



## North American Producers Committed to Responsible Pork Production

**April 11, 2016,(Ottawa, Ont)** - At a recent meeting in Whistler, British Columbia, North American pork producer leaders confirmed their industry's common focus on producing nutritious, sustainable and affordable pork.

Hosted by the Canadian Pork Council (CPC), the meeting was attended by representatives of the CPC, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) of the United States and the Mexican pork producer organization, Confederación de Porcicultores Mexicanos (CPM).

“It was gratifying to see how pork producers from our three countries all recognize they have a fundamental role in maintaining the foundation of a healthy, safe, environmentally sustainable and affordable food supply,” said CPC chair, Rick Bergmann. “This foundation includes the adoption of new approaches and methods demonstrated by sound science to provide the best possible care and handling of our pigs, allow for environmentally sustainable use of our natural resources and achieve favourable results in the quality, safety, affordability and availability of our pork products.” He noted that population estimates indicate agriculture needs to double production to meet the world's needs in 2050.

“Hog producers are very innovative, employing the best proven genetics, using research from animal nutritionists and adopting production technologies which, when combined, have achieved tremendous advances in our industry's ability to produce high quality food in a sustainable manner,” added NPPC president, John Weber, referring to a 2012 Iowa study showing that, relative to a 1959 baseline, pig production has achieved a 35 per cent decrease in carbon footprint, a 41 per cent reduction in water usage and a 78 per cent drop in land needed to produce a pound of pork.

In their discussions, the leaders recognized that, in addition to production efficiencies and environmental sustainability, pork producers share with the rest of society the expectation that pigs are raised in a manner which respects their animal welfare needs as well as society's concerns that the industry uses antimicrobials prudently.

“Pork producers are deeply committed to the humane and respectful treatment of all pigs in their care,” said CPM president, José Luis Caram. “In addition to the sensibilities that farmers have toward their animals, producers look also to animal behaviour scientists and veterinary practitioners for guidance on housing and nutrition which is reflected in industry codes of conduct and recommended practices.”

The pork producer leaders found another commitment in common is the judicious use of animal health products and for farmers to play their part to preserve the continued effectiveness of antibiotics for both humans and for animals. The industry continues to promote sound management, nutrition and good housing as the first line of action to maintain and protect animal health, recognizing that animal health products should never be used as a replacement for good animal husbandry. They do believe, however, that producers and their veterinarians must retain the ability for the welfare of their animals to prevent disease and treat sick pigs with medications that are approved for veterinary use.

“North Americans should feel confident that their pork farmers are capable stewards of their animals and deeply committed to meeting our customers’, and our fellow citizens’, needs and expectations,” concluded Bergmann, who farms in southeastern Manitoba.

Pork is an important source of many essential nutrients including high quality protein, bioavailable iron and zinc, B vitamins and energy. Replacing some carbohydrate with protein foods, like pork, may have clinical benefits such as reduced appetite and calorie intake, improved blood lipids and muscle mass maintenance.

The CPC serves as the national voice for hog producers in Canada. It represents nine provincial pork industry associations and approximately 7,000 hog farms, producing 25.5 million animals a year and generating over \$13 billion in economic activity. The 31,000 farm jobs they create contribute to the total direct, indirect and induced \$23.8 billion and 103,000 jobs across the country. The organization's purpose is to play a leadership role in achieving and maintaining a dynamic and prosperous Canadian pork sector.

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