

Swine Welfare: How is the U.S. Checkoff Responding?

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Objectives

- Marketing challenges
 - consumers
 - animal activists
 - retailers and restaurants
- SWAPsm
- Checkoff funded Animal Welfare Projects
 - 2002
 - 2003



Marketing Challenges - The Consumer

- Fewer consumers have an understanding of animal agriculture and are more distant from the farm
 - They view farmers and veterinarians as credible sources
 - But, they want factual, honest information
- When factual untruths are presented purchasing decision can be effected



PETA Will Gladly Leave McDonalds Alone

October, 1999 2 → 14 demands

No sow stalls	Unannounced audits	Phase out cages	No debeaking	Slow lines	2 ft sq space June '99: 1 1/2 sq ft	Open McDonald's panel reports
No breeding for weight	Effective stunning	Dispatch downers	Add 2 nd stunner	Increase audit numbers	PETA names people on McD panel	PETA observers in plants

September, 2000 14 → 17 demands

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No breeding for weight	Effective stunning	Dispatch downers	Add 2 nd stunner	Increase audit numbers	PETA names people on panel	PETA observers in plants
Only free-range chickens	Revise handling guidelines	No forced molting				

October, 2000 17 → 19 demands

No sow stalls	Unannounced audits	Phase out cages	No debeaking	Slow lines	2 ft sq space	Open McDonald's panel reports
No breeding for weight	Effective stunning	Dispatch downers	Add 2 nd stunner	Increase audit numbers	PETA names people on panel	PETA observers in plants
Only free-range chickens	Revise handling guidelines	No forced molting	No farrowing stalls	PETA directs research		



McDonalds Animal Welfare Activities

- "Incorporate animal welfare into our basic quality assurance program and to engage our suppliers as partners in specific, measurable compliance efforts"
- Established Animal Welfare Council
 - Dr. Temple Grandin
 - Dr. Jeff Armstrong
 - Diane Halverson
 - Dr. Joy Mench
 - Dr. Ken Olson
 - Dr. Janice Swanson
- Welfare Auditing Systems for Suppliers



McDonald's Animal Welfare Guidelines

- August 2000
- Laying Hens:
 - 72 sq. in./bird
 - Stop Forced Molting
- Swine:
 - "Fund research on alternative sow housing"
 - "Explore and evaluate the feasibility of purchasing a portion of our pork from suppliers who raise sows in more animal-welfare friendly conditions"



Burger King Animal Welfare Guidelines

- **June 2001**
- **Laying Hens**
 - 75 sq. in./Bird
 - Two Water Drinkers/Cage
 - Air Quality Guidelines
 - Stop Forced Molting
- **Swine:**
 - “Encourage and support the development of a body of scientific knowledge around the handling of gestating sows. This effort may include identifying and studying pork production facilities that have already instituted alternative procedures for the handling and care of gestating sows.
 - “Also begin purchasing pork from producers employing these alternatives successfully . . .”.



Applebee's International

Applebee's International, Inc.

Dec 19, 2001 letter to “vendor partners”

- “begin a process to phase out . . . farms that continuously confine sows . . .”
- “immediately euthanize any animals . . . at the slaughterhouse . . . overheated or in severe pain.”
- “continuously improve the minimum living conditions of animals”
- “not accepting any product from suppliers that mutilate animals for convenience.”



What Are The Expectations?

FMI / NCCR Welfare Advisory Group

- **June, 2001**
 - Advisory committee of experts in animal science, veterinary medicine and animal welfare
 - Goal: “animal welfare guidelines that have objective, measurable indices for desirable practices in the growing, handling and processing of animals in food production”



FMI / NCCR Welfare Advisory Group

June, 2002

1. Comparing pork guidelines to FMI / NCCR guidance
 - Was there input from other than producers?
 - Are the guidelines themselves science-based?
 - Is there an audit component to the guidelines?
2. Recommend changes for current practices that do not meet FMI / NCCR criteria
3. Encourage research
4. Review guidelines periodically



FMI / NCCR 2002 June Statement

- “One of the most challenging issues the pork industry faces is confinement of gestating sows. Current pork industry guidelines include several enhancements regarding sow stalls but our experts have challenged the industry to go further.”
- “As a short term measure the FMI and NCCR support enhanced pork industry guidelines regarding individual housing systems, including:
 - 1. The pregnant sow should be able to lie down on her side without her teats extending into the adjacent stall”.
 - 2. Her head should not have to rest on a raised feeder.
 - 3. Her rear quarters should not come into contact with the back of the stall.
 - 4. The pregnant sow should be able to stand up unimpeded.”

http://www.fmi.org/animal_welfare/



Swine Welfare Assurance Programsm: A Producer-developed Tool for On-Farm Animal Welfare Assessment



Swine Welfare Indexing SystemSM

- **Three classical measures of animal welfare**
 - behavior
 - production
 - physiology



Swine Welfare Indexing System Advisory GroupSM

- **Physiology**
 - Dr. Bob Matteri, USDA-ARS
- **Behavior**
 - Dr. Harold Gonyou, Canada
 - Dr. Leo den Hartog, The Netherlands
 - Dr. Marc Bracke, The Netherlands
- **Production**
 - Dr. Morgan Morrow, U.S.
 - Dr. Jeff Armstrong, U.S.
- **Veterinary medicine**
 - Dr. Jim McKean, U.S.
 - Dr. John Deen, U.S.
- **Housing**
 - Dr. John McGlone, U.S.
- **Handling**
 - Dr. Temple Grandin, U.S.
- **Stockmanship / training**
 - Dr. Sandra Edwards, U.K.
 - Dr. Peter English, U.K.



