

FALL 2024

# Ohio Porkline

A PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO PORK COUNCIL



OH  
**PORK**  
ohio pork council

# Ohio Pork Council

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# Ohio Porkline



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*Cover photo by Mike King, OPC staff, taken at 2024 Toledo Night Market.*



# THERE'S NO QUITTING

## *in Selling Pork*

You are called to farm, to take care of animals, and to provide wholesome protein for people's plates. Farming presents numerous challenges, which is evident from the fact that the majority do not pursue it.

Adversity defines individuals, farming operations, and industry. We often underestimate our resilience and the power of our inner fortitude. Every challenge is an opportunity for growth. Ohio's pork industry demonstrates the immense strength that emerges when we stand together in challenging times.

Remember that there is a whole team dedicated to supporting you. The Ohio Pork Team is on a mission, and we are not backing down! We are tirelessly working to sell pork, to eliminate barriers, and to provide research, education, and resources to the industry.

Ohio is one of the 10 states pork must WIN to grow domestic pork demand – a mission the Ohio Pork Team does not take lightly. Rest assured, the Ohio Pork Team is not making excuses or giving up. We are dedicated to working hard to address the challenges related to pork demand at the local, state, and national levels.

Our primary focus is increasing pork sales, which significantly influences your bottom line. This task is intricate, involving important factors like flavor and cost, which greatly influence consumers' buying decisions.

Food serves as a means for people to connect, share their culture and heritage, and create lasting memories. However, most U.S. consumers do not have the same emotional attachment to pork as they do to other meats such as beef. This is a critical fact in understanding and addressing the overall challenge of pork demand. In addition, modern consumers base their food choices on three essential factors: taste, balance, and convenience.



**Cheryl Day**  
*Ohio Pork Council  
Executive Vice President*

“

Remember that there is a whole team dedicated to supporting you. The Ohio Pork Team is on a mission, and we are not backing down!

”





Meeting the demands of today's consumers is quite challenging. It is crucial to provide the right products in the right portion sizes. The pork loin, which is the most efficient cut, is often too large and complex for the average consumer to prepare. Furthermore, consumers have not been able to easily swap ground pork for ground beef due to its limited availability in stores.

In addition to taste and convenience, consumers also want to feel good about how pigs are raised. If a nearby pig farm is perceived as a bad neighbor, it could lead to hesitation in purchasing pork.

The Western Lake Erie Basin is home to some of the most vocal critics of Ohio pork. To tackle this, we have implemented data-driven tools and deliberately organized events with the goal of building authentic connections with individuals in Toledo and the neighboring areas.

In a time where accountability is paramount for state pork associations, the highlighted projects on the following pages are just a fraction of the Ohio Pork Team's ongoing initiatives on your behalf. While individual strategies may not directly correlate with increased pork sales, they can contribute to a rise in pork demand by addressing consumer concerns and encouraging greater consumption of pork products – something this team is dedicated to achieving.



**OCTOBER 23, 2024 | 6-9 PM**

*Dalton Union Winery & Brewery*  
**MARYSVILLE, OHIO**

*A special event celebrating October as National Pork Month. Scan the QR code above to get your tickets now and get ready to enjoy the ultimate National Pork Month event!*

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# OHIO PORK COUNCIL

# Annual Report

## Helping You Tell Your Sustainability Story

Despite how it may feel sometimes, most Ohioans have a predisposition to feeling positive about the pork industry. We know this because of our previous consumer and voter research.

To build on this opportunity, OPC is offering our community narrative playbook to ensure that messaging is on target to connect with the public about how producers raise animals in a responsible way to produce safe, nutritious food for their families.

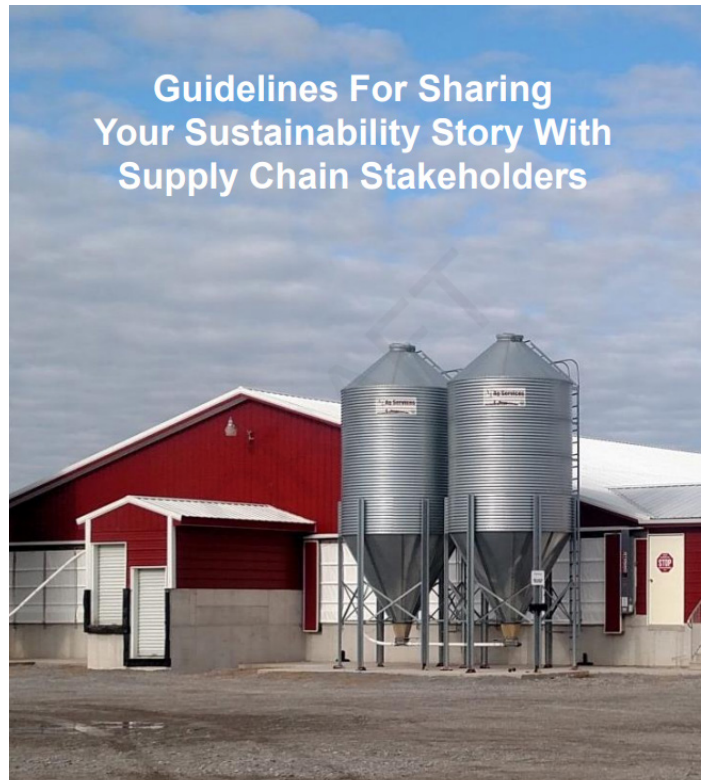
This year, we also have a new how-to guidebook for sharing your sustainability story with supply chain stakeholders (at right). It's designed to make it easier for you to share your personal farming story in a way that resonates with our ever-changing consumers.

