



# PORK CHECKOFF REPORT

JAN FEB 2019



## Minnesota Pig Farmers Give a Ham

2018 marked the pork industry's third annual Hams Across America campaign which began on November 27, otherwise known as "Giving Tuesday". The campaign offers an opportunity for pork producers, packers, retailers, and state associations to unite and give back to the communities they live and work in. These donations showcase industry personnel's understanding of the importance of contributing to a better way of life for their communities.

All across the nation, hams were purchased and gifted to loved ones and those in need. Stories were shared via social media with the hashtags #HamsAcrossAmerica and #GiveAHam, thus beginning a chain reaction with people challenging one another to participate.

The Minnesota Pork Board (MPB) joined other state associations in the challenge by donating hams to the Mankato ECHO food shelf.

Overall, the campaign generated more than 100 individuals who participated in the challenge with a reach surpassing 300,000 users who viewed the content.

Be on the lookout for the 2019 Hams Across America campaign kicking off on Giving Tuesday, the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, so you can participate and show community support to help feed your hungry neighbors!



Current Minnesota Pork Producers Association (MPPA) President, Greg Boerboom, accepted the We Care Give a Ham challenge and donated hams to the Marshall Area Food Shelf.

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## MN PORK CALENDAR

### FEB 20

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Mankato

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

Minnesota Pork Board Office  
151 Saint Andrews Ct. Suite 810  
Mankato, MN 56001

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### MAR 6

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Marshall

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

AmericInn  
1406 E Lyon St.  
Marshall, MN

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### MAR 19

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Morris

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

West Central Research  
and Outreach Center  
46352 State Highway 329  
Morris, MN

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### APR 3

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Rice

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

Pine Country Bank  
750 County Rd. 21  
Rice, MN

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### APR 17

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Worthington

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

WREDC-Biotech  
Advancement Center  
1527 Prairie Drive  
Worthington, MN

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### MAY 15

#### PQA Plus & TQA Training - Hutchinson

**PQA Plus: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**TQA: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

McLeod County Fairgrounds  
- Country Diner  
840 Century Ave.  
Hutchinson, MN

*Pre-register: colleen@mnppork.com  
or 1-800-537-7675*

### JUN 5 - 7

#### World Pork Expo

Iowa State Fairgrounds  
3000 E Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50317

# PQA Plus 4 to Debut at World Pork Expo 2019



Pig farmers and their employees are committed to using best practices to promote food safety. Since its creation in 2007, PQA Plus has expanded and improved over the years covering topics related to food safety and animal well-being.



More than 71,000 farmers and farm personnel have earned their PQA Plus certification and pride themselves on the commitment to continuous improvement of relevant food safety standards and animal well-being. With the ever-changing and improving pork industry, PQA Plus is regularly revised to increase its effectiveness by incorporating new research information.

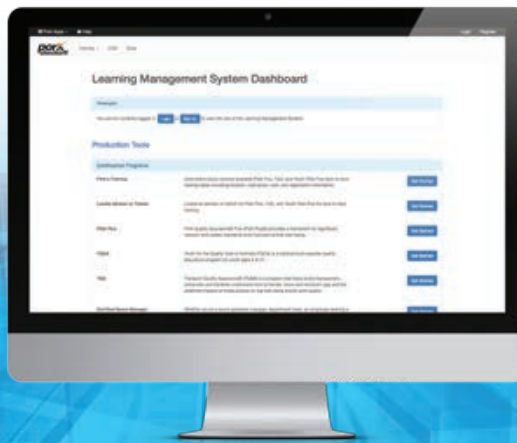
Version 4 of the Checkoff's PQA Plus program will debut at World Pork Expo 2019. Version 4 will feature two certification options - first-time certification and re-certification. The first-time certification provides new caretakers with the basic knowledge and skill set needed to work in the industry. The recertification training allows experienced caretakers the opportunity to renew their certification in a scenario-based setting with their advisor or online.

