

## Cornell Swine School Features Small-Scale Systems

ITHACA, N.Y. — As more and more consumers are looking for healthful products grown closer to home, Northeast farmers have some new opportunities to produce livestock profitably on a small scale.

In response to growing interest from small farmers, the two-day 2003 Cornell Swine School will include one full day of educational programming specifically for small-scale producers and those thinking about getting started in small-scale pork production. This is the first time that organizers are offering a focus on small-scale systems since 1983, when the Swine School first began.

"There is a real need for this small farm initiative," says Tro Bui, Extension Associate with Cornell's Department of Animal Science.

Bui regularly fields inquiries from people wanting to convert old dairy barns for production of swine, goats or sheep. "I get all kinds of basic questions, like 'where can we buy breeding stock? Where is the market? What should I feed?'"

The first day of the Cornell Swine School on Thursday, March 20 is for producers of any size, while the next day is targeted for smaller producers. Students in the small farm session will learn about basic swine health management; artificial insemination; managing baby pigs; feeds and feeding; group housing systems; marketing opportunities; and more.

The Cornell Swine School is conducted at the Livestock Pavilion and in Morrison Hall on the Cornell campus, with some sessions at the Cornell Swine Farm. The program includes both classroom and hands-on training, including practice with injections, tail clipping, castration, artificial insemination, and diagnosis of health problems by necropsy. It's a great way to get started in swine production or to improve your skills and knowledge.

To register for the 2003 Cornell Swine School, call Tro Bui at 607-592-1438. For information on a variety of small farm topics, visit Cornell's Small Farms Web Site at [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu).

## NPPC Report Concludes County-Of-Origin Labeling Program Will Be Very Costly For Pork Industry

WASHINGTON, D.C. — An economic analysis of the mandatory country-of-origin labeling program, performed by economists for the U.S. pork industry and Iowa State University, concludes it will be very costly for the U.S. pork industry, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) stated today. The analysis, which was conducted by Dermot Hayes, an economist at Iowa State University and Steve Meyer, a U.S. pork industry economist, examined the potential impacts of country-of-origin labeling on several levels of the industry.

According to Hayes and Meyer, the estimated costs for pork producers of implementing a full traceback system associated with country-of-origin labeling will be \$10.22 per hog or \$4.00 per hundred pounds. This is equivalent to a ten percent increase in the costs of on-farm production or approximately \$1.02 billion for the U.S. pork industry. In addition, assuming the ten percent increase in costs is passed on to the retail level, U.S. consumers will likely demand seven percent less pork due to higher prices, Meyer said.

"The research shows that the mandatory country-of-origin program will result in negative impacts all across the board for U.S. pork producers, with no real benefits," said NPPC Board Member and President-Elect Jon Caspers, a pork producer from Swaledale, Iowa. "Some surveys have shown that U.S. consumers prefer that meat be labeled as to its country-of-origin but there is no research

evidence that U.S. consumers are willing to pay any premium for such labeled product, let alone a premium high enough to cover the costs." The net effect on U.S. pork exports could be equally devastating.

According to Hayes and Meyer by year 2010, U.S. pork exports could be 50 percent lower than they would be without the labeling program. This is because Canada, which supplied 5.7 million hogs and pigs last year to the U.S., would be forced to process these hogs in Canada.

According to Caspers, this would lead to negative impacts on U.S. pork exports. "The U.S. would no longer add the value of corn and soybeans to these Canadian hogs," he said. "Canada would add the value and export the pork. Therefore, it would turn the U.S. into a net importer of pork rather than a net exporter as we are now," he said.

An additional area of concern for pork producers is the burden of recordkeeping and audits for country-of-origin labeling. "The paperwork that is involved with the country-of-origin full traceback system, promises to be quite burdensome and will add to the already lengthy list of costly re-

sponsibilities for producers," he said.

Caspers said the study makes it very clear that country-of-origin labeling would be very detrimental to pork producers of every size and type with significant losses predicted due to reduced export demand for U.S. pork, the increased costs of implementing a full traceback system and the burden of on-farm recordkeeping. "We believe that given Hayes' and Meyers' findings, Congress must conduct Congressional hearings on this issue and reevaluate the potential impacts on the U.S. pork industry," he said.

NPPC has long opposed mandatory country-of-origin meat labeling due to additional on-farm costs placed on pork producers. NPPC believes the country-of-origin labeling program should remain voluntary.

A copy of the analysis may be found at <http://www.nppc.org>. For more information on country-of-origin labeling, please go to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/cool>.

With a focus on show horse success, Lancaster Farming's Boarder & Trainer for March 15 includes ways to improve horse health using a new treadmill developed at the Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Va. Also scheduled for that issue: highlights of the Steeplechase in Leesburg, Va., the work of farriers, and lots more!



## Potato Growers To Meet

SCHNECKSVILLE (Lehigh Co.) — Commercial potato growers will meet on Wednesday, March 5, at the Schnecksville Grange Hall to learn more about new potato varieties, potato research, insect pest updates, and other issues relating to potato production.

The educational part of the meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. and concludes at 3 p.m.

The meeting will qualify for pesticide credits toward your Pennsylvania update license.

Reservations for lunch are required. Send a check for \$9 to Potato Day, Lehigh County Cooperative Extension, 4184 Dorney Park Road, Allentown, PA 18104-5798, by Feb. 28. Make your check payable to Lehigh County Extension Special Account.

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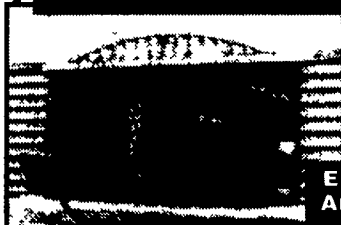
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