As a top 10 pig-producing state in a highly urbanized environment, Ohio producers are in a great position to tell the positive story of modern production practices and sustainability. Explaining how key achievements of modern production practices don't just coexist with our environment, but can actually help improve it, is a story that must be told as part of our industry's We Care ethical principles that are demonstrated in Ohio every day.

Whether it's animal care, nutrient management, or caring for your community, OPC is here to help you tell your authentic farm story about how you are walking the walk of producing high-quality, sustainable protein for a growing world.

## Advocating for You in Columbus and DC

OPC continues to work on your behalf year-round on both state and national issues. Whether it's ensuring your freedom to operate or protecting your continuity of business, success comes from your involvement as producers who help us engage in a meaningful way with the political decision makers at the state and national level. For OPC, that's meant keeping your real-world issues and challenges in front of elected and government officials who can have a big impact on our industry's future success. Meanwhile, we're preparing the next generation of Ohio's Team Pork to make the best case for our industry whether in-state or on the national stage through our new leadership program (see page 9).



2023  
PILOT VERSION



## State Policy Wins

- Feral swine legislation introduced and passed Ohio House
- Secured additional funding for new VDL facility
- Secured additional funding for animal protein for foodbanks
- Advocated for practical policy in H2Ohio implementation
- Fight against misconceptions about pork production, attacks against Ohio's pork farms



# To Be Your VOICE, We Need Your Voice!

- 16 members serving on Ag Advisory Committees
- 3 trips to the Hill
- 1 Evening with Bacon
- 1 legislative Pig Showmanship Contest
- 1 USMEF trip to Red Meat Congress in Mexico
- 295 producer-to-elected official scheduled conversations

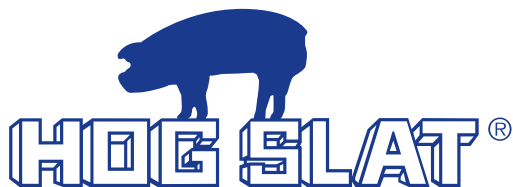


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## Improving Swine Health and Preparedness

OPC continues to lead the way on swine health and foreign animal disease (FAD) preparedness. Building on our previous outreach on Secure Pork Supply, AgView, and input and advocacy on key initiatives like the new Ohio Veterinary Diagnostic Lab and the U.S. Swine Health Improvement Plan (U.S. SHIP), OPC created FADready.org. This first-of-its-kind dashboard is designed to put all major FAD tools at the user's fingertips to make eventual certification with U.S. SHIP easier to navigate and attain.

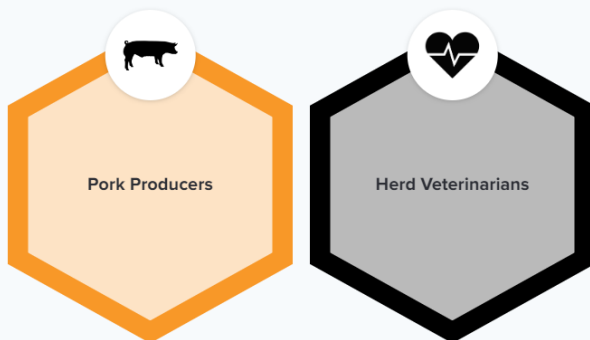


### FAD DASHBOARD

#### FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASE OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE DASHBOARD

Developed For U.S. Pork Producers

Scroll Over/Click On Categories For More



In addition, OPC has sponsored FAD exercises for the show pig and commercial segments of the industry to help ensure everyone better understands biosecurity, traceability, depopulation/disposal, and related protocols. Finally, OPC continues to collaborate with OSU's Veterinary Medical team to build interest in swine health careers. Whether underwriting the well-known Swientist program for youth or sponsoring OSU veterinary students to attend the Ohio Pork Congress and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians annual meeting, OPC is putting our industry's future swine health needs front and center.

# 200

AGVIEW ACCOUNTS CREATED BY SHOW PIG FAMILIES (Multiple States)



# 46

ATTENDANCE AT TRI-STATE SHOW PIG FAD EXERCISE



## Building Bridges to Future Workforce and Leadership

To help ensure a bright future for Ohio's pork industry, OPC continues to invest in programs that create interest in swine-related careers, while keeping adult and youth pig caretakers and exhibitors fully trained and certified in Pork Quality Assurance® Plus or Youth for the Quality Care of Animals. From longtime events such as Junior Swine Day, OH-PIGS, virtual field trips, and Pork in the Classroom, OPC continues to put an emphasis on youth involvement and understanding of our industry. More recently, OPC has launched the Ohio Pork Leaders Program that is providing its first class of next-generation leaders with opportunities to build new skills, acquire knowledge, and have purposeful experiences.



