



"...the Checkoff provides pork producers valuable information that otherwise might not be available to them."

Leon Sheets, Ionia, Iowa

## Slow Down to Speed Up

Remaining competitive today requires access to timely information, and sometimes you have to slow down to speed up. This involves taking time out to educate yourself about the latest industry trends and to expand your knowledge. Producers had the opportunity to do that at the Checkoff's PORK Academy, held June 7-8 at World Pork Expo in Des Moines, Iowa.

"Through PORK Academy, the Checkoff provides pork producers valuable information that otherwise might not be available to them," said Leon Sheets, chairman of the Checkoff's Producer Services Committee and an Ionia, Iowa, producer. "The in-depth seminars reminded me of the importance of reviewing and reevaluating, from the new Pork Quality Assurance Plus™ (PQA Plus™) program to the basics of nutrient management and being a good neighbor."

The content of this newsletter highlights some of the presentations made at this year's PORK Academy. Other tips from PORK Academy included:

- **Put safety first.** Whether vaccinating pigs or pumping manure, take steps to ensure the safety of your employees and yourself, as well as the quality of the pork you're producing.
- **Learn more about PQA Plus.** If your certification through Pork Quality Assurance® (PQA) will expire soon, it's time to learn about PQA Plus, the Pork Checkoff's new, voluntary solution to assure food safety and good animal care.

For more information, call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-PORK. 

# pork checkoff® special edition REPORT

July 2007 • Vol. 4, No. 4



Become a  
**GOOD NEIGHBOR...**  
Not a Trust Buster

**S**trong farms create strong rural communities, but too often non-farm residents often have unrealistic expectations of today's farm families and farms. Since an uninformed public can be easily misinformed by coffee shop talk, the media, self-proclaimed experts and animal activists, you must take a more proactive approach to building trust.

"Communities prosper when livestock farmers have an opportunity to grow responsibly and successfully. Being a good neighbor is a major part of this," said Rex Hoppes with the Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers. He spoke at the Pork Checkoff's 2007 PORK Academy held June 7-8 at World Pork Expo in Des Moines, Iowa.

As a good neighbor, Hoppes says it's important to:

- follow laws and regulations;
- minimize odor, dust and noise;
- protect the environment;
- take proper care of livestock;
- explain what you do on your operation and why;
- help consumers appreciate food production and
- assist neighbors in need and ask for help when you're in need.

Even if you do your best to be a good neighbor, could you still be pegged as a nuisance? Hoppes noted that a "nuisance" can be considered an unreasonable interference with a person's comfortable use and enjoyment of property.

"A lawful business may be a nuisance," he said. "Compliance with required separation distances and other

cont. on page 2

### Welcome to My Farm...



Before a shovel of dirt was turned on his new facility, Mitchell, S.D., pork producer Brad Greenway (left) took the advice of Rex Hoppes (see main article) and others to heart about being a good neighbor.

Greenway answered questions about the proposed facility with one-on-one visits with neighbors and in meetings.

"We don't raise hogs, so we appreciated that they took the time to explain what was going on," said Bob Miller, a retired firefighter who lives on an acreage just a mile from the new hog building. Miller was among the 400 people from the community who attended the Greenways' open house (pictured above) once the building was constructed.

"People had a lot of questions, and we were able to address them up front," said Greenway. He is an alumnus of the Pork Checkoff's Operation Main Street program and has given dozens of presentations to industrial development boards, ag business groups, county and regional commissioners and civic groups, such as the Rotary Club and the Kiwanis.

Through the program, producers are trained to speak out on behalf of the pork industry in their own communities. For more information on how you can participate, call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-PORK.

Inside: Put tips from the Checkoff's PORK Academy to work in your operation.



or the Pork Checkoff Service Center @ (800) 456-PORK

National Pork Board • P.O. Box 9114 • Des Moines, IA 50306

legal requirements does not mean an operation cannot be found to be a nuisance.”

Factors used to determine whether a nuisance exists include:

- priority in time (who was there first), which is given considerable weight;
- nature of the area (agricultural or not); and
- nature of the activity (is there a substantial interference).

“While insurance may offer protection, it’s not the only solution. Standard farm liability policies normally don’t cover this, but you should always check with your insurance company and/or an attorney,” said Hoppes, who noted that environmental policies are available that provide coverage for claims and costs of defense.

More important, take all reasonable steps to minimize the impact of your livestock operation on your neighbors. This improves your chances of avoiding a nuisance lawsuit or helping in legal defense if a nuisance suit is filed. To be a good neighbor, Hoppes encourages producers to:

- realistically assess the situation with your neighbors before constructing a new swine unit;
- meet with concerned neighbors;
- sincerely respond to concerns expressed by neighbors;
- meet or exceed all legal requirements; and
- design and construct your operation to minimize the impact on your neighbors.

When selecting a site, consider the size of the barn and the manure holding structure; available land for nutrients; distance to surface water or wells; proximity to neighbors and public use areas; prevailing summer winds from the south; nearby infrastructure, including roads, bridges, water and electric; and windbreaks. Also determine if barns can or will be added for future growth.

Hoppes said producers also should stay current on new technology and management practices to minimize odor.

“Inform your family and employees about good neighbor practices and make sure they follow the them,” Hoppes said. “And require manure applicators, input suppliers, livestock haulers, etc. to follow good neighbor practices.”

He added, “Producers also shouldn’t overlook public relations, which is simply doing the right thing and telling people about it. It’s so important to tell the story of modern pork production and educate non-farm neighbors and consumers about your operation.”

To make this easier, the Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers has developed a 16-minute DVD that addresses neighbor relations, regulations, siting considerations, conducting open houses and more. For more information, log onto [www.supportfarmers.com](http://www.supportfarmers.com).

