

# PORK CHECKOFF REPORT

**NOVEMBER DECEMBER 2021** 





The Minnesota Pork Producers Association (MPPA) is pleased to announce the 2022 Minnesota Pork Congress will be held in Mankato, MN. Previously held in Minneapolis, the location change comes following producer's desire for the trade show and annual meetings to be held closer in proximity to their farms.

The event is scheduled to take place on February 15 and 16 at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center, where pork producers, allied industry, and stakeholders will convene. Registration for Minnesota Pork Congress is now open. Register prior to January 17, 2022, for discounted registration.

Minnesota Pork Congress offers attendees the ability to gather at the state's largest swine-specific tradeshow for networking

and business-enhancement opportunities. In combination with the tradeshow and annual meetings, the event also hosts timely seminars

farmers and pork industry stakeholders.

CHARLE BERRE BERRE BERRE BERRE

If you have questions related to Minnesota Pork Congress, Registration, or Annual Meetings, please contact the Minnesota Pork office at 507-345-8814.

and social activities designed exclusively for pig

Strategic Investment Partners (SIP) and MPPA members receive complimentary registration to Minnesota Pork Congress.

The annual Awards Reception, featuring the 2022 Minnesota Pork award winners, will be held prior to Pork Congress on Monday, February 14, 2022. The Awards Reception is an invitation-only event with RSVP's required.

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Minnesota Pork Board

# MN PORK CALENDAR

#### **FEBRUARY 2022**

#### **FEBRUARY 14**

Awards Reception
Invitation Only, RSVP Required

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Chankaska Creek Winery

# **FEBRUARY 15-16**

# 2022 Minnesota Pork Congress

Feb 15: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Feb 16: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center 1 Civic Center Plaza Mankato, MN 56001

#### **FEBRUARY 16**

### 2022 MPB Annual Meeting

12:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center Banquet Hall 1 Civic Center Plaza Mankato, MN 56001

#### **FEBRUARY 16**

## 2022 MPPA Annual Meeting

3:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center Banquet Hall 1 Civic Center Plaza Mankato, MN 56001



# Join us at the 2022 Minnesota

# WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 AT 12:30 P.M.

# MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM EVENT CENTER BANQUET HALL

#### MPB MEETING

All Minnesota pig farmers who pay into the Pork Checkoff are stakeholders in the Minnesota Pork Board (MPB) and are encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting on February 16, beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center (1 Civic Center Plaza Mankato, Minnesota).

The MPB Annual Meeting will feature updates on programs, 2022 MPB Pork Checkoff financial information, Pork Act Delegate elections, and Pork Checkoff-related resolutions. Resolutions submitted at the meeting will require a two-thirds margin to be brought to the floor for discussion and a three-fourths majority vote for approval.

National Pork Board chief executive officer, Bill Even, will provide an update on issues that are currently facing the pork industry and the action steps the National Pork Board is taking to address those issues.

#### LUNCH AND MPPA MEETING

A complimentary luncheon for all meeting participants will be served from 11:30 – 12:30 p.m. The Minnesota Pork Producers Association (MPPA), a voluntary membership association funded by investors in the Strategic Investment Program (SIP) and Pork Partners, will hold its annual meeting following the MPB meeting from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. The MPPA focuses its work on legislative and public policy matters. Only those who are enrolled in SIP or Pork Partners can vote and participate in discussions at the MPPA Annual Meeting.



# **Pork Board Annual Meeting**

#### **PREREGISTRATION**

To help with meal planning, seating, and handouts, preregistration is requested. To preregister, contact Colleen Carey at the Minnesota Pork Board office by calling 1 (800) 537-7675 or email colleen@mnpork.com.

Online registration for the Pork Congress Trade Show can be completed here: https://www.mnporkcongress.com/registration/

#### **CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS**

All Minnesota pig farmers who pay into the checkoff are invited to submit proposals for resolutions. All proposals are due no later than January 10, 2022. Proposed resolutions can be sent to David Preisler, CEO of the Minnesota Pork Board, at david@mnpork.com.