 **82**  
PQA PLUS® TRAINED  
(Regular and Advisor)

 **11**  
OHIO PORK  
SCHOLARSHIPS


 **5**  
OHIO PORK  
INTERNS

  
VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP  
PROGRAM

OVER  
 **400**  
NATIONAL SHOW PIG  
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

'23 - '24 VIEWS:  
**27,122 (UP 6,200)**

'14 - '24 VIEWS:  
**143,516**

OVER  
 **300**  
JUNIOR SWINE  
DAY



 **1**  
NATIONAL PORK  
INSTITUTE CLASS

 **27**  
ExploreAg CAMP ATI  
PORK SESSION

 **14**  
OPC PORK  
LEADERSHIP CLASS



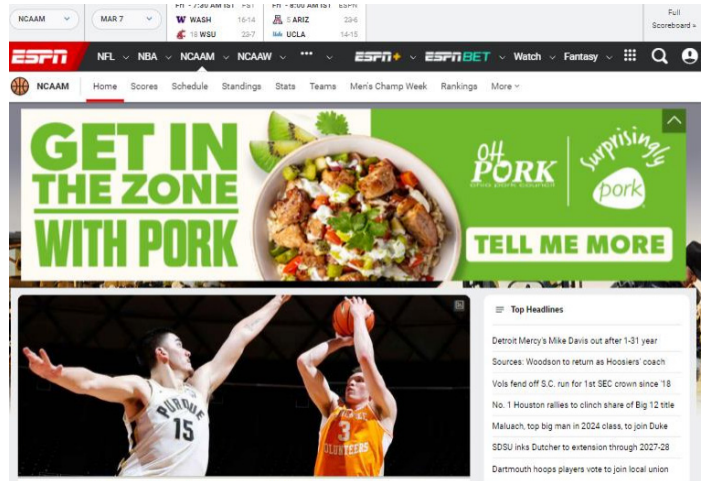
OHIO STATE  
FFA CONVENTION  
OVER  
**9,000**

 PORK IN THE  
CLASSROOM  
OVER  
  
**10,000**



## Moving the Needle on Trust, Image and Demand

To get more Ohio consumers who are in the “movable middle” to think more positively about Ohio pig farmers and ultimately, buy more pork, OPC continues to deploy a comprehensive array of tactics to reach them. More precisely, we are targeting an overall demographic that is more female, younger (less than 40) and lives in a more urban setting. This has led us to focus more on pork’s nutrition, versatility, sustainability, and the giving-back ethics of Ohio’s family-based producers. Some major tactics during the last year to gain earned PR and OPC media coverage included a Google ad campaign, an ESPN March Madness partnership, and social media influencer posts.



### ESPN MARCH MADNESS CAMPAIGN

Display Ad & Video Impressions - **1.3 M**  
 Ad & Video Clicks - **317,000**  
 Ad & Video Click-Thru Rate - **0.24%**  
 Video Completion Rate - **87.4%**

## OHIO'S PIG FARMERS CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT

LEARN MORE



### GOOGLE AD CAMPAIGN

Display Ad Reach - **14,743,910**  
 Display Ad Clicks - **263,581**  
 Display Ad Click-Thru Rate - **1.79%**  
 Video Ad Impressions - **4,902,391**  
 Video Ad Views - **1,417,305**

PORK POWER ...

### Ohio Pig Farmers' Donation to Help Fill Toledo Area Protein Gap

Donated pork will provide nutrient-rich protein for months of meals

PUBLISHED ON MAY 21, 2024

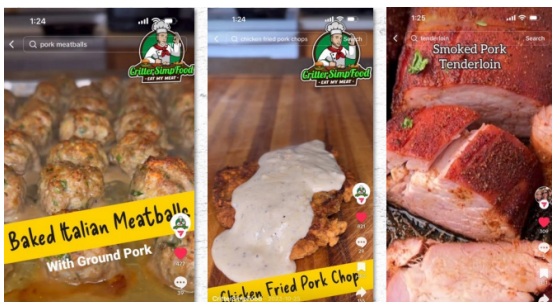


Nick Seger (back center left), president of the Ohio Pork Council, presented a check that represented the amount of pork that was delivered to the Toledo, Ohio, non-profit to serve to its hundreds of food-challenged guests every week. Shown here is Courtney Schmittke, head chef of SAME Cafe (back right), along with Ziffine Carrington, cafe coordinator (front left), and Alex Zappone, cafe sous chef. (OPC)

### OPC MEDIA COVERAGE 2024

Pork Congress, Pork Rib-Off, Pork Power, Tornado Relief, HB 503, USO BBQ Battle, NW Ohio Rib-Off, Breaking Boundaries Show, OPC

Total Earned/Nonpaid Mentions - **87**  
 Total Editorial Reach - **103 M**  
 Total Ad Value Equivalent - **\$952,000**



### SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

**518,000 total impressions**



141,000



181,000



112,000



84,000



## Partnering with OSU Athletics

OPC's most-recent marketing relationship with Ohio State University athletics started in mid-August 2023 and went through the 2024 spring football game. As the state's largest university, it offers us a large and somewhat captive audience of OSU fans to present our messages.



Ultimate Gameday Experience contest ran from October 20 to November 10 on OSU's Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram pages and received 246,242 impressions, 7,505 engagements, 3,780 link clicks, and 2,497 entries.



