

January 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.

Certified Organic Foods Continue Strong Growth

According to a December 2, 2004 article in USA Today, organic food sales continue to climb steadily, topping the \$10 billion mark in 2003 (compared to \$3.6 billion in 1997*).

- Organic options may be showing up in unexpected places, including certified organic hot dogs and bratwurst at ball stadiums. “consumers are demanding healthier food everywhere – even at the ballpark.”
- The top chef at Delaware North Companies Sportservice, a company which handles concessions at 21 major sports facilities nationally, was quoted in the article as saying “Five years ago, we barely had bottled water at stadiums. Now we’re getting customers who want to see documentation that certifies something as organic.”
- Sales of certified organic hot dogs and bratwurst will be tested next year, pending availability of enough product, at San Diego’s Petco Park and St. Louis’s Busch Stadium.

Over 100 Attend NichePORK Conference

The November 30 Conference in Ames, Iowa, sponsored by the National Pork Board and the Iowa Pork Producers Association, was attended by approximately 110 producers and others who support the niche pork industry.

- Attendees enjoyed a talk by keynote speaker Jim Riemann from Certified Angus Beef about what makes a niche brand, benefits of branded programs, trademark licensing agreements, elements of a successful brand, and what’s involved in protecting a brand.
- Featured speakers at the breakout sessions presented on the topics of traceability, USDA labeling, and direct marketing success stories.
- Technomic Research reported on “What Chefs Want”, a National Pork Board research study conducted in 2004.
- Niche pork marketers Prairie Grove Farms and Eden Natural shared their experiences.
- Sixteen companies exhibited their products/services during the trade show portion of the Conference, a popular part of the day.

To view conference presentations and/or listen to audio files, go to the Calendar on nichepork.org.

nichepork.org Website Activity Increases

The 2004 national print advertising effort inviting chefs to visit nichepork.org “to source unique niche pork products” for their menu ran through December. Activity on the site continued to increase, growing from 55,000 hits per month by 4789 visitors in October 2004 to x hits per month by x visitors in December 2004.

America’s Favorite Pork Places

An on-line pork-friendly restaurant database, America’s Favorite Pork Places, was launched on the National Pork Board otherwhitemeat.com website. To submit a restaurant, go to www.otherwhitemeat.com/AmericasFavoritePorkPlaces and click on “Submit A Restaurant” (upper right side of menu bar). Complete the required fields and click to submit. Enter as many restaurants as you’d like, and be sure to indicate what kind of pork is served (“Featured Pork Dishes” field).

2005 Plans for NichePORK

Program areas for NichePORK that will be supported in 2005 based on the goals and tactical priorities identified by the National Pork Board Niche Producer Committee include:

- continued development and maintenance of nichepork.org and its producer and packer/processor databases
- continued promotion of the nichepork.org website to chefs
- expansion of nichepork.org promotional efforts to specialty/upscale retail targets
- NichePORK conferences plus additional efforts to help connect the dots between producers and the channel such as a producer mentor program and development of a resource list for producers

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.

*according to Organic Trade Association figures