Advisor trainings for PQA Plus Version 4 will begin in late March 2019. Please contact the Minnesota Pork Board office about local advisor training sessions at colleen@mnppork.com or (507) 345-8814 or watch mnppork.com for more information. All PQA Plus Advisor certifications will expire on August 31, 2019.



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PQA Plus Version 3 content will remain available on <https://lms.pork.org> for use until August 31, 2019. September 1 is the official transition and all content on the website will be Version 4.



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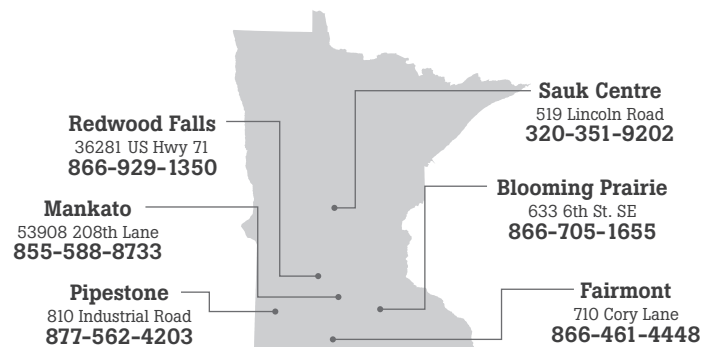
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# African Swine Fever (ASF)

## History and current status

African swine fever (ASF) is one of the most severe diseases of pigs, having a drastic impact on the pig industry. ASF first appeared in domestic pigs in East Africa in the 1900s. It subsequently spread to Europe appearing first in Portugal, then Spain and further countries. Eradication was achieved in Europe apart from Sardinia in the mid 1990s. In 2007 it then appeared in Georgia spreading then to Russia and the Caucasus region, and other Eastern European Countries. In 2018, it continued to spread westward affecting domestic pig and wild boar populations (Fig 1). In 2018, ASF virus also reached the world's largest pig producer, China (Fig 2). And in 2019, Mongolia reported its first outbreak.



Figure 1: Updated distribution of ASF in Europe. (Jan 2019)

## What is African Swine Fever (ASF)?

ASF is a **highly contagious hemorrhagic disease** caused by a virus of the family *Asfarviridae*. It is often fatal in domestic pigs and wild boars. The primary control strategy for ASF in domestic swine is stamping-out. Currently, there is no vaccine available. Given the financial implications and limitations in trade, eradication is the ultimate goal.

ASF is a **notifiable disease** listed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and must be reported. ASF virus is considered a **Foreign Animal Disease** by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and therefore swine byproduct imports from ASF-positive countries are forbidden. Any suspicion of ASF must be **notified to the Board of Animal Health (BAH) and the USDA**.

## Public Health Risks?

No, there are no risks to human health. ASF virus is only infectious to swine. Still, people play a critical role in ASF epidemiology, primarily for long distance spread.

## What do we know about ASF virus (transmission, incubation, clinical signs and treatment)?

Importantly wild boars and infected pig farms are a reservoir of ASF virus in certain countries. Transmission occurs through infectious bodily fluids, blood and tissues:

- **Direct transmission** - contact between infected and uninfected individuals.
- **Indirect transmission** - Swill feeding (uncooked pork products), fomites.
- **Vectors** - Via soft ticks *Ornithodoros moubata*

ASF virus can remain infectious in **uncooked pork for up to 3-6 months**. Incubation period can range on average from 2-14 days, and acute forms of the disease can occur within 3-4 days post-infection. Mortality can reach 100%, but subclinical infections can also occur. Peracute to acute signs of the disease can range from fever, cyanosis, hemorrhaging of the skin and extremities to sudden death within 2-10 days. Chronic and less virulent forms can show mild signs of inappetence, weight loss, diarrhea, necrosis of extremities, and fever. There is no treatment available for ASF.

## How is ASF diagnosed?

ASF should be considered with presentation of any of the **clinical signs described in combination with mild to severe increase in mortality**. Preliminary diagnosis can be done by submitting whole blood in EDTA to designated ASF labs in the United States. Confirmation of a positive is then done by Plum Island USDA lab.