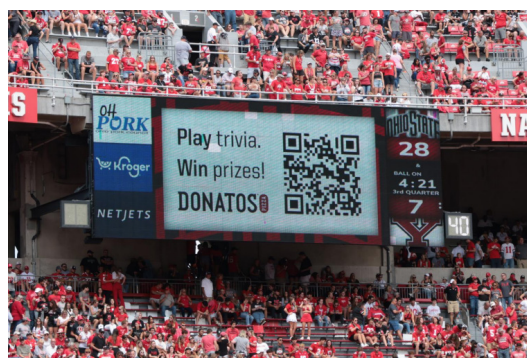
OSU football radio reached up to 147,600 listeners in Columbus area with a 30-second ad played 22 times with two extra plays during spring game.



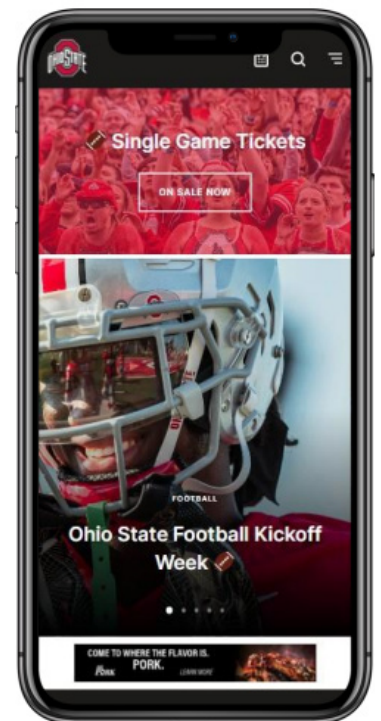
Fans interacted with OPC's bacon vending machine during home football games.



Over 200 fan connect signs gave OPC 2.5 hours of exposure per home football, men's/women's basketball games.



Scoreboard signage received nearly one hour of exposure per home game.



Digital messaging reached fans through website banner ads for 500,000 impressions. And through six weekly emails, reaching 125,000 fans each time.



**2023 Attendance:**  
**103,792 per Game**  
**3rd Nationally**

# Save the Date

## 2025 OHIO PORK CONGRESS



### FEBRUARY 4-5, 2025

Where you come to network, learn, and support our industry.

Veterans Memorial Civic & Convention Center | Lima, Ohio

For more information visit [www.ohioporkcongress.org](http://www.ohioporkcongress.org).

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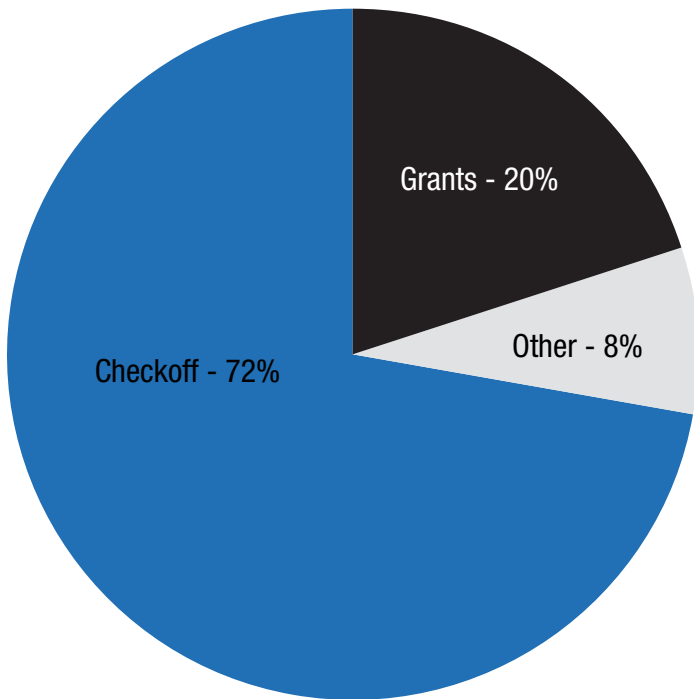
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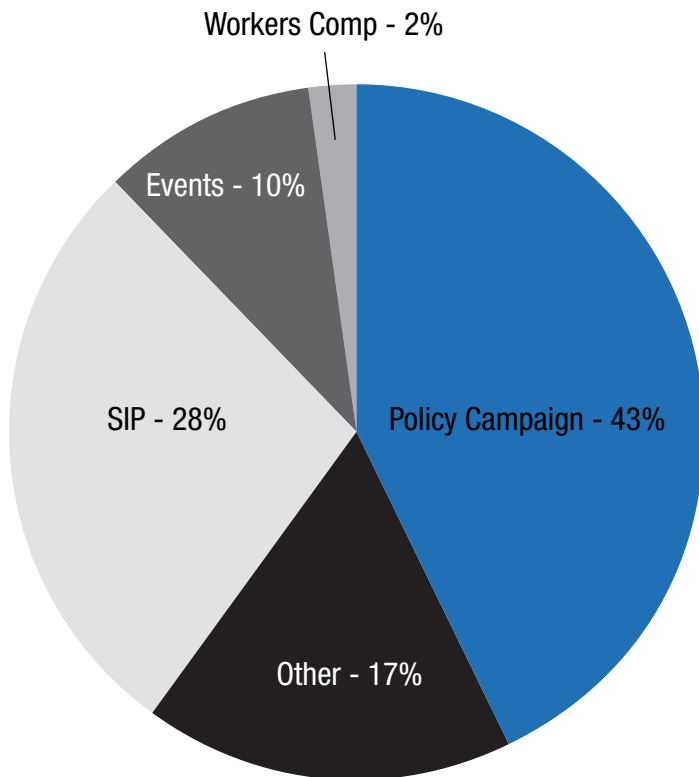
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# Ohio Pork Council