Swine Welfare Indexing SystemSM

- **Swine Welfare Index evaluates**
 - farm records
 - animals
 - facility conditions



Swine Welfare Assurance ProgramSM

- **Swine Welfare Assurance ProgramSM (SWAPSM)**
 - Pork Quality Assurance ProgramTM (PQATM) model
- **SWAPSM**
 - Voluntary, objective assessment of welfare
 - producer implementable
 - independent of housing type or size
 - fits with an educator / auditor / verifier program if required
- **SWAPSM addresses production from breeding to finishing**
- **SWAPSM can be the basis for an auditable program**



Producer SWAPSM Booklet

- **Producer SWAPSM booklet contents:**
 - Program elements
 - » Site definition and number of animals to observe
 - » Educators
 - Introduction
 - Regulatory Aspects of Animal Welfare
 - Producer Code of Practice
 - Nine Care and Well-being Principles (CWPs)



Producer SWAPSM Booklet

- **Care and Well-being Principles (CWPs)**
 1. Herd Health and Nutrition
 2. Caretaker Training
 3. Animal Observation
 4. Body Condition Score
 5. Euthanasia
 6. Handling and Movement
 7. Facilities
 8. Emergency Support
 9. Continuing Assessment and Education



SWAPSM Assessment Form

Breed to Wean				
Care and Well-being Principles (CWP)	Measure	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Comments
Record Keeping				
CWP #1 - Herd Health and Nutrition				
1.1 VCPR				
1.2 Herd Health Program				
1.3 Medication and treatment records				
1.4 Mortality				
1.4a Sow herd	%			
1.4b neonatal herd	%			
1.5 Nutritional Program				
Animal Observation				
CWP # 5 Euthanasia				
5.1 Timeliness				
5.2 Methods				
5.2 Functional Equipment				
Facilities				
CWP # 8 Emergency Life Support				
8.1 Emergency detection plan				
8.2 Written action plan				

Educator SWAPSM Booklet

- Designed to identify critical discussion points
 - What measures will appear on the assessment table
 - How to perform the assessment
- Introduction to each CWP includes a short paragraph explaining why this welfare measure is important

CWP # 1 Herd Health and Nutrition

“Record keeping is a critical component of any operation. It allows the producer to evaluate the level of their nutritional program, performance levels and overall welfare of the animals. Producers are encouraged to keep their previous 12 months records for assessment.”

SWAPSM

Projected timeline, subject to change as needed to meet SWAPSM project objectives

Third - Fourth Quarter, 2002

- Development of SWAPSM materials
- Pilot project on-farm SWAPSM implementation

- Third - Fourth Quarter, 2002
 - Refine SWAPSM training materials
- First and Second Quarter, 2003
 - Revise and refine SWAPSM based on industry feedback
 - Train educators
 - » AASV 2003
 - » Additional training sessions

Benefit to Producers

- Give a uniform, producer-developed tool for animal welfare assessment
- Evaluate and track their operation's performance over time
 - Identify weaknesses in management, nutrition or health programs before they become production problems
- SWAPSM can show packers, retailers and consumers that pig welfare is important to producers

**Pork Checkoff:
Addressing Welfare**

How Are Checkoff Programs Responding?

Animal Welfare Committee

To maintain and promote the pork industry tradition of responsible animal care through the application of scientifically sound animal care practices

- Advance producers' awareness of emerging animal welfare issues
- Provide information and education to improve animal care skills
- Support scientific research to enhance animal well-being
- Provide information for greater public understanding and awareness about producers commitment to providing humane care

How Are Checkoff Programs Responding?

- **Review of Scientific Literature Comparing Housing Systems for Gestating Sows and Gilts Using Measures of Physiology, Behavior and Performance and Health (Submitted, 2003)**
- **Fact Sheets**
 - Producers Code of Practice <http://www.porkscience.org>
 - Farm Animal Ethics
 - Handling and Transportation
 - Stress and Food Safety
 - Stereotypes in Sows
 - Sows and Space: Normal Postural Adjustments
 - Neonatal Management Practices
 - Animal Welfare Resolution
 - SWAPSM Q & A



Checkoff Funded 2002: Animal Welfare

P.I.	Inst.	Title
L. Johnson	Univ. MN	Enhancing sow welfare with high fiber diets and frequent feeding
J. Deen	Univ. MN	Comparison of housing systems for gestating sows
J. Salak-Johnson	Univ. IL	Effect of space allowance on group-housed dry sows
D. Lewis	OH State	Developmental of computer template(s) to economically assess alternatives to individual housing of gestating sows
R. Bates	MI. State	Characterization of sow longevity and the developmental factors that influence it
C. Maxwell	Univ. AR	Effect of weaning age and co-mingling after the nursery phase of humoral and behavioral indicators of well-being and on growth parameters
T. Widowski	Univ. Guelph	Factors affecting the behavior of early weaned piglets
N. Lewis	Univ. Manitoba	Well-being of early weaned piglets: Assessment of seasonal effects on performance behavior and physiology
M. Morrow	N.C. State	Developing criteria for timely euthanasia decision making



2003 Research Priorities

- **Sow Gestation Housing**
- **Sow Longevity**
- **Space Requirements for Swine**
- **Handling / Transport**
- **Production Practices**
- **On Farm Euthanasia**



National Pork Board

January 2002

"Animal welfare guidelines developed without a sound scientific basis put the welfare of the animal and the sustainability of the producer's operation at risk.

Therefore, the National Pork Board continues to support sound science as the only basis for animal welfare guideline decision-making."

