some of these values include trust, respect, recognition and simply allowing people to do what they do best.

Through our second seminar we were able to accomplish several objectives we had set for the inaugural year of this program. As we took on our two-day seminar we were able to learn more about the industry we are all involved in and passionate about, as well as make connections with other leaders. Furthermore, we continued to learn about each other and were able to cultivate some rich discussion through our sessions. On the horizon, we have aspirations to take this knowledge and these connections and put them into action. Afterall, what is knowledge worth if you don't share it?

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MEET THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2015 PORK LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Today, Nebraska's agricultural leadership is built on generations of individuals who made agriculture their cause, not just a job.

The Nebraska Pork Producers Association believes in, and is committed to helping develop agricultural leaders who share the same passion for agriculture. In 2015, the Pork Leadership Program was created to build awareness, interest and involvement in the pork industry. It was created, primarily to provide opportunities to further develop leadership skills.

Participants in the Pork Leadership Program in 2015 are talented people who are positively contributing to the future of Nebraska's pork industry!

Alan Stephens is a Sr. Business Development Manager for The Maschhoffs, the largest independent pork producer in the US. He's responsible for expanding the company's production capacity throughout Nebraska and Southwest Iowa.

During his career in animal agriculture, Alan has had the opportunity to develop skills and experience in a wide range of roles, including research, technical support, production operations, business development, sales and marketing, in the chicken, turkey and swine industries.

Having travelled to 47 of the United States and 17 countries, he's gained a great appreciation for different perspectives and cultures. His most gratifying career experience was partnering with a Brazilian company to produce, market and distribute turkey breeding stock throughout South America.

Alan and his wife of 32 years, Kristin, live in Elkhorn, And continue to enjoy close relationships with their three college-educated/employed children who reside in North Carolina and Colorado. When not working, Alan enjoys outdoor recreation, boating, college and professional sports and home improvement projects.

Presiding over FIRE® feeder research at DNA Genetics, **Ali Prochaska** is responsible for maintaining the quality of data at the Insight Performance Center. This includes any maintenance the feeders may require as well as focusing heavily on accurate feed intake data. The information that comes from the FIRE® feeders is used to calculate each individual pig's feed conversion ratio, which is then calculated into their overall index.

Prior to joining DNA Genetics in August 2013, Ali earned her bachelor's degree in Agricultural Business from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. In college, she participated in the Nebraska Pork Producers Association Pork Mentoring Program and served as the Agricultural Economics Department Ambassador. She was also involved in other clubs and activities throughout campus. Ali grew up on a family farm outside of Crete, where she was involved in 4-H and FFA.

Ali married her husband Nate, on June 6th. Together, they are proud homeowners in David City, and are busy in the home remodeling process.

Danielle O'Neel was born and raised on a family hog farm outside of Friend. From showing pigs in 4-H to her current position as the Assistant HR Manager at Smithfield-Farmland–the pork industry has always been a big part of her life.

After graduating from High School in Friend, Danielle received her Bachelor's of Art in Communication at Nebraska Wesleyan University and her Master's in Organizational Leadership with Gonzaga University. During her college career, she was also part of the Nebraska Pork Producers Association Pork Mentoring Program. She gives credit to this program for finding her first job through making connections at Smithfield-Farmland.

Danielle strives to be a good advocate for the industry that has had such an impact on her and her family. Her parents, Terry and Diane O'Neel, have instilled the importance of being involved and doing what is right. Through the Pork Leadership Program, she hopes to continue to learn, grow and be a resource for NPPA and the pork industry.

In her spare time, Danielle stays busy through baking cakes and pastries, as well as training to be a fitness instructor at her local gym. She enjoys traveling, spending time with family and friends, fitness, sports, cooking and anything outdoors.

Swine and Ag Sales Inside Representative at QC Supply, **Jennifer Ruby** is responsible for selling items to customers and helping them get the right products for their operation.

Jennifer worked for seven years in swine production from boar stud to finishing in company facilities and contract growers.

A graduate of Oklahoma Panhandle State University, she earned a bachelor's degree in Animal Science, where she participated as a member of the collegiate livestock judging team. She also earned an associate degree in Horse training and Management from Lamar Community College.

Jennifer and her husband, Justin reside in Howells, where they have a small show cattle herd.

