

SWINE

Environmental Stewardship Program

Richard Coffey and Gary Parker (in cooperation with Kentucky Pork Producers Association)

The Environmental Stewardship Program is designed to assist producers in becoming better environmental stewards of their natural resources. This educational program outlines environmental issues and the best management practices that producers can utilize in developing and implementing a sound nutrient management plan for their operation. The best management practices that are a part of this program can be incorporated into a producer's Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Plan for their operation. Information covered in this program includes:

1. water quality and issues relating to water quality,
2. primary nutrients of concern in manure,
3. factors influencing available nutrients in manure,
4. manure or nutrient management plans,
5. disposal of animal carcasses,
6. odor control, and
7. key environmental regulations.

On-Farm Applied Research/Demonstration Activities

Richard Coffey and Gary Parker

Applied research and demonstration activities focus on issues of critical importance to swine production. Areas of interest include manure and nutrient management, feeding and nutritional strategies, production and housing systems, and reproductive management. Past projects have included:

1. development of an automated bio-fermentation reactor to enhance microbial activity and reduce odors in lagoons,
2. evaluation of high-pressure cooling as means of reducing heat stress in swine,
3. development of management techniques for swine housed in large groups, and
4. developing farm-specific feeding strategies for swine.

On-Farm Swine Performance Testing Program

Gary Parker, Kevin Laurent, and Richard Coffey (in cooperation with Kentucky Pork Producers Association)

The On-Farm Performance Testing Program was initiated in 1991 to assist producers in evaluating the genetic merit of potential replacement boars and gilts. This program utilizes Real Time Ultrasound to determine tenth rib backfat, loin depth, and percentage carcass lean on live animals. These data are then combined with growth and performance to generate selection indexes that can be used to identify genetically superior animals.

Pork Quality Assurance Program

Richard Coffey and Gary Parker (in cooperation with Kentucky Pork Producers Association)

Consumers are increasingly demanding that the foods they consume be safe and free of harmful drug residues. The Pork Quality Assurance Program is an educational program that details 10 "Good Production Practices" which producers can implement on their farm to produce safe and wholesome pork. When utilized, these production practices will improve the efficiency of the operation and minimize the likelihood of drug residues and harmful objects (such as broken needles) being present in pork from that operation. The 10 "Good Production Practices" covered in this educational program include:

1. identifying and tracking all treated animals;
2. maintaining medication and treatment records;
3. properly storing, labeling, and accounting for all drug products and medicated feeds;
4. obtaining and using veterinary prescription drugs only based on a valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship;
5. educating all employees and family members on proper administration techniques and withdrawal times;
6. using drug residue tests when appropriate;
7. establishing an efficient and effective herd health management plan;
8. providing proper swine care;
9. following appropriate on-farm feed processing and commercial feed processor procedures; and
10. completing quality assurance checklist annually and recertifying every two years.

Producer Consultation Activities

Richard Coffey and Gary Parker

Due to the enormous variety in the makeup of different swine operations, personal consultations are an integral component of the swine Extension program. Producers, county Extension agents, and support industry personnel require personal contact with individuals who have the technical expertise and resources to assist them in the decision-making and problem-solving process, especially where a large investment will be required. Personal consultations are used to address all areas of pork production and would include production flow, production efficiency, management, health and disease, environmental sustainability, marketing, pork quality, facility construction and remodeling, and trouble-shooting.

Producer Cooperatives Activities

Richard Coffey and Gary Parker

The dynamic changes that have occurred over the past decade in the swine industry have led to many changes for producers. In an effort to remain sustainable and economi-

cally viable, many producers have joined with others to form various producer cooperatives. Activities of these cooperatives have typically included group purchasing of inputs (i.e., feed ingredients, equipment, pharmaceutical supplies, etc.), group marketing of animals, and the sharing of ideas and production practices. More recently, these types of cooperatives have looked at ways to retain ownership of their pork products further up the consumer chain. Educational programs pertaining to nutritional strategies, breeding herd management, marketing alternatives, herd health, production systems, manure and nutrient management, and other vital topics have been and continue to be developed for these groups.

Youth Swine Activities

Richard Coffey and Kevin Laurent (in cooperation with Kentucky Pork Producers Association and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture)

Youth swine activities are an important component of the swine Extension program. Activities include Livestock Judging Clinics and Contests, Swine On-Foot Shows, and Youth Agriculture Field Days. Educational programs are developed and presented on various aspects of pork and livestock production, as well as various careers that are available in animal agriculture. Educational resources, such as the Livestock Judging CD, are developed for use by agents working with youth in their counties.