Figure 2: updated distribution of ASF in China. (Jan 2019)

This fact sheet is meant to provide basic information. For specific health concerns please contact your veterinarian. Updated 2019.



## Biosecurity and Early Detection

### How ASF is spread

Due to the absence of an effective vaccine, introduction and spread of ASF onto domestic pig farms can only be prevented by strict compliance with biosecurity measures.

ASF virus is highly stable and temperature resistant and can persist in the environment for a long time. The main mechanisms of spread include:

- **Direct pig-to-pig contact, including with wild pigs**
- **Movement of infected live animals**
- **Improper disposal of manure and dead animals**
- **Contact with contaminated pork and byproducts**
- **Consumption of contaminated feed (swill feeding)**
- **Ticks**
- **Slurry**
- **Introduction of genetic materials and replacement animals**
- **Contaminated vehicles and other fomites, clothing, footwear, any other equipment**
- **Workers and visitors**

### Biosecurity:

In order to avert ASF spread:

**Bioexclusion** – Preventing the introduction of the virus into a herd, site or country from an outside source.

- **Pigs should not be fed swill** that might contain remains of swine byproducts. To ensure safety, swill should be boiled, above 70°C for 30 minutes and cooled before feeding.
- Check with feed supplier about ingredients.
- Movement of live pigs and byproducts across international borders should be controlled.
- Prevent visitors from bringing external byproducts into the farm and surroundings.
- Ensure perimeter fences and barriers are well maintained to prevent the entrance of feral pigs.
- Ensure biosecurity protocols are up-to-date and commit to their implementation every day.
- Implementation of periodic internal audits for biosecurity protocols.
- Reinforce staff biosecurity training.
- Proactively follow industry best management practices if hosting international visitors or traveling abroad.

**Biocontainment** – Preventing a pathogen from escaping a site and spreading, limiting the number of farms infected by the disease.

- In case of clinical suspicion, stop the movement of animals from the farm.
- Carcasses should be destroyed on-farm, and proper disposal should be preferred.
- Use disinfectants (specifically labeled for ASF), after removal of organic material.
- If you notice any difference in pigs' health, call your **veterinarian practitioner immediately**.

### Early detection highlights

Early signs you may notice include:

- Increase in the number of animals with purple ears & other parts of the body, fever, diarrhea.
- Sudden increase of morbidity and mortality.

Some ASF strains can start shedding long before the onset of clinical signs. **Be aware of the fact that ASF can have a much milder presentation in the field than what it is traditionally expected, misleading the early clinical diagnostic.**

### Immediate actions and resources:

- Prepare your farm for enrollment in the **Secure Pork Supply**. Resources instructions can be found at [www.SecurePork.org](http://www.SecurePork.org)
- Fill out a **FAD Preparation Checklist** for your farm. It can be found at [www.pork.org/fad](http://www.pork.org/fad)
- A person who suspects of an ASF case shall immediately notify the board. **Call the Board of Animal Health at 651-296-2942 (Link)**.

### Additional Information:

- OIE Technical Disease Card - African Swine Fever, 2018.
- Jurado C et al. (2018). Relevant Measures to Prevent the Spread of African Swine Fever in the European Union Domestic Pig Sector. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 5:77.
- Bellini, et al.(2016). Preventive measures aimed at minimizing the risk of African swine fever virus spread in pig farming systems. *Acta Veterinaria Scandinavica*, 58, 82.
- Global African Swine Fever Research Alliance (GARA) Gap Analysis Report. 2018: <https://go.usa.gov/xPfWt>
- Beltrán-Alcrudo, D. et al. 2017. African swine fever: detection and diagnosis – A manual for veterinarians. *FAO Animal Production and Health Manual No. 19*. Rome. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

*This fact sheet is meant to provide basic information. For specific health concerns please contact your veterinarian. Updated 2019.*

# U.S. PORK INDUSTRY Ends 2018 with M

New FDA report shows big drop in livestock antibiotic sales/distribution; pork industry joins diverse group to issue stewardship framework

America's 60,000 pig farmers and their veterinarians are ending 2018 with recognition of their diligence to use medically important antibiotics in a strictly responsible way. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's newly published *Annual Summary Report on Antimicrobials Sold or Distributed for Use in Food-Producing Animals* cites 2017 data that shows a 33 percent decline in this most critical class of antibiotics intended for use in food animals. When added to the decline found in the 2016 data, it confirms a reduction of 43 percent in this class of antibiotics from the 2015 level.