#### AGENDA TOPICS

- Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes Myrna Welter, MPB Secretary
- 2021 Financial Report- David Preisler, CEO
- Program Updates
- National Pork Board Update Bill Even, CEO National Pork Board
- 2022 Advisements, Discussion, Action Todd Selvik
- 2023 Pork Act Delegate Elections
- President's Remarks

# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

# PUBLIC NOTICE BY MINNESOTA PORK BOARD AND THE NATIONAL PORK BOARD

The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 2023 National Pork Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body will take place at 12:30 PM, Wednesday, February 16, 2022 in conjunction with a Board of Directors meeting of the Minnesota Pork Board. All Minnesota pork producers are invited to attend. This Annual Meeting will be held at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato, MN 56001. To RSVP, please contact the Minnesota Pork office at (507) 345-8814 or email mnpork@mnpork.com.

Any producer, age 18 or older, who is a resident of the state and has paid all assessments due may be considered as a delegate candidate and/or participate in the election. All eligible producers are encouraged to bring with them a sales receipt proving that hogs were sold in their name and the checkoff deducted. For more information, contact the Minnesota Pork Board Office, 151 St. Andrews Court, Suite 810, Mankato, Minnesota. (507) 345-8814 or (800) 537-7675.





# Get a FREE, On-Farm Sustainability Report

To measure and document continuous improvement efforts for the pork industry, the Minnesota Pork Board (MPB) and National Pork Board (NPB) encourages all producers to create their own free On-Farm Sustainability Report. This report helps producers recognize key sustainability metrics on their farm. A third-party expert, Sustainable Environmental Consultants, will head data collection with quick and efficient aggregation.

The On-Farm Reports include a Sustainable Continuous Improvement Plan – offering recommendations for producers to improve sustainability on their operations, such as:

- Manure data with application, agronomic rates
- · Water data on both quality and amount used
- Community outreach including donations and services hours

# On-Farm Sustainability Reports Offer Immediate Value

These On-Farm Reports offer immediate value to pig farmers. Previous participants shared their reports with financial institutions, suppliers and community members. They have also used the reports to make on-farm improvements and improve their bottom line.

The blinded, aggregated data will be used at the state and national level to share real data on producers' commitment to sustainability. Allowing the pork industry to continue to build trust in modern pig farming, while protecting pig farmers' freedom to operate.

# **COMMON QUESTIONS:**

### What's the time commitment to participate?

On average, total participation takes 2-4 hours. Participants will have an initial interview and provide data collection for the previous growing seasons' data (depending on farm size, each of these steps lasts about an hour).

# What type of format do my data records need to be in?

Any type of record-keeping system – regardless of whether it is digital or on paper.

### Who is my data shared with?

Your data is yours and will be kept confidential. The name of your operation and your data will not be shared. The results of all On-Farm reports will be pulled into an aggregate of state and national reports to help the pork industry learn and share the industry's sustainability story.

# Are there any limitations to the type, style and size of farm?

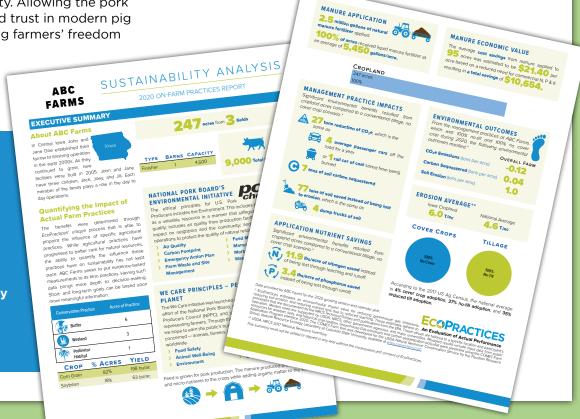
No, the On-Farm Reports cover a variety of farm types, sizes, and styles of farms and are free for Checkoff-paying pig farmers.

#### Who is paying for this project?

The Pork Checkoff.

# SIGN UP!

To learn more or to participate in an On-Farm, Sustainability Report, visit: porkcheckoff.org/sustainability or contact Lauren Servick at lauren@mnpork.com.





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# BOARD MEMBER Abbie Redalen





# Tell us about yourself and how you became involved in the pork industry.

Growing up, my love of agriculture was fostered on my grandfather's farm. Later, my personal agricultural roots became firmly planted when my beef and sow herds grew which afforded me the opportunity to learn the business from the ground up. After I graduated

from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Animal & Plant Systems, I returned home to farm. I was so immersed in farming I almost didn't get around to applying to vet school, which had always been part of my plan! I did return to vet school as a non-traditional student with a young family and farm responsibilities in tow. Today, I'm proud to be an integral part of a farming family operation where we raise livestock and have a diversified row cropping operation in southeastern Minnesota. I'm proud the tradition continues as my children learn and experience firsthand animal agriculture and have the opportunity to learn from and work with great mentors in this industry.