As Director of Livestock Marketing, **Mike Wisnieski** is responsible for managing risk on hog production for Standard Nutrition and their partners. Risk management includes cultivating relationships with packing and toll mills, negotiating cash sales and price discovery contracts, input pricing, execution and tracking of all futures and option positions. Mike utilizes a margin-management approach to evaluate feed inputs in conjunction with livestock sales bi-directionally. In addition to risk management, Mike compiles and summarizes financial statements for lending partners and Standard's partners in the different finishing flows.

Prior to joining Standard Nutrition, Mike spent (in non-consecutive terms) approximately 10 years with Farm Credit Services of America as a credit analyst in the swine division, working with both large integrated and large independent swine producers. In between, Mike spent four years with Cargill Direct as a risk manager for swine producers throughout the Midwest.

Mike grew up on a family farm in Northeast Nebraska where the family operated a small dairy and farrow-to-finish operation along with raising corn, beans and alfalfa. Mike earned his Bachelor's of Science degree in Diversified Agriculture from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1999. Mike is married to his wife Brandy, and the couple has two children, Madisyn, age seven and Ethyn age three.

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Sandra Kavan is the Allied Industry Services Director for the Nebraska Pork Producers Association (NPPA) in Lincoln. Sandra coordinates and promotes pork industry programs for allied members as well as the association's Strategic Investment Program, which focuses on public policy and trade.

Sandra earned her Bachelor of Science degree in agribusiness from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in December 2012. She participated in the Nebraska Pork Producers Association Pork Mentoring Program, a career development program that provides college students with a variety of hands-on experience in the pork industry.

Sandra grew up on her family's farm just outside of Wahoo, where they have a wean-to-finish pig operation, and raise corn and soybeans

NPPA Leadership Engages with USMEF

By: Russ Vering, NPPA President Elect

Brian Zimmerman, Board Member of the United States Meat Export Federation (USMEF) and Russ Vering, President Elect for NPPA had the opportunity to serve on an advisory panel for the USMEF in April. The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) is a nonprofit trade association working to create new opportunities and develop existing international markets for U.S. beef, pork, lamb and veal. Headquartered in Denver, USMEF has offices in Seoul, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Mexico City, Monterrey and Brussels. USMEF also has special market representatives covering China, the Middle East, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Brian Zimmerman, Board Member of the United States Meat Export Federation (USMEF) and Russ Vering, President Elect for NPPA

The round-table objective was to hold a discussion about direction of the organization, including the level of participation and funding directed toward each trade-participating country. In attendance were stakeholders from the National Pork Board, CEO, Chris Hodges and Dale Norton, and Randy Spronk, past Presidents of NPB and NPPC respectively. Also attending were USMEF staff and most of the major exporters of wholesale and retail pork products.

(Front row l-r) Dan Halstrom, USMEF Sr. VP Marketing and Communications, Macarena Hernandez, Alejandra Valdez, and Bill Luckey. (Back Row l-r) Russ Vering, NPPA President-Elect, Nelson Huerta, Scott Spilker NPPA President, Francisco Jaime, Larry Sitzman NPPA Ex Director, and Jorge Paredes. Representatives from the Mexico pork industry were in Nebraska attending the American Meat Science Association 2015 Reciprocal Meats Conference held at UNL, June 14-17. They took time out of their busy schedules to meet with NPPA Leaders. Mexico was the No. 1 market in volume in 2014. U.S. pork exports to Mexico set new records in volume and value for the third consecutive year. They increased 9 percent in volume to 680,843 metric tons and 27 percent in value to $1.56 billion.

Phil Seng of the USMEF explained their process for evaluating effective education and marketing programs for trade in pork consuming countries. Phil listed the many levels of consumers USMEF works with abroad. Packer processors, Exporters and Traders, International Importers, Processors, Wholesalers, Food Service and Retailers. Phil explained that it is important to identify the reality of the market. Is it a market that needs to be developed, displaced or defended. Development is the first step to achieving the sale of U.S. Pork in a country that is emerging financially, has a demand for pork but has a supply shortage or cannot produce its own demand. Displacement is a term used when other countries currently hold market share in countries where pork demand is established. USMEF works to compete or displace that demand toward U.S. exports. In markets where the U.S. is represented and well established as a dominant supplier USMEF works to defend that market share. Each of these techniques requires a specialized plan, separate marketing plan and specialized budget.

Establishing markets for U.S. pork puts dollars directly in the U.S. pork producers hands. 24% of U.S. Pork produced is exported. This amount of export volume puts a great premium on U.S. pork products. It's a necessity our industry cannot live without. Prioritizing market direction at USMEF is important. Plans must be made in advance in order to set budgets nine months in advance for foreign marketing projects. Japan, China, North America and South American markets are essential and each of these markets from Tokyo to Nigeria to Mexico City was discussed in our meeting. As pork is a delicacy, so are these markets "delicate". Concentrating efforts just so in these regions of the world takes strategic planning and strong marketing messages.