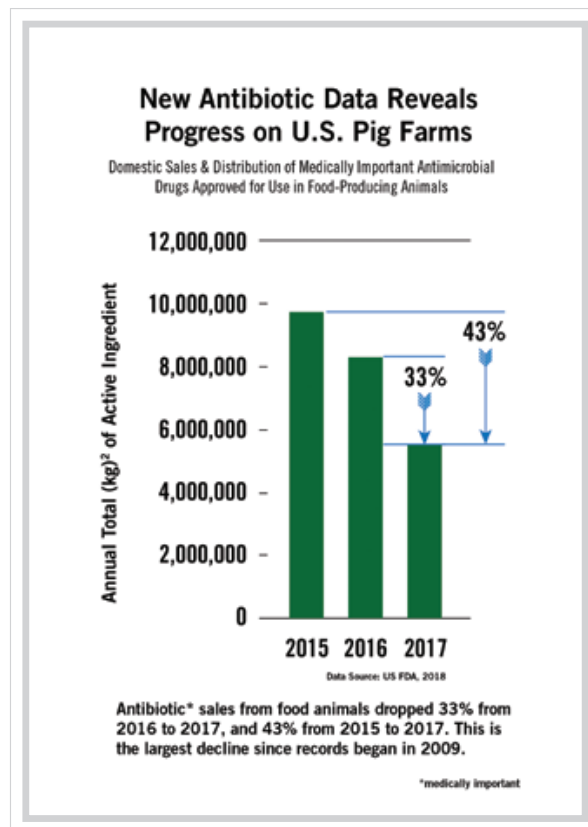
"This report is another indicator of the hard work that my fellow pig farmers have been doing to reduce the need for antibiotics. We continue to work closely with our veterinarians to ensure that we use antibiotics responsibly and according to FDA-approved labels," said National Pork Board President Steve Rommereim, a pig farmer from Alcester, South Dakota. "We're committed to using antibiotics in a strategic way that focuses on animal health and well-being, as well as to protecting overall public health."

Veterinarian Dave Pyburn, senior vice president of science and technology at the National Pork Board, says that while the new report is not a perfect estimate of antibiotic use at the farm level, it clearly shows a downward trend in antibiotic use intended for food animals. He also notes that this latest data reflects what happened after the pork industry's successful implementation in January 2017 of the Veterinary Feed Directive, which banned the use of medically important antibiotics for growth-promotion use.

"It was a relatively smooth transition after the Veterinary Feed Directives went into effect," Pyburn said. "Thanks to well-planned and well-executed education programs implemented by the pork industry long before that date, producers, veterinarians and allied industry personnel were prepared to modify their procedures. This was a clear example of how the pork industry adapts to do their part

in protecting antibiotics for human and animal health. It's simply the right thing to do."

The FDA report shows that the overall usage of antibiotics in livestock is the lowest since the report began in 2009. According to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics reports, America's pig farmers produced over 121 million market hogs in 2017 at an average weight of 282 pounds. This is an increase of 16 pounds per pig since 2009, when production stood at roughly 113 million market hogs. Comparing these figures indicates that today's pig farmers are using far less antibiotics per pound of pork produced than ever before.



"When viewing this data with a scientific lens, I clearly see that America's pig farmers are on the right track in their antibiotic stewardship," said public health veterinarian Heather Fowler, director of producer and public health with the National Pork Board. "The industry is not complacent either. We're proud of our ongoing collaboration with some of the best researchers in the world develop antibiotic on-farm metrics. We are working with diverse stakeholders to continually improve antibiotic stewardship for the health of people, pigs and the planet."

