

# Pork Organizations Separate

(Continued from Page A1)

program restructuring required. The Pork Board will have approximately two years to demonstrate to producers and importers the value of the checkoff program to the industry.

USDA will conduct a survey by June 2003 to determine whether 15 percent of producers and importers are in favor of conducting a referendum to decide continuation of the checkoff program.

If the required number of producers and importers request a referendum, the referendum would then be held within one year.

### Restructuring

The restructuring requires the National Pork Board to:

- Employ its own management and staff, including the chief executive officer and chief financial officer
- Manage separate contracts for promotion, research, and consumer information projects
- Maintain separate office operations from the NPPC
- Maintain separate communications from the NPPC.

### National Pork Board

On the National Pork Board Website, the organization posted a release which states that the board will continue to focus on checkoff-funded programs following the official separation from the NPPC, which had been its general contractor. The board is based in Des Moines, Iowa.

"The pork checkoff settle-

ment agreement announced Feb. 28 has resulted in significant changes for the National Pork Board. We must continue to provide the checkoff-funded programs required by law but now will manage them directly rather than through a general contractor.

"We now have our own location, our own accounting system and our own staff," explained John Kellogg, president of the National Pork Board and a pork producer from Yorkville, Ill.

"These are business decisions that took time. We still have details to work out, such as hiring a chief executive officer and a chief financial officer."

Plans to select a CEO are underway, with a candidate expected to be identified in early September. Once the CEO is selected, the hiring of a chief financial officer will take place. Changes to separate accounting, staff and locations occurred on July 1.

### NPPC

The NPPC, based in Washington, D.C., says it will concentrate on an ambitious legislative and regulatory agenda that includes trade policy, the environment, food safety, animal health, biosecurity issues, and the upcoming Farm Bill.

"Pork producers continue to set policy for the NPPC, which now will focus on legislative and regulatory issues that impact the economic viability of pork producers and the pork industry," said NPPC President Barb Determan, a pork producer from Early, Iowa.

"Whether it's securing resources for conservation technical assistance in the Farm Bill or fighting for funding to upgrade the animal disease research facility at Ames, Iowa, NPPC will be leading the charge.

"Pork producers will continue

to work aggressively with the U.S. government to open new markets for U.S. pork and thereby help ensure a brighter future for our producers," Determan said.

"Pork exports have doubled since 1994, but there are still many countries that deny U.S. pork imports through high tariffs or non tariff barriers."

NPPC will continue working closely with its members the 44 state pork producer associations.

During the last joint National Pork Industry Forum in March, delegates voted to create a task force to create the future structure of the National Pork Producers Council.

The Task Force has met and continues to move forward with the restructuring of NPPC as required by the delegates.

### MPPA

The Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA) "sought an injunction in January contending that USDA had no legal authority to conduct a binding referendum. Moreover, the USDA's referendum was filled with irregularities and failed to apply consistent standards," said Pete Blauwiekel, Fowler, Mich, pork producer.

"Through this settlement, we have been able to help pork producers across the U.S. maintain their access to promotion, research and education funded by the checkoff. We believe that USDA's participation in the Settlement Agreement reflects their

genuine concerns regarding the referendum and the way it was conducted."

Additional information about the settlement and related issues is available at (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/pork.htm>).

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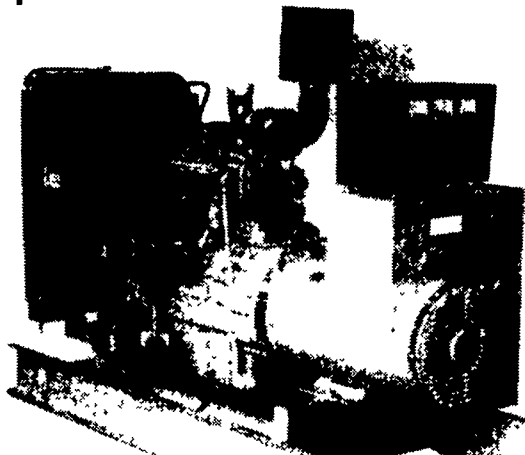
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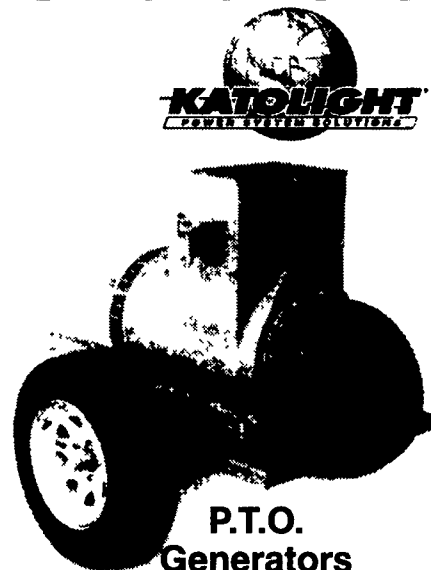
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