



# Livestock Ledger

By  
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## PQA LEVEL III RECERTIFICATION

Check your calendar. It may be time for you to recertify your Level III position within the National Pork Producers Council's Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) program. If you're one of many producers who reached Level III more than a year ago, you need to recertify.

The process can be simple, if you've established or maintained a relationship with the verifier. Most verifiers are veterinarians, extension personnel, or agriculture instructors.

If the verifier is familiar with the detailed operations of your hog business, a short discussion of any changes made since certification may be all you need. Specific areas to review include drug usage, product availability, herd health practices, and the type of medication records you're keeping.

Residue testing is not mandat-

ory for PQA recertification. This is left to your discretion and that of the verifier.

Following the review, your verifier should complete the verification postcard enclosed in NPPC's mailing sent last April. If you can't find yours, contact NPPC for another.

As a Level III certified producer, you will continue to receive updates on changes in federal regulations, NPPC symposiums, and regional seminars as well as the Update newsletter.

If you have questions or need additional PQA information, contact NPPC at (800) 456-7675.

## Keep Heifers From First-Calf Heifers

Beef herds on heifer AI programs are finding that the replacement heifers retained from first-calf heifers provide the best genetics, combined with low birth weight EPDs and high maternal value. Since these heifers are sired by calving ease sires, a majority of

them will reduce frame size and be earlier maturing than heifers from mature cows.

If your management is on target, these heifers will often be the older ones, ready to breed before the main cowherd. In fact, one common mistake producers can make is selecting heifers on adjusted weaning weights, often ending up with many younger heifers in their replacement group. These heifers could be 45 days younger than the majority of your calf crop and may not reach puberty in time to breed them ahead of the cow herd.

By choosing older heifers, you can avoid these problems and keep your replacements from the cows who calved first.

Good replacement heifers are certainly worth the expense of raising them. Knowing the genetic potential of the heifers and cows in your herd can help make important selection and culling decisions.

## Deworming Sheep

In the humid Mid-Atlantic region, sheep need to be dewormed more often than in other parts of the country.

Deworm the ewe flock every other month beginning in May (May, July, September, November) and the last deworming after a

hard killing frost.

Lambs on pasture and replacement ewe and ram lambs, including show stock, should be dewormed every four weeks. A variety of dewormers are available for sheep and should be rotated to decrease the chance of resistance. Consult your veterinarian or extension agent for advice on deworming products labeled for sheep.

## Tunnel Ventilation

If you're planning a new building or considering remodeling, look at all the options. If tunnel ventilation sounds interesting, consider these guidelines to help you make the right decision.

• Are you building new or able to do sufficient remodeling to fit the engineering requirements of a relatively long, narrow building? A low, flat ceiling is preferred, but air deflectors in open-ceiling buildings will work. Also facilities that are square or too wide are generally not cost-efficient to tunnel ventilate.

• Can you implement all-in/all-out production for a grower/finisher or use tunnel ventilation in a breeding/gestation building? If not, then tunnel ventilation probably isn't right for you. Ask your veterinarian what the maximum age spread can be in a single

room without compromising herd health.

• Are you willing to improve your management skills to make sure the building is working properly? Tunnel ventilation requires more manual control and equipment must work all the time for it to be most effective.

• Do your pens lend themselves to tunnel ventilation? Open-gating type pens maximize tunnel ventilation's effect. Solid concrete in your building may lock you into another ventilation system.

• Can you effectively combine fans and other equipment of tunnel ventilation with your winter-time ventilation design?

## Implement Tractor Safety

During this harvest season, you and your employees become more vulnerable to accidents. That's because fatigue sets in as workdays stretch to 16 hours or more.

In 1992, the National Safety Council reported 120,000 disabling injuries because of agriculture-related accidents.

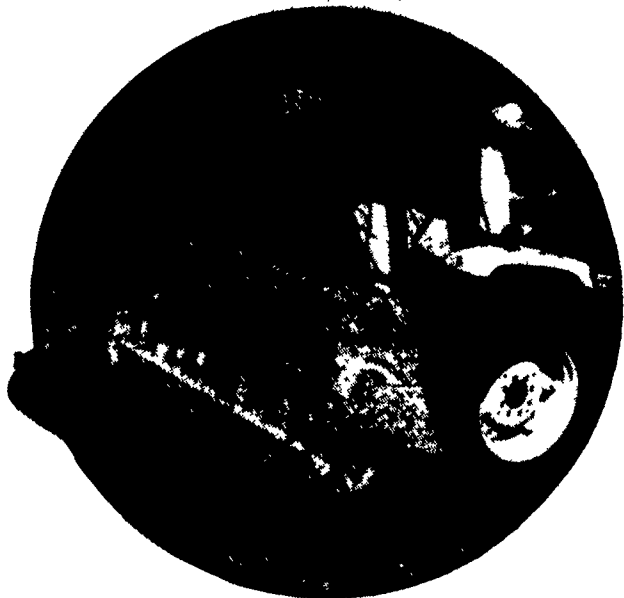
Most on-farm accidents involve tractors. Rollovers are the primary cause of accidental death on U.S. farms. And if you're like most producers, you use a tractor almost daily, exposing yourself to inherent risks.

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