

To: Iowa State Fair Market Swine Exhibitors
From: Iowa State Fair
February 10, 2020
RE: Ractopamine

As of February 2020 JBS USA, Tyson Food and Smithfield will no longer accept delivery of market hogs that have been exposed to or fed ractopamine. The decision will specifically allow the companies to compete fairly in the international marketplace. Particularly, capture the increased demand from China, which currently requires ractopamine-free pork imports. The China market has increased demand for imported pork after the country's hog herd has been decimated by the African swine fever (ASF) epidemic.

These changes from packers also mean changes for the show industry. It is important to remember that market swine from livestock shows are less than 1% of the swine industry. We must consider what is best for our exhibitors while keeping the commercial industry's best interest in mind as well.

Ractopamine is fed to promote growth and leanness and has proven to be a very effective product in swine. It is still considered safe for human consumption in the USA when used by label instructions. It is important to know that the change in packer's protocol is a trade issue not a food safety or swine health issue.

So what does all of this mean for Iowa State Fair swine? In what we believe to be the best interest of our exhibitors, the FDA approved use of Ractopamine will be allowed at the 2020 Iowa State Fair. The use of ALL drugs still must be listed on your Animal Care and Management Disclosure Statement. The Iowa State Fair 4-H, FFA and Open Class Truckload and Hawkeye Market swine will continue to be terminal shows. All swine entered in these shows will be marketed to a third party packer that will only distribute the product domestically. Due to the restriction of marketing only domestically, exhibitors will receive payment below market value. We do not know the exact percentage under market value at this time but are working diligently to find the best option for exhibitors.

Even if we require exhibitors to sign an affidavit the product is easily transferable through feces and urine allowing for frequent cross-contamination. Unfortunately, rapid, live animal tests to confirm the presence of ractopamine in the live animal are not available at this time, and while the withdrawal from the blood stream is known to be very rapid, detection in meat or organs is longer, thus not being able to verify an animal is truly free of ractopamine before being harvested. The repercussion of a single positive test in an export container can result in an entire shipment being lost, with no payment for product and all of the associated costs of shipment to potentially be paid by the exhibitor or Fair if the packer so chooses. Furthermore, a positive test could possibly shut down the entire export market.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the Iowa State Fair Swine Department at sheepswine@iowastatefair.org or 515-262-3111 ext. 207. We look forward to seeing your swine exhibits at the 2020 Iowa State Fair.