# Why did you decide to run for a position on the Minnesota Pork Board?

I have a genuine appreciation for those who have given

their time and have actively served on the Minnesota Pork Board and the respective committees. With the challenges the industry faces today, I'm humbled to give back and to serve this industry and my fellow Minnesota producers.



We are fortunate to work with a great team on the Minnesota Pork Board and the MPB staff. As Board Members, we bring a diversity of thought and experiences and yet we all work together to adapt, evolve, and advance our industry forward. I'm honored to be a part of this team and the work we do advancing our industry.

# What other pork-related activities are you involved in?

In addition to my role as a swine veterinarian and fellow pork producer, I also serve as a member of the Minnesota Pork Board's Research Committee and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians Pig Welfare Committee. I serve as a PQA Plus Advisor, speaker for Operation Main Street, and volunteer at the Minnesota State Fair's Miracle of Birth Center. I also have a passion for helping 4-H and FFA youth with their livestock projects.

# In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing today's pig farmers in Minnesota?

There are a number of challenges pork producers face. They range from the threat of foreign animal disease to markets and human capital. However, as both a veterinarian and producer, I see firsthand the gaps consumers have in understanding how food goes from farm to fork, the misperception of our industry, and overall distrust. We need



to continue to share our story and connect with consumers. Engagement about our industry can occur on many levels and is something all Minnesota pig farmers can be challenged to do!

# What is your vision for the future of MPB?

It is easy to stay immersed and focused on what we are doing individually, but collectively keeping producers connected and engaged allows us to generate ideas and actions that are relevant and will benefit Minnesota producers and our industry. It is also exciting to be able to work toward the vision created with the strategic imperatives that have been identified to provide direction and added value moving forward.

# What are you most looking forward to as a member of the MPB board?

As a member of the Minnesota Pork Board, it is exciting to be surrounded by those who have a deep passion for our work and industry. I look forward to continuing the previous work of the board in delivering sound, deliberate, and progressive action to benefit our industry and Minnesota pork producers.





# HAM IT UP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Through yet another challenging year, the commitment of American pig farmers to their communities and the nation's food supply never wavered. The Give-A-Ham challenge is a social media campaign aimed to engage the U.S. pork industry and the communities they support in a holiday giving program. Pig farmers value their communities and come together through this challenge to support the food insecure by supplying food pantries with much-needed protein.

Participation in the challenge is simple. All it entails is taking a photo or video and posting it to your social media account or company account, showcasing the ham or other pork product donation. Tag the individuals you would like to challenge and watch the ripple effect spread across the country.

When creating a video or taking a photo for this challenge, consider sharing:

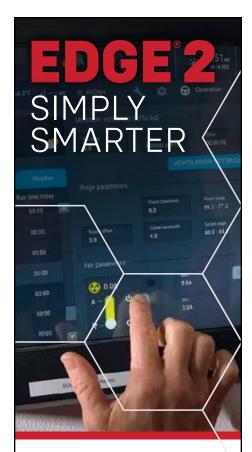
- **1. Your story.** Why giving back to your community is important to YOU.
- **2. Your pride.** Pig farmers have persevered while maintaining a commitment to community giving. Tell campaign followers why you are proud to be part of this industry.



Maddie Hokanson participating in the Give-A-Ham challenge after being nominated to join in on the giving.

**3. The product.** What do you love most about the world's most popular source of protein?

The Minnesota Pork Board encourages all individuals to join the challenge and share their story on social media. Though the name implies one must give a ham, any cut of pork can be used in the challenge, so choose your favorite! Have fun and get others involved, including your kids, employees, and friends. Be sure to use the #GiveAHam hashtag.



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# MIDWEST PORK SUMMIT

# Minnesota welcomed chefs from across the Midwest

In September, the Minnesota Pork Board hosted its first Midwest Pork Summit, previously held in Iowa. The event, only occurring for the third time, aimed to showcase pork in a different light to inspire new and innovative ways to cook, plate, and menu pork.

