

Pork Board Adopts 2001 Industry Budget

DES MOINES, Iowa — The National Pork Board has approved a spending budget of \$51.4 million for checkoff-funded programs in fiscal year 2001. The action came here during the board's fall meeting.

Pork checkoff funds research, promotion, and education programs that are designed to build a future and create opportunities for pork producers.

"As we await the announcement of the referendum vote, both the National Pork Board and National Pork Producers

Council (NPPC) continue to plan and work on the programs that benefit all producers," said National Pork Board President John Kellogg, a pork producer from Yorkville, Ill. "The programs that will be funded with checkoff dollars in 2001 reflect the needs and priorities of U.S. pork producers."

The board is allocating \$39.4 million in contracts to its general contractor the NPPC. A total of \$10.4 million will be returned to the state pork producer association level for

promotion, consumer information, and research programs complementary to the national checkoff programs. Administrative costs of the National Pork Board will remain relatively low for 2001, representing about three percent of the total checkoff collections.

Promotional programming of the total 2001 national and state checkoff funding will account for 61 percent of the budget. Twenty-five percent of the budget will be directed into research and education. Con-

sumer information programs will account for 14 percent of the budget.

"We are also focusing on areas of emerging importance to pork producers. Four cross-departmental strategic work areas are high on the priority list for 2001," said Kellogg. He explained the areas include food safety, value-added and niche marketing, nutrition and diet health, and certification programs. "Through producer input, it has been determined that addressing these program areas will help provide producers access to the tools they need to remain profitable in the future."

The following checkoff-funded grants were awarded to NPPC: consumer communications, \$12.9 million; retail/food

service marketing, \$10.4 million; foreign market development, 6.1 million; production technology and information, \$5.9 million; and swine health/pork safety/pork quality, \$4 million.

Of the overall checkoff funds allocated to programs, approximately 20 percent, or \$10.4 million, is returned to state pork associations for work in the state and local level. "The state and national programs complement each other and provide for the most efficient use of checkoff funds," according to Kellogg. "As an example, the states have a more even distribution of funds between consumer information, research and promotion. They rely on national dollars to carry the majority of promotion so they can focus on other more locally effective activities."

Producers Approve Research Projects Addressing Pork Priorities

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — More than 90 pork producers, industry scientists and other specialists gathered in Kansas City, Mo., to discuss progress and innovation in the pork industry.

Members of five producer committees reviewed more than 150 research proposals during the checkoff sponsored 2000 Unified Research Review Meeting, which was organized by the National Pork Producers Council in conjunction with the National Pork Board.

The committees selected 47 projects to recommend the National Pork Board fund with checkoff dollars. James Ledger, a pork producer from Washington, Iowa, said all the funded research addresses issues producers face on a daily basis.

"Producers are interested in what checkoff dollars do to help us be as efficient as we can be," said Ledger, a member of the Swine Health Committee. "For example, diseases in swine are a top priority for our committee, which affects the bottom line that producers deal with on a day-to-day basis."

Committees participating in the meeting represented the industry areas of swine health, pork safety, pork quality, human nutrition, and environmental issues.

Mark Reding, member of the Diet/Health and Food Policy Committee and a pork producer from Howardstown, Ky., welcomed the chance to learn about research advances in all aspects of the industry.

"It's good for producers, industry and scientists to meet each other, and the meeting brought us all together. We couldn't have all this expertise brought to each committee individually," said Reding, who also serves on the National Pork Board.

"It's important for all of us to have an idea of what the other committees are working on. This way we're not operating in a vacuum."

Dr. Chris Calkins, member of the Pork Quality Solutions Team and a meat scientist from the University of Nebraska, also appreciated the opportunity to meet with others involved in the pork industry.

"One of the strengths of this meeting is that it gets producers, packers and scientists together. The interaction is good, and it

allows us to hear from all perspectives," Calkins said.

Other topics discussed during the meeting included updates on antimicrobial resistance, a pork quality research initiative, the Pseudorabies eradication program, and food labeling issues. Researchers will be notified of their proposals' approval and will work with the National Pork Board and National Pork Producers Council to relay the information on to producers.

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