

April 2005 – Update on Pork Checkoff Activities for NichePORK

To help keep you informed of the latest happenings and upcoming events related to Checkoff funded NichePORK marketing and the NichePORK website.

Niche Pork Products, Like Berkshire, Are Enjoying Demand

- In a March 2005 article in *Meat & Poultry* which talks about the recent increase in pork consumption, niche pork companies are referred to as:
 - “quietly continuing to thrive, seemingly unscathed by many of the challenging market conditions”
 - “as financial results from the major players indicate, lower profile niche processors are gaining momentum”
- Having interviewed Gary Malenke of SiouxPreme Pork Products about their Berkshire line, the article also highlighted the growing demand for Berkshire pork as follows:
 - Malenke was quoted in the article as saying “We started to come to grips that the Berkshire market is gaining momentum on a domestic basis. Five years ago if you would have gotten a call from someone saying they were looking for some Berkshire product it would have been unheard of.”
 - The article went on to state, “But, these types of requests are becoming more frequent. Malenke’s company is banking on continued growth in the high-end pork segment.” And, “The products that demand a premium price, costing as much as four times the price commodity products.”
 - “Berkshire has been a solid rock in Japan for years,” says Malenke, “It seems that we’re just waking up to it here domestically.”
 - The article also stated that “Unfortunately, supply doesn’t come close to meeting demand” for the Berkshire product.

Consumer Research Confirms Demand For Niche Pork Products

- Research to identify which niche pork attributes consumers prefer and whether they are willing to pay a sufficient premium for those attributes was conducted in first quarter 2005.
- Preliminary results of the study indicate the market potential for premium-priced niche pork products is between 7 and 22% of general consumers (depending on the product’s specific niche attributes). Final results will be available on NICHEPORK.ORG in second quarter.
- The research study was a joint project between the National Pork Board and the Niche Pork Marketing Working Group (NPMWG) using grant dollars awarded by the Kellogg Foundation.

2005 Advertising For NICHEPORK.ORG Kicking Off Now

- The national print advertising that began in 2004 to create awareness for NICHEPORK.ORG among chefs continues in 2005 in the leading chef publications.
 - by the time April issues hit the market ads will have appeared in *Food Arts, Plate, Chef* and *National Culinary Review*
- Awareness for NICHEPORK.ORG among retailers is an added focus for 2005. To kick off these efforts, the 2005 second quarter issue of the NPB Retail Newsletter will carry a half page ad promoting the site to retailers.

NICHEPORK.ORG Producer and Packer Databases Continue to Grow

- In the first quarter of 2005, the niche producer database grew by approximately 10% or 14 new producers. Four new packer/processors were added expanding the packer/processor database from 20 to 23 states. This brings the current total to 167 and 77 listings respectively.

NichePORK To Have Good Visibility At World Pork Expo

- Attendees to this year’s World Pork Expo can see and learn more about NICHEPORK.ORG as they come to the Swine Barn. NichePORK will have a presence throughout the three day event there, including sponsorship of producer breakfasts and lunches. Niche producer mentors will also be on hand at the Swine Barn to talk with niche producers and others interested in niche pork production.

Do You Know Your Checkoff Responsibilities?

- To help address questions that have been raised about producer checkoff responsibilities, a new link has been added to the nichepork.org home page. Or you can call 515-223-2620.