The Pork Checkoff’s Operation Main Street program and Neighbor to Neighbor program also are helping producers develop good neighbor relations and improve the image of the industry. For information about participating in either program, go to [pork.org](http://pork.org) or call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-PORK. ✓

## 10 Steps to Control Odor

While the **CHEMISTRY OF SWINE ODOR** is complex, managing it doesn’t have to be complicated. Start with simple solutions, from siting new buildings properly to applying manure carefully, said Dr. Jay Harmon, a professor of ag and biosystems engineering at Iowa State University. He offered these tips at the Pork Checkoff’s 2007 PORK Academy.

**1. Location, location, location.** If you’re building a new swine barn, invest time in siting the building properly, a relatively low-cost proposition that can have a major impact for years to come. Many states have modeling programs to help you do this.

**2. Inject manure.** This can lead to an odor reduction of 50 to 75 percent compared with broadcasting manure.

**3. Modify swine diets.** Scientists have found that odor can be reduced by cutting back on crude protein and including crystalline amino acids in swine rations.

**4. Cover manure storage areas.** Permeable options, such as straw, cornstalks and geotextiles, can cut odor by 40 to 50 percent at a cost of \$ 0.10 to \$ 0.25 per square foot. Impermeable materials such as a high-density polyethylene cover can reduce odor by 70 to 85 percent at a cost of \$1 to \$1.40 per square foot.

**5. Create visual barriers.**

Well-kept sites reflect on the overall management of the farm and receive fewer odor complaints. “It’s ‘out of sight, out of mind,’ and it’s real,” Harmon said.

**6. Be aware of pit ventilation issues.** Pit ventilation offers limited benefits to indoor air quality. Pit ventilation systems accelerates the production of gases from effluent.

**7. Incorporate biofilters.** These can reduce odor by 65 to 80 percent at an energy cost of 42 cents per pig finished. “Biofilters must be designed to avoid harming the ventilation system, however, and management, especially for moisture, is critical,” said Harmon, who added that whole-house biofilters are not practical.

**8. Plant vegetative environmental filters.** Trees and shrubs around buildings promote uplift and air mixing to control odorous gasses while providing a visual screen.

**9. Consider chimneys.** These devices on swine barns promote air mixing and offer a relatively low-cost solution for odor management. Height is important for the chimneys’ effectiveness.

**10. Assess other options.** Additives are most effective in dilute systems, although their effectiveness varies. Aeration is 40 to 80 percent effective in dilute systems and costs about \$4 per pig. Barriers that remove dust and force air up can offer a low-cost answer, while bio-curtains also can remove dust. Other options include manure digestion and oil sprinkling. ✓



*The Pork Checkoff offers a series of odor management brochures. To request copies, call (800) 456-PORK or go to the [pork.org](http://pork.org) and click on the “Pork Store.”*

## 100 PERCENT PURE PORK... Let’s Keep It That Way

Imagine sitting down to a relaxing meal, enjoying the tempting aroma of your pork entrée – and finding a needle when you take that first bite. It’s not an appetizing scenario for consumers or pork producers.

“Depending on who experienced this, it could generate a lot of publicity and hurt pork demand,” said Dr. C. Scanlon Daniels, DVM, MBA, with Circle H Animal Health, LLC in Dalhart, Texas. He was a speaker at the Checkoff’s recent PORK Academy.

“It’s time to take control, and this starts with needle accountability,” Daniels said. “Make sure your staff understands the importance of replacing needles if they bend or have a bur. Also, remind employees to change needles every 25 to 30 animals since needles can weaken after repeated use.”

A needle inventory process also fosters accountability. Each morning count the number of needles that are distributed to employees, and count the number of needles that are returned at the end of the day, including used and unused needles. To simplify the process, prepackage needles in bags of 10 or 20, Daniels said.

Be careful when counting, since a new box labeled as “100 needles” may not always contain 100 needles, he said. During use, watch for needle defects such as hub-and-shaft separation, bent shafts, burred tips or contamination. If you find defects, replace the needle immediately.

### What if a needle breaks?

“No matter how careful you are, needles can break. The important thing is to promptly identify the pig and try to remove the needle,” Daniels said.

If you’re unable to remove the needle, attach needle tags to both of the animal’s ears. Also communicate with the harvest facility where the animal will be delivered.

“Work with your customer, and ask them how they want you to handle the situation,” Daniels said.

**DO YOUR PART**  
A missed needle is hard to find.

**Sow Needle Management Matters**  
pork.org or the Pork Checkoff Service Center @ (800) 456-PORK

Since broken needles pose a significant risk to the pork industry, more producers are considering needle-free injection methods, said Daniels, who discussed some of these options at PORK Academy (see sidebar).

“Some of the industry has gone completely needle-free and will soon require others to stop,” said Daniels, who added that the vaccine efficacy of needle-free systems is at least equal to needle and syringe methods. Depending on the device, needle-free systems work for antibiotics (including solutions and suspensions).

“While we can completely replace needles, there are implementation barriers, including the cost of the equipment,” Daniels concluded. “Since a tangible value is created at the consumer level from the needle-free systems, maybe it’s time to consider ways to share the value across the entire production chain.” ✓

### Needle-free Options:

- The Pulse Needle Free system offers several devices, including low-dose, medium dose and larger dose, along with sow and piglet options. Devices are powered by carbon dioxide or compressed air.

- LectraVet® is a multipurpose, 0.25 to 5.0 mL injection device powered by rechargeable batteries.

- Agro-Jet®, which offers several devices powered by carbon dioxide or compressed air, has an injection volume range of 0.1 mL to 5.0 mL. Injections can be subcutaneous, intradermal or intramuscular.

- Derma-Vac™ is a needle-free system developed for a USDA-approved, commercial, one-dose *Mycoplasma* vaccine.