As an example of this cooperative approach to antibiotic stewardship, the National Pork Board, along with the National Pork Producers Council, recently announced a partnership with the Farm Foundation,

The Pew Charitable Trusts and many others to introduce a comprehensive framework to strengthen antibiotic stewardship to protect animal and public health. The stakeholders agree that the use of medically important antibiotics in all settings, from human health care to livestock production, must be carefully managed to slow the emergence of resistant bacteria and preserve the effectiveness of vital drugs. The framework defines effective stewardship, outlines its core components and describes essential characteristics of effective stewardship programs, including key performance measures.

In addition to the two pork groups, organizations that agree with the framework include: Elanco Animal Health,

# Major Antibiotic Progress



Hormel Foods, Jennie-O Turkey Store, McDonald's Corporation, National Milk Producers Federation, National Turkey Federation, Smithfield Foods, Inc., Tyson Foods, Walmart Inc. and Zoetis.

"There is a broad consensus across the food animal industry that we must continue to drive and demonstrate antibiotic stewardship in animal agriculture," said Joe Swedberg, chairman of the board of Farm Foundation. "This framework is about stakeholders coming together to do the right thing and to communicate their commitment to antibiotic stewardship with a transparent and meaningful approach."

The 15 core components of the antibiotic stewardship framework are based on the importance of veterinary guidance and partnership, disease prevention strategies and optimal treatment approaches, as well as effective record keeping and a culture of continuous improvement and commitment to antibiotic stewardship. The components address education, implementation and evaluation steps for phasing in stewardship programs. The framework's guiding principles are intended to help ensure that stewardship programs have a clear scientific basis, are transparent, minimize the risk of unintended consequences, encourage alternatives to antibiotics and focus on long-term sustainability.

Rommereim says the Pork Checkoff is on the right path forward to make additional progress on antibiotic stewardship.

"We will make continuous improvement in antibiotic stewardship through additional Checkoff-funded antibiotic research and collaboration with those who share our objectives to protect animal and public health," Rommereim said. "We can make the U.S. pork industry even more sustainable into the future."

*The National Pork Board has responsibility for Checkoff-funded research, promotion and consumer information projects and for communicating with pork producers and the public. Through a legislative national Pork Checkoff, pork producers invest \$0.40 for each \$100 value of hogs sold. Importers of pork products contribute a like amount, based on a formula. The Pork Checkoff funds national and state programs in advertising, consumer information, retail and foodservice marketing, export market promotion, production improvement, science and technology, swine health, pork safety and sustainability and environmental management. For information on Checkoff-funded programs, pork producers can call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-7675 or check the Internet at [pork.org](http://pork.org).*



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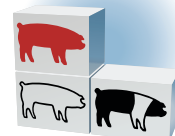
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# HOGGING ENERGY SAVIN

Over 35 farmers, utility staff and community members met on the morning of November 15 in Fairmont to learn about methods and technologies to manage energy consumption in swine barns. The event was hosted by the Southwest Clean Energy Resource Team, the Minnesota Pork Board and Great River Energy in association with area electric utilities. The Martin County Pork Producers cooked up tasty pork chops for lunch as well.

## **START WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND KNOW WHERE YOUR BARN USES ENERGY**

Jill Eide, CEM from Great River Energy kicked off the session explaining how Great River Energy and its member cooperatives focus on energy efficiency to keep production costs down. Jill described Great River Energy's new farm audit program, "Energy Wise for your Farm" which launched this past summer with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program. This program covers 75% of the cost for a farm energy audit and provides a comprehensive energy management plan tailored to the farmer's needs.

A farmer's first, simple step is to call 1-800-441-8525. GDS Associates, Great River Energy's project partner, will review the farm's eligibility, discuss the kinds of assessment the farmer would like, and schedule the walk-through over the phone. GDS Associates personnel then perform the scheduled farm energy audits. Ms. Eide noted GDS Associates energy auditors are well-versed in biosecurity protocols, including shower in and out of barns, donning Tyvek suits, and waiting 72 hours between swine barn visits. Energy auditors also prefer performing walk-throughs between herds and will work with the farmer to schedule visits accordingly.