Midwest Pork Summit brought together 13 chefs across the Midwest from Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois. This year's event was a pork-immersive program designed to give chefs a complete farm-to-fork experience with the theme focused on Hispanic flavors.

Day one started with a Pork 101 presentation giving an overview of the various ways pigs are raised, quality assurance programs used on farms, muscle-to-meat conversion information, tenderness and marbling

Many great questions were asked while the chefs toured the modern sow farm. They learned about veterinarian oversight on medication usage, withdrawal times for antibiotics, artificial insemination practices, and how genetics play a major role in the pork they serve. The group was also intrigued with the importance and value of using pig's manure to fertilize the crops that then feed the pigs and the entire nutrient cycle.

After the farm tour, all thirteen chefs stayed and enjoyed an evening barbecue meal with the farm family and continued conversation discussing everything they had heard and seen throughout the day.

The second day began with a pork fabrication presentation led by Dr. Ryan Cox from the University of Minnesota. From the presentation, the chefs were

"I would say my perception on how the raised (pigs) has changed. Realizing they are taken care of much better than what you hear from outside sources."

information, plus so much more. This was followed by a discussion and presentation on nose-to-tail BBQ that explained cuts and BBQ cooking techniques for the various cuts.

Following lunch, the chefs boarded a bus and headed out to tour a Wakefield Pork farm. The chefs had the opportunity to tour a sow farm, where they learned about biosecurity measures and participated in the shower-in/shower-out protocol. As with any farm tour, they enjoyed seeing the piglets and learned how quickly the pigs grow to reach market weight.

able to see where each of the cuts they use on a daily basis originate from on the pig, which they learned also affects how tender the meat is.

Day two also consisted of presentations and sampling of Al Pastor Porchetta, Birria, Pazole Mixteca and Island Style Bone-in Chops. One speaker, Susana Trilling, came from Oaxaca, Mexico, to share her authentic Oaxacan cooking techniques, which each of the chefs found interesting and beneficial.

Once the presentations and demonstrations were complete, the chefs split into teams and descended to the kitchens. Each team created 3 to 4 unique pork entrees in 3.5 hours. The energy level within the the opportunity to work with each other to develop electric energy within the kitchen.



# for a three-day farm-to-fork learning experience

On the third and final day, the chefs heard about alternative ways people raise and market pigs in Minnesota. Carla Mertz from Iron Shoe Farms talked about how she and her family raise pigs near Princeton then market directly to consumers and restaurants in the Twin Cities.

Feedback from chefs regarding the event was overwhelmingly positive and they were appreciative of the opportunity to learn more about the pork they use every day.

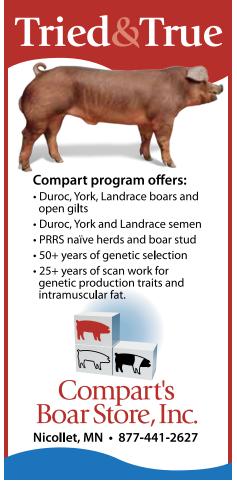
"I feel inspired and educated. I want to share and work on whole animal butchery."













# **Foreign Animal Disease Preparation Checklist**

The following general checklist will help pork producers prepare for a potential foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak in the U.S. Specific plans and requirements will vary by state.

#### **Finance**

To receive indemnity payments from USDA APHIS, producers must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. This no-cost process may take time, so take action now.

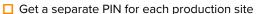
Register your farm business at <u>sam.gov</u>. You must do this annually.



# Traceability and Surveillance

Animal health officials need the physical locations of production sites in disease control areas to quickly communicate important disease control information. These Premises Identification Numbers (PINs) are used to link site data and information (production and movement records, diagnostics, permits, etc.) so it can be easily analyzed by animal health officials for rapid decision-making.

Basic movement record forms can be found in the Pork Quality Assurance® Plus (PQA Plus®) education handbook. However, having these records in an electronic format is preferred (e.g., AgView).



- Ensure all PINs are geolocated to the site where the pigs are housed
- Include PINs on all animal movements, semen shipments and diagnostic submissions
- ☐ Record all human, vehicle and equipment movement on and off each site
- Create an AgView account and upload pig movement data at go.porkcheckoff.org/agview



## Onsite Preparedness

Resources are available at <u>securepork.org</u> to assist with onsite preparedness.