## FINANCIALS 2023-2024

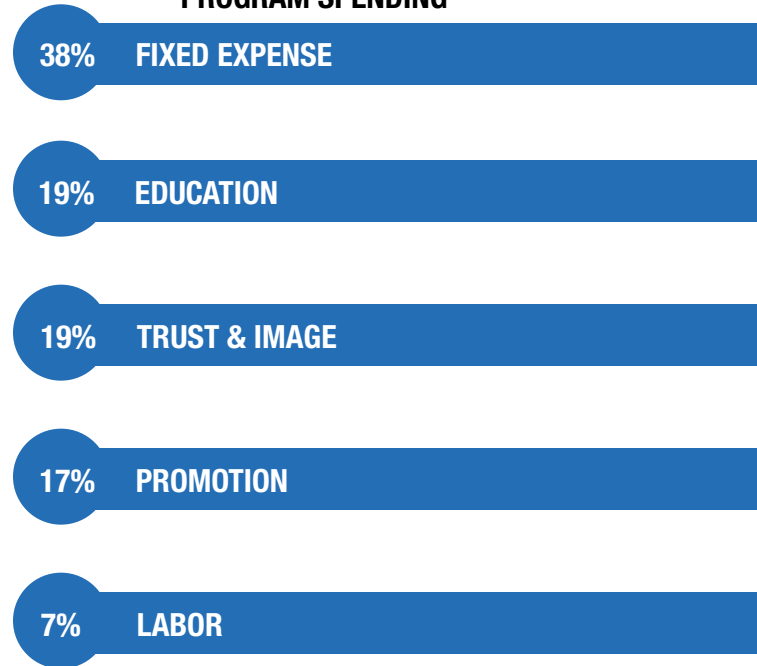


**CHECKOFF REVENUE**

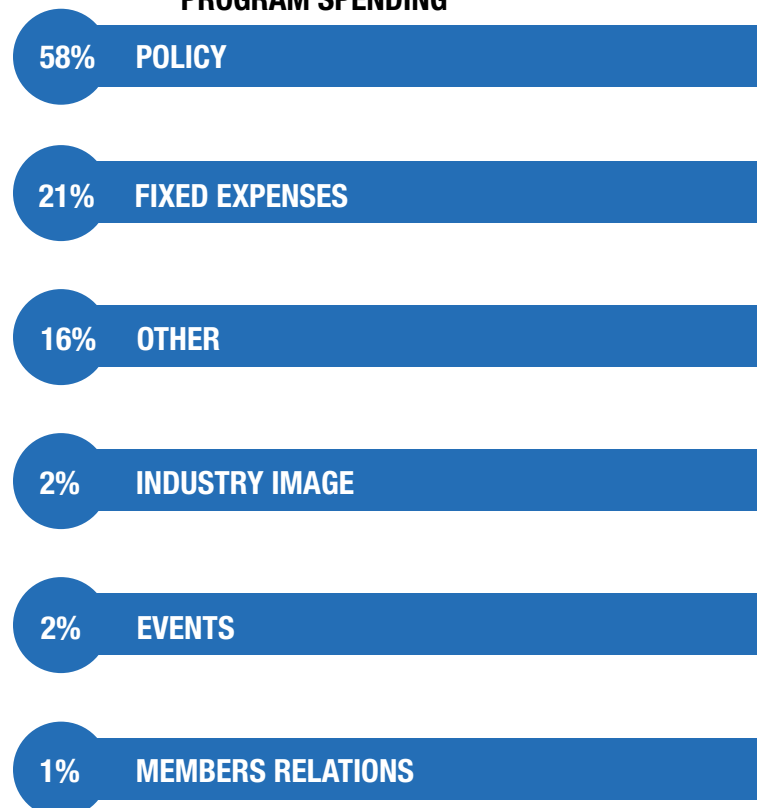


**NON-CHECKOFF REVENUE**

### PROGRAM SPENDING



### PROGRAM SPENDING





# OPC SUCCESS DOESN'T YIELD to State Fair Construction

Sure, there was plenty of construction; and things weren't exactly as they usually are at the 2024 Ohio State Fair. Yet, despite the changes and challenges, the Ohio Pork Council, with its great volunteers, chalked up a successful state fair run on all counts.

"This is the one event of the year where everything we do as a membership organization comes together in a very real way for us to interact and make a difference," said Cheryl Day, OPC executive vice president. "Whether it's pork promotion, showcasing real Ohio pig farmers, giving back to youth, or spending time with our political leaders, the state fair is the ultimate stage for what we do all year."

## Consumer Connection

As always, OPC used the great crowds and opportunities provided by the state fair to promote, market, and serve delicious pork dishes. Doing so in a fun and educational way is a key part of trying to move the needle of pork demand.

### OPC Pork Stand

For this year's pork-hungry consumers, OPC again fired up the grills to produce perfect chops and loins accompanied by copious amounts of bacon to build out the menu along with pulled-pork to round out the protein options. Consumers lined up to enjoy their pork favorites with a side of real pork information from OPC's signage featuring elements from the "Surprisingly Pork" campaign on pork's nutritional attributes.