Ms. Eide highlighted several on-farm energy uses with good savings potential which may be coupled with utility rebates to facilitate with implementation:

- LED lighting
- Engine block timers (new rebate for 2019!)
- Ventilation fans
- Variable frequency drives (VFDs), and
- Hog creep mats

## **ELECTRIC & THERMAL CONSUMPTION TRENDS IN COMMERCIAL SWINE FACILITIES**

Fritz Ebinger stepped in to share results from recent research by Kirsten Sharpe and Faculty of the UMN West Central Research & Outreach Center (WCROC). The WCROC conducted energy monitoring at six commercial swine barns near Morris, MN to better understand equipment use and its impacts on energy consumption. The study researched two breed-to-wean barns, two nursery barns, and two finisher barns.

At high level, some key findings included:

The breed-to-wean barns had the highest energy usage per pig. Roughly 60% of the electricity used in consumption was due to heat lamps. The WCROC is currently researching creep mats as a more efficient alternative to heat lamps.

In the nursery barns, mechanical ventilation dominated energy consumption. This reinforced the need to maintain fan belts, keep louvres lubricated, and fan blades clean. Mr. Ebinger suggested farmers take a look at the Agricultural Ventilation Fans online tool from the Bioenvironmental and Structural Systems Laboratory ("BESS Lab") based at Illinois State to help understand and compare the energy efficiency of ventilation fans.

The finisher barns, representing the most common swine barn in Minnesota, highlighted the difference in energy usage between mechanically ventilated barns versus side curtain barns. Mechanically ventilated barns use a lot more energy, in this particular case study, almost four times more.

Attendees had a good discussion about how best to track energy usage by farm site and how operators may access that data. All of the utilities in the room reinforced they are a one-stop resource for energy consumption data. Should anyone ever have data questions, they just need to call their local utility. Some utilities have that information online in easy to use spreadsheets. However, if the a farm worker is not the listed contact for a particular meter account, he or she may need to work with the account owner to sign a data release form in order to access energy data information.

Attendees also discussed whether the WCROC research evaluated heat lamps using 250 watt or 150 watt lamps and what a farmer might see in terms of savings between the two bulbs. Later, Mr. Ebinger confirmed with Ms. Sharpe the lamps in the study were actually 125 watts on the more efficient end of the spectrum. To understand the savings, one would calculate current costs (250 watts/hour x number of hours of run ime x cost of energy in ¢/kWh) and then compare that with the new bulb wattage. Participants indicated a lower wattage lamp would not likely be quite as high a savings as simply comparing 150 watts to 250 watts since farmers may end up running the 150 watt bulbs for more hours.

## **SOLAR FOR YOUR FARM OPERATION**

Fritz Ebinger, CERTs Rural Energy Manager for the UMN Extension, Regional Sustainable Development Partners then dove into all things solar, but not before stressing how important it is to start with energy efficiency. Any solar array should be sized to annual consumption load; if a producer can shrink that energy load, he or she can install less solar equipment. Key highlights from Mr. Ebinger included:



# IGS: Swine farmers learn about solar efficiency



The Solar Resource in Minnesota: In general Minnesota's solar resource is good though siting a system is dependent upon local conditions and having a good southern or southwestern solar window. Producers can check out their farm sites with the Minnesota Solar Suitability App to get a general sense of their solar exposure.

Through the USDA-funded Renewable Energy for Greater Minnesota program, Mr. Ebinger will come out to your farm to conduct a renewable energy site assessment and financial report. This process includes evaluating your solar resource in respect to shading obstructions, identifying the ideal solar site (based on buildings, tile lines, points of interconnection, etc.). He will also help producers review their electric bills and understand financing options and tax incentives with different financial models.