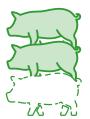
- ☐ Create a site-specific biosecurity plan, which can be shared upon request
- ☐ Implement enhanced biosecurity measures included in the plan
- Train all production employees on clinical signs of FADs, including ASF
- Observe pigs daily for FAD clinical signs, document and report concerns
- ☐ Perform diagnostic testing as directed by your herd veterinarian
- Develop welfare and disposal (normal mortality) plans in case of a stop movement order



### **Emergency Depopulation and Disposal Plans**

Work with your herd veterinarian and appropriate state agencies to develop depopulation and disposal plans.

- Work with your state's environmental agency to develop an authorized disposal plan, as it may dictate the depopulation options for your farm
- Determine required resources necessary for the identified depopulation and disposal methods
- Locate potential sources for equipment/supplies





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Questions? Call the Pork Checkoff Service Center 1-800-456-7675 or visit porkcheckoff.org.

# PRRSV 144 - A Rapid Response to a National Crisis

#### Pipestone Research

In partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc., Pipestone Research has provided a rapid response to bring science-based answers to managing the emergence of PRRSV 144. Based on field observations from practitioners and producers, stating that, "This is the worst strain of PRRSV ever," "Vaccines don't work anymore", and "Biosecurity protocols are ineffective," the team determined that immediate action was needed.

This industry-wide feeling of panic encouraged PIPESTONE to respond using science to generate answers to these concerns. PIPESTONE Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Joel Nerem responded with a Call to Arms, stating that, "Answering difficult questions with production-driven research for farmers is our wheelhouse." stated Dr. Joel Nerem, PIPESTONE Chief Veterinary Officer. "We need answers. Let's do a study and share the results." Pipestone Research team members, Dr. Scott Dee, Roy Edler and Dan Hanson put the wheels in motion, joined forces with Dr. Amanda Sponheim, Dr. Reid Philips, and Justin Rustvold from Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA, Inc., and completed three studies targeting the field concerns, including:

# Study 1 (pathogenicity): Is PRRSV 144 worse than PRRSV 174?

**Design:** Naïve pigs were challenged with either PRRSV 144 or PRRSV 174. Outcomes included Average Daily Gain (ADG), percent mortality, viral load, clinical scores, pyrexia, and number of treatment events.

**Results:** Across all metrics, PRRS 174 was more pathogenic than PRRSV 144.

### Study 2: Do vaccines still work on PRRSV 144?

**Design:** Pigs were vaccinated either with Ingelvac PRRS' MLV (BI) or Prevacent' PRRS (Elanco) and compared to a non-vaccinated control group. Vaccination was applied according to label instructions and challenge occurred 28-day post-vaccination.

**Results:** Both vaccines were effective against PRRSV 144 and performance in vaccinated groups was significantly better than non-vaccinates.

# Study 3: Can biosecurity protocols prevent PRRSV 144 introduction?

**Design:** Six biosecurity protocols were tested on pigs challenged with PRRSV 144. The study evaluated transmission of 144 through feed, using natural feeding behavior, transmission via contaminated personal and fomites (boots, coveralls, and hands), the ability of PRRSV 144 to be detected in aerosols

from infected pigs, survival in slurry (14 vs 21 days), and whether the transport (feed truck) could serve as a vehicle for viral movement between sites. In addition, intervention strategies, including 2 disinfectants (Ag Forte Pro or Synergize™), 2 feed mitigants (Guardian™ or Sal CURB\*), air filtration (Camfill Farr MERV 14) and a shower protocol with a boots/coverall change, were tested to determine if the respective risks could be managed.

#### **Results:**

- **Disinfectants:** Ag Forte Pro and Synergize<sup>™</sup> neutralized PRRSV 144 after 60 minutes of contact.
- Contaminated feed: PRRSV 144 was transmitted through feed via natural feeding behavior.
   Both feed mitigants (Guardian™ or Sal CURB\*) prevented infection.
- **Feed transport:** PRRSV 144 survived in the feed transport model and infected pigs.
- **Survival in slurry:** PRRSV survived in slurry for 14 days, but not 21 days.
- Contaminated fomites/Shower in protocol:
  Following 30 minutes of contact with infected pigs, PRRSV 144 was detected on hands, boots, and coveralls of personnel. In the absence of a shower and clothes/footwear change, virus was transmitted to contact controls. After a shower and clothes/footwear change, virus was not transmitted to contact controls.
- **Filtration:** PRRSV RNA was detected in 28%-43% of interior air samples during the challenge period. In contrast, there was no detectable PRRSV 144 in exterior air samples post-filtration.