### Pork Rib-Off

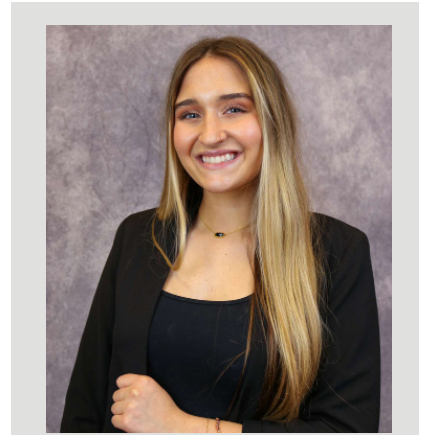
This year, a partnership with Giant Eagle helped grow the excitement around the 26th annual OPC Pork Rib-Off with new faces. Eager fairgoers patiently waited in lines to get the opportunity to taste test each contestant's BBQ specialties in each category and then vote on their favorite. Ale Yeah BBQ of Delaware, Ohio, took top honors for ribs and pulled pork.

### Live Cooking Demonstration

Leveraging the temporary home of the Taste of Ohio, OPC held a consumer quiz at the live cooking demonstration stage with partner Ashley Martinez, a chef and dietitian who also finds time to be a Cincinnati Bengals cheerleader. Her charisma and expertise helped OPC build connections with fairgoers to show them how easy and economical it is to cook using pork every day at home whether it's a loin-based, or ground pork dish.

## Giving Back to Youth

OPC's connection with fairgoers of all kinds, from legislators to youth, is unmatched. For the second year, OPC grew its Breaking Boundaries show as a way of simultaneously giving back to and providing our OH-PIGS youth with a growing and mentoring opportunity. As evidenced by the packed stands and growing



**Kelsie Mannasmith**  
Communications Intern





attention by other organizations and media, OPC has clearly struck a chord with those who see the value provided by this opportunity to include these special youth in this annual event that has turned out to be an emotional and educational win-win for all involved.

## Building Grassroots Political Bonds

Thanks to years of providing a welcome place for politicians and other leaders to relax and recharge during the fair's run, the OPC Pork Tent continued to be the epicenter of planned and impromptu meetings where some of the best conversations were often had.

### Battle for the Bacon

OPC collaborated with the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) in the second annual Battle for the Bacon Legislative Pig Showmanship event. This year, 12 legislators representing both parties participated. Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport) and Rep. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) judged the contest aided by commentary from ODA Director Brian Baldrige. Youth mentors from OH-PIGS were paired with legislative participants to teach them about showmanship while their parents got to have real conversations with the politicians.

### Two OPC Receptions

As is fair tradition, the Ohio Legislature held its annual joint Ag Committee Meeting onsite. This gave OPC the opportunity to offer attendees some delicious pork belly at the reception. Later in the day, many politicians and staff joined OPC next to the Pork Stand area to enjoy more pork items from the OPC state fair menu as they connected with producers and allied industry prior to the legislative showmanship contest.

## Swine and Pork Education

Because everyone loves the sight of newborn piglets, OPC continued to reach attendees of the state fair by displaying two sows who gave birth to piglets for the purpose of education. Even in the temporary location, OPC made sure fairgoers got clear, bold messaging to foster swine- and pork-centered conversations that our interns, staff, or volunteers could participate in. This was again done by focusing on real Ohio families, raising real pork, along with nutritional facts and health benefits of pork. It was all about ensuring visitors walked away feeling better about how pigs are raised and why pork is a great protein they should be eating more of in their diet.

While we still must wait until 2026 for all the fairground's new facilities to be completed, OPC staff and volunteers made sure that this year's fair was successful, just as they will during next year's 12-day run from July 23 to August 3, 2025!





# CREATING "Smiles with Pork" in Toledo

For the second year in a row, the Ohio Pork Council assembled a small group to spend a Saturday afternoon and evening grilling up pork loin to serve to a diverse crowd of over 3,000 who attended the Toledo Night Market along the Maumee River last month – all of which created priceless interactions that made them view our product, farmers, and industry in a more accurate and personal way.

The marketgoers, who were mainly from the Toledo metro area, thoroughly enjoyed all the pork loin-inspired samples of sliders, lettuce wraps, and Cuban sandwiches, but it was really the one-on-one conversations and smiles that were the star of this grassroots community event. Much of this centered on how good the pork was because it was perfectly cooked to 145° F and showcased pork's great flavor and menu versatility.

"We appreciate those who volunteered their time and talent to help us make a difference in this part of the state," said Cheryl Day, OPC executive vice president. "Being part of this event for the second time and seeing the positive responses we're getting simply tells us that we're doing the right thing in the right place to ensure that Ohio's pork industry is being seen in its true light of caring and giving back."



## WHY DID OPC MAKE THIS EFFORT?



**Promote Pork:** We're all about that pork! We wanted to show everyone just how amazing pork can be when prepared right.



**Real Pig Farming Awareness:** Ever wonder what goes into pig farming? We shed some light on it and showed the love and care that goes into raising pigs.



**Healthy Options:** Pork isn't just delicious; it's healthy too! We highlighted how pork can be a great addition to your diet.



**Affordable Protein:** With food costs on the rise, we showed how pork is an affordable, protein-packed option that doesn't break the bank.



