

# National Chair in Swine Welfare Update

Industry awareness and support continue to build for the NSERC Industrial Chair in Swine Welfare as the candidate to lead the program, Dr. Sandra Edwards, meets with industry groups across Canada. Dr. Edwards was the keynote speaker at the first Tim Hortons Sustainable Food Management Summit hosted at the University of Guelph (October, 2013). The one-day event showcased current research in animal welfare and sustainability of the food supply chain for retailers and food service industry representatives. Dr. Edwards, a professor and Chair of Agriculture at Newcastle University, UK, has become a familiar face to Canada's pork value chain in the development of the first **National Chair in Swine Welfare**. Her message for the audience which included pork producers, packers, processors, retailers and food service professionals was focused on the formation of value chains in Europe and the central role animal welfare standards occupy in those systems. Making the point that *"a value chain shares information, responsibility and profitability and these have become an important part of European food production."* Dr. Edwards went on to describe to listeners that the **Canadian industry** can benefit from this European experience and should seek to endorse a more uniform and reasoned approach to on-farm welfare expectations and evaluation. This will help to avoid some of the mistakes made in Europe, with multiple "standards" and commercial schemes that often frustrate consumers and players in the value chain and do not always improve the welfare of the pig.



- *Dr. Sandra Edwards (left), Dr. Michael von Massow, University of Guelph, and Crystal Mackay Farm and Food Care Ontario, at the Tim Horton's Sustainable Food Management Summit*
- *Dr. Edwards is the candidate for the National Chair in Swine Welfare which will serve all segments of the Canadian pork value chain*
- *Accomplished researcher with over 50 major projects, 28 doctoral students trained, and over 400 scientific presentations*



*Sandra Edwards speaking at the 2013 Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium*



*Rick Bergmann Vice-Chair Manitoba Pork Council (left) and Rick Prejet, Board member Manitoba Pork Council (far right) present letters of financial support for the National Chair in Swine Welfare.*

### **Looking for more information on the National Chair in Swine Welfare?**

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## **Pork Producers from across Canada are joined by pork processors in support of the National Chair in Swine Welfare**

Pork producer support for the National Chair in Swine Welfare now reaches across Canada. At a recent meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba Pork Council took the opportunity to officially present a letter of financial support. Commitments have been made by pork associations from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and PEI with combined pledges in excess of \$500,000 over the 5-year term of the research and outreach program.

*“Pork producers have supported swine behavior and welfare research for many years” notes Dr. Mary Buhr, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan, “and given the importance pork producers place on animal care, the new knowledge that will be developed in this area will be of great benefit to pork producers first.”*

Pork packers and processors also realize the benefit of research and communications activity proposed by the National Chair in Swine Welfare. Olymel, based in Quebec and Alberta made an announcement in October to support the Chair. In the media release, Olymel CEO Rejean Nadeau identified the importance of *“research ...focused on animal welfare regardless of what production systems are in use, should benefit all stakeholders in the Canadian hog industry.”* To date, major pledges have been received from five packer-processors totaling \$250,000 over the 5-year program.

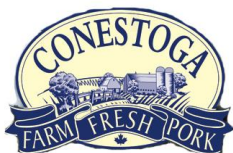
## Funding Program Advances the Science of Swine Welfare

All segments of the pork value chain are invited to participate

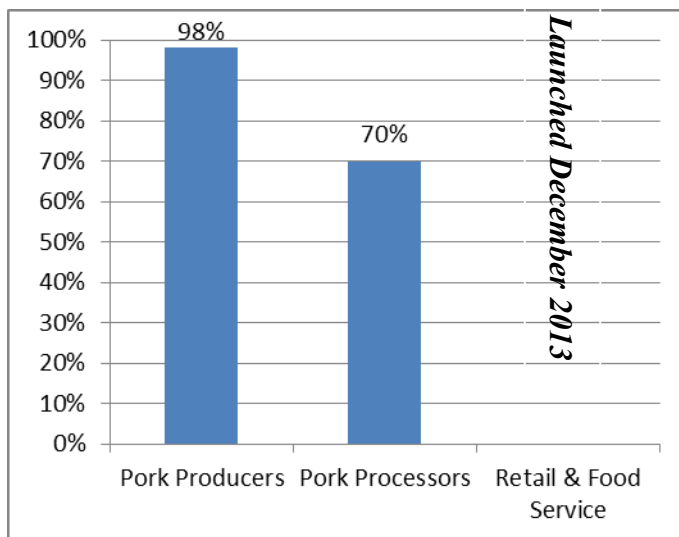
*A new model of cooperation is key to advancing the science of welfare:*

- Pork producer's associations across Canada have traditionally taken a significant leadership position in supporting research by committing millions of dollars annually to constantly improve food safety, farm productivity and sustainability.
- The National Chair in Swine Welfare fundraising program now makes it possible for pork processors, and their grocery and food service customers to also contribute directly to improving our understanding of pig welfare.
- This fundraising approach reflects an equal and balanced partnership between pork producers, processors and retailers.

### Leading Pork Processors Pledging Support In 2013



## Fundraising Progress 2013 - Reaching Targets



*The industry fundraising program is now at 63% of target with the final goal of leveraging a total of \$2.5 million dollars in new funding for swine welfare research and industry outreach*



*Looking for a way to talk about modern pork production with your customers? Try this virtual tour of a pig farm.*

<http://www.farmissues.com/virtualTour/en/index.html>

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please e-mail [lee.whittington@usask.ca](mailto:lee.whittington@usask.ca) with National Swine Welfare Chair in subject line.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## About the NSERC Industrial Chair in Swine Welfare

1. **What is the project?** This is not a project but a strategic investment by industry to invest in research, knowledge, and communication leadership in the area of swine welfare.
2. **What is the total funding required?** The initiative is \$2.5 million over 5 years. This will be provided 50% by industry and 50% by an application to NSERC (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council).
3. **What will the research program look at?** To understand and objectively measure welfare from the perspective of the pig itself in a range of practical on-farm situations, rather than relying on subjective human opinions and generalisations. The key objective of the Chair program is to develop consensus, based on objective science, on the best ways to promote true swine welfare in every day practice and to thus deliver positive outcomes for all concerned.



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