In closing, under the conditions of this study, it appeared that PRRSV 174 was more pathogenic than PRRSV 144 and modified live virus vaccines were effective against PRRSV 144. In addition, standard protocols of biosecurity such as disinfection, showering, changing boots and coveralls between infected and non-infected populations are still effective. Aerosols and feed appear to be risk factors for PRRSV 144 spread, but risk is reduced through filtration and feed mitigation. Finally, the risk of contaminated transport (feed truck) continues to be a risk factor for viral movement between farms.

As a results of this study, PIPESTONE and Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc., recommend keeping up on all practices related to biosecurity. "You know what to do, don't give up," said Dr. Scott Dee, PIPESTONE Director of Research. "We know the routes of transmission and how to manage these risks. Don't take shortcuts, keep using modified live virus vaccines according to label, and don't relax."



# WE CARE - COMMUNITY

# Dave Mensink



Agriculture and pig farming are the driving forces in rural economies, but the people and farmers in those communities are the life blood.

Pig farmers know the importance of the community and take pride in supporting and participating in the events and organizations that make rural Minnesota a great place to live.

Pig farmers like Dave Mensink know being an active member in the community is the right thing to do both as a neighbor and a pig farmer.

"My wife and I started this farm in 1981 and we couldn't have done it without the love, support and friendships that make up our community," Dave says. "No one farms in isolation."

Pig farms generate many opportunities in communities including careers that attract people to the community and philanthropy support which stimulates the rural economy by supporting local businesses.

"Maintaining relationships is as important as anything we do on the farm," Dave states.

Pig farms look different than they did when Dave's father started farming in rural Preston, Minnesota.

"Our farms look different and that means we have to work even harder to keep our connections to our



communities strong," Dave explains. "Our community is viable and that is why we are committed to building and supporting our community."

Farmers understand their communities are made up of a variety of different people, and strive to be good neighbors each and every day.

"I'm honored that I have new neighbors building a house across from us. That means I need to control truck traffic on the roads we share and keep odors responsibly controlled and minimized," says Dave.

> Dave farms with his family right on the edge of Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park. His farm is also located in an area of Minnesota referred to as the driftless area. This part of Minnesota is known for its trout streams. bike paths, and bluffs. This geography takes special care to farm in and pig farmers like Dave do not take that lightly.

> Dave and his family have invested in protecting the neighboring state park and the natural resources where they live and farm. They have built buffer zones to protect vulnerable parts of the water supply and they plant and maintain areas of pollinator habitat.

> Pig farmers know vibrant, rural communities are vital to their success as a pig farmer and that is why they are committed to caring for the people and environment in their community.





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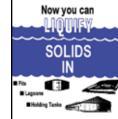
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# ENJOYING PORK AT THE CENTER TABLE-HOW IT CAN FIT INTO ANY HOLIDAY MEAL

By Renee Korczak Ph.D., RDN, CSSD, LD

The season of entertaining is upon us, which means two things: delicious, nutrient-dense food and an inviting atmosphere that includes a warm, holiday table for family and friends to gather around. Before we dive into what makes a nutritious and satisfying holiday meal, let's talk about decorating your holiday table.

For starters, I recommend organizing your decorations based on the type of table that you have. For example, my dining room table is long and rectangular in shape; therefore, using a neutral color runner (or a seasonal printed runner) as your foundation sets the tone for the remaining decorations. Next, consider using some faux garland or leaves to add color and movement across the table. Keeping decorations and any centerpieces low, will also allow guests to see each other, while also keeping plenty of room for food on the table. Last, but certainly not least, add small pumpkins or squash to help bring everything to life. Adding a couple of candlesticks and candles is also a nice complement to any table.