**Cooking Tips:** Cooking pork can be an art. We helped teach the proper way to cook it, emphasizing 145° degrees.



**Giving Back:** We love our communities, and this was our way of giving back and saying thank you for all your support.



**Making You Smile:** There's nothing like a good pork sandwich to put a smile on your face. We hoped we made everyone's day a little brighter!





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# Apply for OHIO PORK COUNCIL INTERNSHIPS

The Ohio Pork Council is looking for three highly motivated applicants for its 2025 spring/summer internship program.

## Communications Intern

The Ohio Pork Council is looking for a highly driven communications intern to join their team during summer 2025.

The ideal candidate should be majoring in the field of agriculture, communications, marketing, or journalism; preferably going into their junior or senior year. Knowledge of swine and modern agriculture is a plus, but not required.

The intern will be responsible for developing written and graphic communications for farmer members, the media, and consumers; increasing member participation and awareness of producer education programs; promotion of education and food stands at the Ohio State Fair; in addition to special events planning and volunteer recruitment.

The Ohio Pork Council Communications Internship is sure to provide a variety of learning opportunities and awesome experiences within the agricultural communications field.

## OH-PIGS Program Intern

The Ohio Pork Council OH-PIGS Program intern will be responsible for efficient and effective communication with the program manager on expectations on a week-to-week basis. The intern will work closely with the program manager to ensure that the OH-PIGS program has a successful line-up of shows.

Applicants should be majoring in the field of agriculture or a related program area at the collegiate level. Applicants should have a good working knowledge of show pig programs, as well as knowledge of modern agriculture and pork production. Those interested in the internship should have solid public speaking and writing skills, be highly organized, can work independently, and be able to travel to and from required events. Additionally, applicants should have a working knowledge of Microsoft Excel, Google Docs, Google Sheets, and other similar programs.

## Pig Care and Education Intern

The Ohio Pork Council pig care and education intern will serve as the key staff person at the 2025 Ohio State Fair Birthing Center. During the 12-day event, the intern will play an integral role in providing quality animal care, monitoring the farrowing process, and maintaining a positive public perception for fairgoers in attendance.

Applicants should be majoring in the field of agriculture, communications, or education, preferably going into their junior or senior year. Previous experience working with swine is required. Related experience conducting agriculture education programs or working with consumers is a plus. Applicants should have the ability to provide superior animal care, solid public speaking skills and feel comfortable answering questions regarding Ohio's pork industry. Applicants should be self-motivated, can work independently, and thrive in fast-paced environments.

**Interested applicants can view complete job descriptions at [www.ohiopork.org/internship](http://www.ohiopork.org/internship). All applications are due no later than November 30, 2024.**



# Ohio Pork Council

## SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT



The Ohio Pork Council is pleased to announce that the application process for the 2025 OPC scholarship program is now open. For those wishing to be considered for awards associated with the 2025-26 school year, now is the time!

Again this year, the Ohio Pork Council will offer four scholarships: the Ohio Pork Council Scholarship, the OPC Women's Scholarship, the Dick Isler Scholarship, and the Tony Forshey Memorial Scholarship.

To be eligible for scholarship consideration, all applicants or his/her parents must be actively involved in the pork industry. Children of pork industry employees, managers, and contract growers are eligible. Applicants, or their parents, must be a member of the Ohio Pork Council and residents of Ohio. Applicants entering their freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior year of college are encouraged to apply.

**For more information and to view the scholarship applications, please visit [www.ohiopork.org/scholarships](http://www.ohiopork.org/scholarships).**

**Applications are due no later than January 10, 2025.**

## Nominate

# YOUR PORK COLLEAGUES TODAY!



Celebrate a deserving colleague, friend, or family member by nominating them for one of Ohio Pork Council's annual awards. Nominations are easy but look carefully at the categories below before you make your submission.

### Pork Industry Excellence

This award is given to a pork producer or pork-producing family for their willingness to give their time, talents, and money to the pork industry. And as a result, they have made an outstanding contribution to the swine industry. Consideration will be given for contributions at the local, state, and national levels.

### Swine Manager of the Year

The award for Swine Manager of the Year recognizes an owner or non-owner who excels in the management of a swine production operation.

### Pork Promoter of the Year

The award for Pork Promoter of the Year recognizes an individual/family, organization, company, or county group

who has done an outstanding job promoting pork and/or the pork industry on a local, regional, or state level. Candidates need not be actual pork producers.

### Friends of Pork Award

The OPC Friends of Pork Award is presented to a pork industry leader whose principal occupation is not pork production but has made an outstanding contribution to the swine industry. Consideration will be given for contributions at the local, state, and national levels.

### OPC Service Award

This award is presented to an individual who exemplifies outstanding service to the swine industry. This is someone who exceeds volunteer expectations and is willing to support the pork industry in numerous ways.

Have a nominee in mind? Simply submit a name for the award committee's consideration by **Tuesday, Oct. 31**.

Access the nomination form at:  
[www.ohiopork.org/ohio-pork-industry-awards](http://www.ohiopork.org/ohio-pork-industry-awards)



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# Staying on the FAD PREPAREDNESS PATH

Foreign animal disease (FAD) preparedness fatigue is real; and to some extent, it's understandable. Since 2018, U.S. producers have had nonstop news and warnings about how African swine fever (ASF) has caused various levels of havoc overseas and as near as the Dominican Republic, but so far, it's not reached our shores (thankfully). This reality, coupled with low market prices and other real-time farm concerns, has meant that FAD preparedness may have suffered – something that needs to change fast.

