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SWINE



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Building Innovation Into What We Do - Everyday!



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and annual US corporate reports. In one 90 day period there were 225 books published with the word 'innovation' in the title; in addition a survey of 260 companies, 43% indicated they had a 'chief innovation officer' or equivalent position*. Given the focus on innovation it should be all around us and contributing to improved businesses, better personal wellbeing and be part of virtually everything we touch. Yet many of our successful businesses,

Highlight Safety and Innovation:

At Prairie Swine Centre we start every meeting with a safety tip. Today's safety tip is also an innovation – the deadstock mover. According to workplace research we should be careful when lifting anything greater than 15% of our body weight (source: Kansas State University), and the fewer steps we take carrying heavy objects the better. Sows die, sometimes in awkward places, and they are heavy. The photo of the deadstock mover is an innovation developed by the production and maintenance staff at Prairie Swine Centre, instigated by Brian Andries our Operations Manager. Here is their low cost innovation to make light work of a job that needs to be done on all farms. The solution is in a word 'elegant' from its dependable components to its low cost manufacture, and it removes a health and safety risk associated with the job.



The low-cost deadstock mover is an innovation using a pallet jack, rollers and an electric winch

What can we take from this simple example about the role of innovation on our farms?

What Does it Mean to be Innovative?

The word has become so overused in business press that it ceases to hold real meaning or excitement. For example, last year the word 'Innovation' appeared 33,528 times in quarterly

especially in manufacturing, have developed systems that engage the power of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) and volume to drive down costs as a way to achieve profitability. Our farming model has also demonstrated that there are advantages to size. Our systems leverage their expertise by managing thousands (for example, acres or sows) in pursuit of a more efficient farm that meets family or shareholder needs for net income. Are 'innovation' and standardization opposites and in conflict?

(Building Innovation...Continued on page 3)

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