Now for the food! A holiday meal can be served in many ways. Some prefer buffet style, where all the food is set out at once and guests can self-serve themselves. I prefer a plated meal for a few reasons: 1) It allows for an equal distribution of food groups including a source of high-quality protein, fruits, veggies, and healthy fat 2) The presentation is impressive 3) Providing sensible portions means you still have room to enjoy your favorite cocktail, glass of wine or beer and still have room for an enjoyable dessert.

This holiday season, I am serving a roasted, apple-infused pork tenderloin with cranberry sauce, a lightened-up version of sweet potato casserole, and green beans with a mushroom sauce. This can be served with a simple mixed green salad with fresh cranberries as décor.

Choosing pork for my holiday meal is easy because not only is it affordable, but it is also versatile and easy to work with. As a registered dietitian nutritionist, I also value trying to keep it lean and put my health first. The good news is pork tenderloin provides 30 grams of high-quality protein per 4 ounce serving, which helps to keep you satisfied, as well as a blend of nutrients including B-Vitamins (Thiamin, Riboflavin, Niacin, and Vitamins B6 and B12). An added health benefit of choosing pork tenderloin for your holiday meal is that it is naturally low in sodium and potassium; two nutrients that work together to help regulate blood pressure. If you are worried about your heart health, another bonus is that some cuts of pork meet the American Heart Association (AHA) Heart checkmark; meaning it contains less than 5 grams of fat and 2 grams of less of saturated fat per label serving.

To help round out the key nutrients on your plate, colorful sides such as sweet potatoes, green beans, fresh cranberry sauce and a simple mixed green salad also means that you are getting plenty of fiber for digestive health, beta-carotene (a form of Vitamin A), Vitamin C, Vitamin K and Folate. All these nutrients are required in your diet daily to help support a healthy lifestyle.

Pork tenderloin is a lean, nutrient-dense, protein-packed option that can fit into any holiday meal. Its versatility means it will pair well with just about any flavor you wish to incorporate. Enjoy your holiday meal, gather safely, and remember to nourish yourself.



# **APPLE-INFUSED PORK TENDERLOIN**

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 2 lbs. pork tenderloin-This is enough to serve 6 guests if you are portioning
   3-4 ounces per plate-Adjust total amount of pork that you buy if you are entertaining more guests
- 2 medium-size honeycrisp apples, peeled and diced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

Preheat oven to 350F. Take a filet knife and make four incisions (in the shape of a diamond) in the center of the pork tenderloin. Make the incisions deep enough to fill each with diced apples. Stuff each slit with diced apples. Season pork with salt, pepper and olive oil and place into a roasting pan. Place the pork tenderloin into the oven for 20 minutes per pound or until the internal temperature reads 145F. Let the pork rest on a meat cutting board until you are ready to plate with your sides.

### FRESH CRANBERRY SAUCE

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 cup orange juice, no pulp
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1, 12-ounce package fresh cranberries

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, dissolve the sugar in the orange juice. Add in the cranberries, stir, and cook until the sauce thickens (about 10-15 minutes). Remove the saucepan from the heat and transfer to a bowl. The sauce will naturally thicken as it cools down.

## LIGHTENED-UP SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 5 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 Tbsp. pure maple syrup
- ½ cup skim milk (can be substituted with 2%, whole milk or a plant-based milk)
- 2 Tbsp. cinnamon
- 1 Tbsp. nutmeg
- 2 tsp. allspice
- ¼ cup pecans
- 1 large egg

### **DIRECTIONS:**

Preheat oven to 400F. Wash potatoes and dice into quarters. Add to boiling water until the potatoes are soft enough to pop out of the skin (about 20-25 minutes). Drain the potatoes from the water and allow to cool. Once the potatoes are cool, pop them out of the skin and place into a mixing bowl. Use a potato masher to mash the potatoes. Add all ingredients to the potatoes (maple syrup through egg) and blend with an electric mixer, blend until smooth. Spray an 8 x 8 pan with a nonstick cooking spray and add the casserole mix. Put into the oven for 25-30 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Add pecans to the top of the casserole for décor.

### MUSHROOM GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 can (10.5 oz.) low-sodium cream of mushroom soup mix
- 3 cups steamed green beans, ends trimmed
- ¼ cup slivered almonds

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

Preheat oven to 350F. Combine the soup mix and green beans in a mixing bowl. Spray a casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray and add the green bean mix. Place into the oven for 25 minutes or until hot. Top with slivered almonds when cool and ready to serve.



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