Installation Costs: Current solar costs for commercially installed systems are in the ballpark of \$2.30-\$2.50 / watt. The major components to making a project work are the federal tax incentives. Right now, farmers can access a 30% Federal Business Energy Investment Income Tax Credit (it has a 1 year carry back, 20 year carry forward period). This tax credit stays at 30% through 2019 and then steps down in subsequent years. Accelerated depreciation (MACRS) is another big part of the savings. Mr. Ebinger then walked through a cash flow example for a solar project. He assumed an electric rate of \$0.10/kWh for most producers on farm-residential electric rates. Notably, a producer who pays a lower commercial kWh rate or is on demand rate service, might see a longer payback though this depends on electric consumption details. Before advancing a project, producers should always work with their local utility. They can best walk farmers through their net metering program.



Financing a Project: Property Assessed Clean Energy—or PACE—is also a good option for many farmers. There are two PACE programs available in Minnesota. One is through the St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA), and the other through the Rural Minnesota Energy Board (RMEB)! Lending is based upon equity in a farmer's property. Specifically, SPPA and RMEB will lend up to 20% of the assessed tax value of the farm business property. The farmer then repays the loan at 5% interest for projects with paybacks of 10 years or less on their property tax bill in six month increments. The SPPA and RMEB only lend out to projects that are cash-flow positive and are looking for projects that will save the farm business money.



# Thought-Provoking Messaging Shared During Farm Tour and Research Committee Meeting



On Monday, December 17, members of the Minnesota Pork Research committee, Minnesota Pork Board, and the University of Minnesota gathered in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, at Christensen Farms headquarters. The morning started with a walk-through tour of Christensen Farms' on-site feed mill and truck wash.

Built in 1998, the truck wash became one of the most innovative methods Christensen Farms implemented at the site of their headquarters. Six additional truck washes extend across Minnesota, South Dakota, Illinois, Nebraska, and Iowa.

Integrating truck washes into their company model allowed for increased biosecurity measures to protect against disease transfer. The ability to more easily track and schedule truck movements from farm to farm creates a sound system where diseases can be confined and controlled from spreading. "Avoiding the risk factor of cross-over with other pig or livestock premises ultimately provides the optimal nutrition to our animals," states communications manager for Christensen Farms, Amber Portner.

Much like the truck wash, the feed mill also creates an even more integrated system allowing for more company oversight and control. The on-site feed mill allows the operation to mix their own feed to provide consistent quality and nutrient rations, as well an increased ability to control feed timelines for pig farmers.

Since the first implementation in 1996, three other feed mills have joined the Christensen Farms fleet landing in Nebraska, South Dakota, and Iowa. The landscape spread allows the company to keep up with demand and reduce gas expenditures from transport.

"Christensen Farms was one of the first producers in Minnesota to incorporate these resources and would be considered an early adopter amongst the broader pork industry across the U.S.," says JoDee Haala, director of public, industry, and community affairs for Christensen Farms. "From farm to fork, Christensen Farms has made investments into technologies and resources at almost

all stages of the pork value chain to ensure we are consistently able to deliver upon our mission of responsibly producing high quality, safe, and nutritious pork for people within our communities and across the globe."

Following the tours, attendees gathered for quick discussion and continued the rest of the day at the research meeting. Welcome and introductions from Christensen Farms included an overview of the company's past history, current accomplishments, and future endeavors.

Presentations following Christensen Farms included:

- Dr. Brian Buhr; Dean, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences; Director, Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station; Professor, Department of Applied Economics
- Dr. Trevor Ames; Dean and Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine
- David Preisler, Minnesota Pork Producers Association

Succeeding presentations, attendees split amongst themselves into four subsequent groups to discuss specific industry topics collaborating with industry professionals and university researchers with the ultimate goal being the identification of priority issues within each subgroup and ideas to join forces in future efforts. The groups discussed: swine nutrition, swine health, manure management, and swine housing and production.

After two hours of thought-provoking discussion, fifteen total questions, generated by the small groups, were shared collectively. These questions left attendees inspired to work with each other in collaborative efforts to find solutions in science-driven research. The areas of consensus will be used to help direct research investments by the Minnesota Pork Board and inform the University of Minnesota on areas they should invest state dollars into. The group of researchers excitedly agreed to meet again in 2019 for further discussion.