Sights from BaconFest 2015.

The scene; Bountiful bacon + Fun décor + Great music = **Happy guests.**

Greta's Gourmet kept it simple but delicious with Bacon-Wrapped Little Smokies. Greta's produces their own smokies, homemade in-house.

Hormel Foods sponsorship, both Retail and Foodservice Divisions, were key components to BaconFest's success. Hormel reps, Kyle Moritz and Miguel Ramos, had the most popular booth in the house, serving up four different flavors of Hormel bacon to the crowd. They went through 60 pounds in just under one hour.

Winner Winner Bacon's Better, **9 South Char Grill** with the victor's spoils. Their creation, Whiskey Barrel Smoked Bacon with Jack & Cola Bacon Tomato Jam & Amish Peanut Bacon Butter Sliders w/Candied Bacon & Pecans won them top honors. Chefs Shane Goodall and Lisa Bolz accept their award from Digity's Chris Linville.

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The Mangalitsa is a rare pig breed that is native to Hungary. Mangalitsa is the opposite of American pork in that the name Mangalitsa literally means "hog with a lot of lard." They are also sometimes known as "wooly pigs" because of the curly-haired fleece that covers their body. Their genetics remain unchanged since the breed originated in 1833.

The pig was originally developed for the rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire some 200 years ago. They dominated the European lard market until World War II. The introduction of cooking oil and modern meat production largely pushed the Mangalitsa out of the market. The Hungarian government maintained some hog farms, but those collapsed after the fall of the communist government leaving an estimated 200 Mangalitsa's alive in 1991. The breed's population is slowly increasing and today Hungary is home to more than 16,500 sows that produce some 70,000 pigs for market each year. In 2009, a company called Wooly Pigs, based in Washington State, imported a herd from Austria and began breeding the hogs. Today, their numbers are still small in the United States with only 500 to 1000 animals.

A unique alternative of pork products from commercial breeds and other heritage breeds, the Mangalitsa is not yet commercially produced in the United States. Because

Svoboda Family. Erin, Tami, Leon, Brenda and Brent (l to r)

of their unique genetics, Mangalitsas provide all the characteristics that chefs and makers of high-end specialty meats desire. The most outstanding features of these pigs is their huge amounts of fat and their tasty, marbled, deep red meat. When fed correctly and allowed to mature at a natural rate, the Mangalitsa produces a meat that has a stronger flavor and more than double the marbling of average pork. The fat is a healthier type of fat. It's more unsaturated than normal pig fat. It's soft, not heavy and greasy, so it tastes

ELTEE Mangalitsa's "Franz", herd sire.

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much "lighter and cleaner" and it melts at a lower temperature. The fat keeps longer due to having higher levels of oleic acid. Chefs rave about the meat and lard versatility. Independently owned fine-dining restaurants that feature locally-sourced products, chefs that engage in some in-house meat

Mangalitsa pigs are a rare heritage breed of swine that is renowned for their tasty, marbled red meat and their huge amount of fat.

Leon Svoboda with Mangalitsa heard.

processing and makers of high-end specialty meats are customers of this distinctive product.

"We at ELTEE Mangalitsa's LLC are proud to have the opportunity to raise this special breed of pigs. Every day we strive to produce the highest quality product while using sound animal husbandry and farming practices to present this high-end premium pork to our customers," said Leon Svoboda. ELTEE LLC is Pork Quality Plus Certified and a member of the American Mangalitsa Breeder's Association.

For more information about ELTEE Mangalitsa LLC: leonsvoboda@live.com or call 402-385-2477.

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Volunteer Opportunities
at Raising Nebraska

Raising Nebraska is excited to announce new open hours! Raising Nebraska is open Monday–Friday from 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. and the second Saturday of every month from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. This change allows for more families, travelers and groups to visit and explore Nebraska agriculture. With increased hours, there is an increased need for volunteers! As a volunteer, you answer guests' questions and ensure they walk away with a positive experience. To become a Raising Nebraska volunteer, please visit raisingnebraska.net/volunteer/ or contact raisingnebraska@unl.edu.

Another volunteer opportunity exists during the 2015 Nebraska State Fair from August 28–September 7. The Grand Island Chamber of Commerce is coordinating a few positions within Raising Nebraska. Roles include assisting fair goers with fair questions. To review and sign-up for these opportunities, visit statefairvolunteer.org/.