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# Nominations for America's Pig Farmer of the Year



Raising pigs looks differently today than it did decades ago, and America's pig farmers are responsible for that progress. The changes include significant advancements in **animal health, food safety, and environmental stewardship**. Today, on farms large and small, America's pig farmers are doing what's right for our people, pigs, and planet while producing the best pork ever.

To ensure America's pig farmers represent the very best in agriculture, the National Pork Board created the America's Pig Farmer of the year contest in order to recognize the best of the best in pig farming. This prestigious honor will be awarded annually to the pig farmer who best demonstrates and lives by the We Care ethical principles.

The winner will be asked to share his or her story of pig farming with the American public while representing all pig farmers.

Know a Minnesota pig farmer who deserves to be recognized for their outstanding demonstration of raising pigs using the We Care ethical principles and for their contributions to the pork industry? Nominations for America's Pig Farmer of the Year are officially open through Sunday, March 10.

To nominate a farmer, or yourself, please visit <https://www.americaspigfarmer.com/nominate/>.



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# #PorkPlease Gnocchi and Pork Bolognese



Winter months were made for comfort food! Whip up an easy meal everyone in the family will reach for seconds on. This Gnocchi and Pork Bolognese dish is delicious, filling, and easy to make, not to mention a unique way to use ground pork!

## INGREDIENTS

1 lb. ground pork	1 medium onion, diced	1 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped
2 packages of gnocchi	2 Tbsp. garlic, minced	1 sprig fresh thyme
1 tsp. oil	1 cup bell peppers, cut into small pieces	¼ cup heavy cream
¼ cup red wine	2 large tomatoes, chopped	Salt and pepper

## STEPS

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet until warmed; add ground pork and cook until browned (about 6 to 8 minutes)
2. Reduce heat to medium. Stir in wine, onions, and garlic. Cook until onions are translucent
3. Add bell peppers, tomatoes, basil, and thyme; bring mixture to a slow, rolling simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 15 minutes
4. Add cream and gnocchi, and warm through for about 5 minutes
5. Season with salt and pepper, to taste



Find the recipe video here: <http://www.mnpork.com/porkplease/gnocchi-pork-bolognese-sauce/>

For more tasty pork recipes visit: <https://www.mnpork.com/porkplease/>



## Polka Town

Market Hog Show  
and Swine Judging Contest

**Saturday, March 16, 2019**  
Open to public. No entry fee.  
Lunch available on the grounds.

Youth Coliseum Brown County Fairgrounds  
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**SCHEDULE:**

- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Weigh-in of Animals
- 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Judging Contest 4-H, FFA, Adult Awards immediately following
- 1:00 p.m.  
Market Hog Show

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**OFFICIAL JUDGE:** Nathan Brugman

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# Step Up and Serve! Become an MPPA/MPB Committee Member!

The Minnesota Pork Producers Association relies on committees to give direction and thought leadership on program efforts to the Board of Directors and staff. More than 85 Minnesota pork producers and allied industry representatives currently serve on one or more of MPPA's five committees, providing expertise to assist in making decisions for the betterment of the Minnesota pork industry.



The future of Minnesota's pork industry relies heavily on strong leadership from producers and individuals willing to step up and serve. If you have interest or expertise in a specific area and are willing to serve, MPPA wants you! Committee involvement is open to anyone with interest.

Each committee meets via conference calls or in person at the Minnesota Pork office in Mankato three to four times a year. Meals are provided and mileage is reimbursed if travel is needed.

If you believe your contributions will help better the association's efforts in supporting the pork industry, then MPPA has a place for you. Complete and return the form to MPPA by March 1, 2019. If you need more information, please contact us at [colleen@mnpork.com](mailto:colleen@mnpork.com) or (507) 345-8814.

### COMMITTEES

- Human Capital
- Pork Congress
- Promotion and Image
- Public Policy
- Research and University Outreach



# COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM



If you are willing to serve on an MPPA committee, please complete this form and **return to MPPA by March 1, 2019.**

Minnesota Pork Producers Association  
151 St. Andrews Court, Suite 810  
Mankato, MN 56001

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm or Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your operation or business  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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## COMMITTEE PREFERENCE

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