SAVE THE DATE

2015 Ribfest VIP Tent and Auction

Saturday, August 15th, 4:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Get your tickets at nepork.org starting on July 27th.

Thank you Allied Members for all of your support through the years and welcome to our new Allied Members. We are greatly appreciative of our members continuing to renew your membership and support of the Nebraska Pork Producers Association. We look forward to a successful 2015 with our new tiers of membership.

If you have any questions, please contact Sandra Kavan at sandra@nepork.org or at (402) 472-0493.

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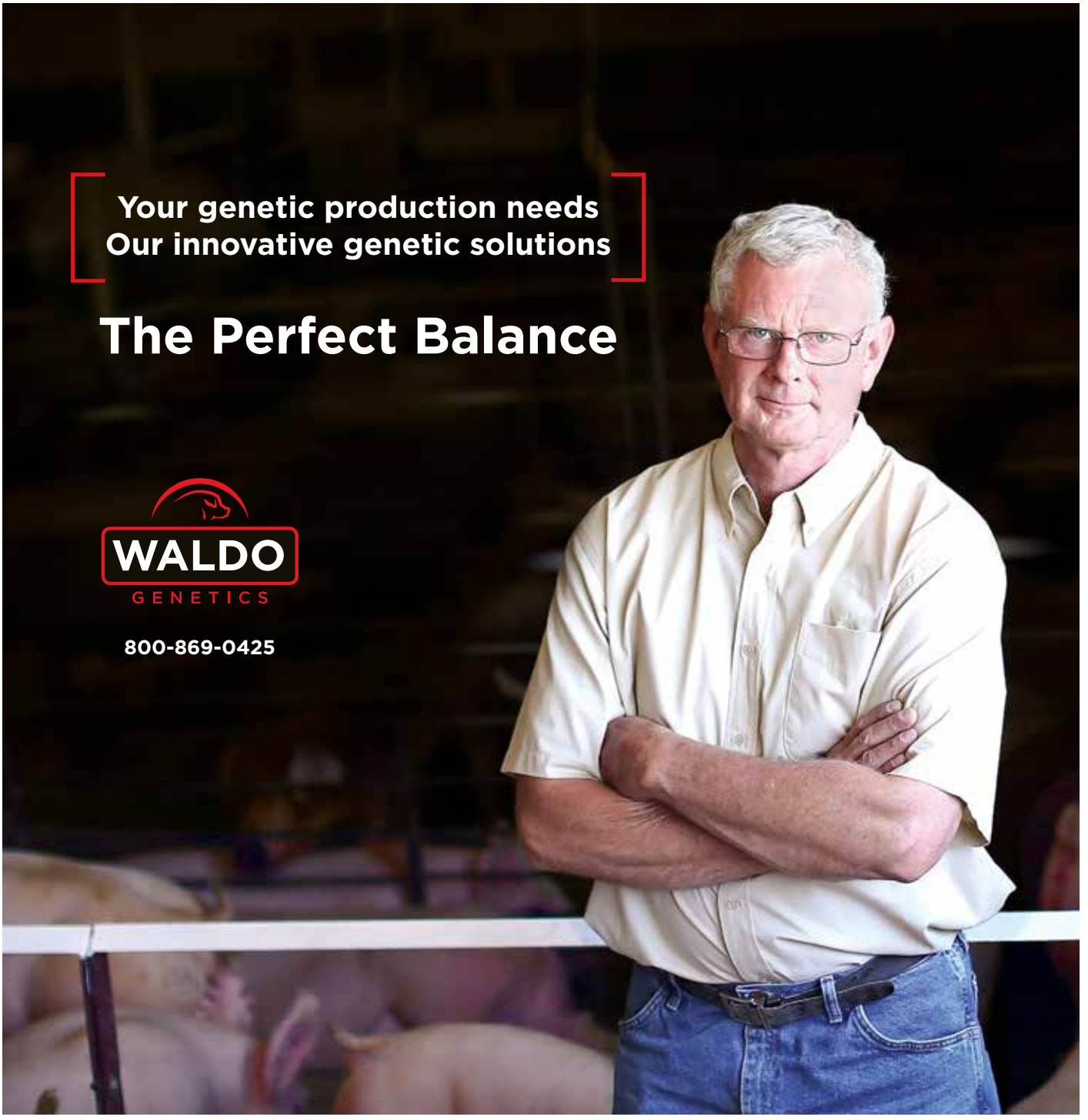
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