As for producer leadership, the Ohio Pork Council, National Pork Board and National Pork Producers Council, have kept FAD preparedness a top priority for our industry over the past six years. This decision is well-founded as the last economic study pegs a potential ASF loss in the U.S. at \$79.5 billion over 10 years should it reach our nation.

Let's look at three ongoing FAD preparedness programs and explore how they are serving the U.S. pork industry as a whole and closer to home in Ohio as well.

## U.S. SHIP: A Comprehensive Program

The U.S. Swine Health Improvement Plan (U.S. SHIP), modeled after the successful National Poultry Improvement Plan, is a platform for safeguarding, improving, and representing the health status of swine across participating farm sites, supply chains, states, and regions, with the initial focus on ASF and classical swine fever status. As a USDA pilot project, it already has 36 states participating, including Ohio, which represents 75% of the nation's breeding herd and 65% of the grow-finish pigs.

At the recent U.S. SHIP House of Delegates meeting in Minnesota, industry participants, including a delegation from Ohio, heard how the organization is nearing completion of the full USDA accreditation process. At the meeting's end, they also voted on several new resolutions and standards.

"The codification of U.S. SHIP by the USDA should be seamless for the most part as the program has had input from veterinarians, industry, as well as USDA and regulatory officials since it began," said Todd Price, DVM, an Ohio delegate from Upper Sandusky. "The fact that the program is including small herds and exhibition swine in the identification and traceability areas of the program are encouraging as this will be critical to ensure future sales in the case of an outbreak."

What does this mean to Ohio producers? Price says there are multiple benefits. Most notably, a USDA codified U.S. SHIP, combined with enough certified herds, will provide our state and nation with a much better chance of having uninterrupted pork export sales. This is critical to a fast return to business as usual following FAD confirmation.



**Mike King**  
*Senior Director of  
Communications and  
Public Relations*





“Testing required in U.S. SHIP can be correlated with samples that are already being done as routine monitoring on most farms so likely, no additional labor will be needed on sampling of those sows in the country that are enrolled in the program,” Price said. “If we can wrap up the remaining 25% soon, we will be even more prepared in case we face an ASF outbreak.”

Cheryl Day, OPC executive vice president, who served as a panelist during the recent U.S. SHIP meeting, said, “Our producers have been involved in this program from the very beginning to help shape it into what it is today, ensuring that all parts of our industry are engaged and participating to safeguard the entire national herd and everyone’s livelihoods. I’m particularly glad to see that the exhibition swine part of our industry is being more fully included in how this program evolves.”

## FAD Exercises: Necessary Practice

When it comes to FAD preparedness, having a plan sitting on a shelf is not enough to be truly ready. That’s why OPC has placed a greater emphasis on testing our state’s capabilities of handling a situation such as confirmation of ASF in Ohio.

Earlier this year, OPC hosted show pig producers, exhibitors, and pork association staff from Indiana and Kentucky to join our state in a daylong exercise (see photo). It focused on plans are in place today at the state and national level to assist in such a scenario, but most of the action centered on a tabletop demonstration including role playing of potential scenarios that could affect a community with a potential ASF case.

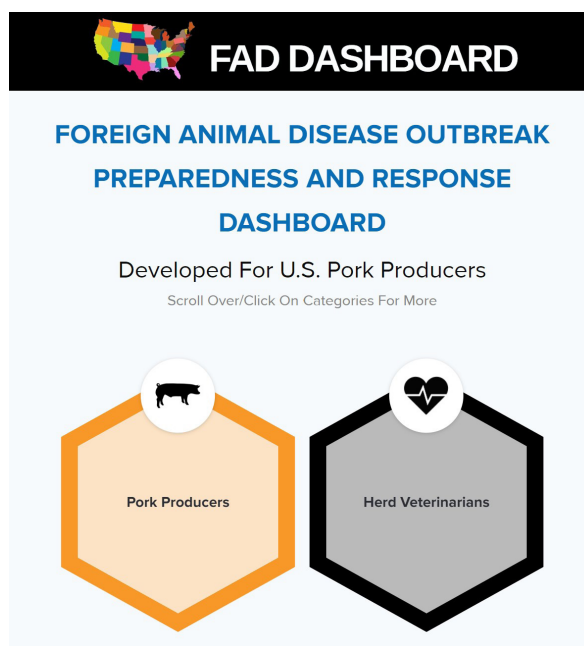
“In Ohio, we’re all about working together to figure out how we can bring further integration and understanding between the commercial and show pig parts of our industry,” Day said. “We know that it all begins with building trust and relationships with all parts of our industry if we’re truly going to be successful on an industry-wide basis.”

On the commercial side of production, OPC recently spent an entire week in August role-playing an ASF scenario with USDA, Ohio Department of Agriculture staff, and others who went through detailed operational steps that would need to happen. This included actual on-farm tests, depopulation, and disposal on farms of collaborating producers. Some staff from National Pork Board also assisted in various aspects of the Checkoff-funded exercise, including communications responses at the state and national level.

“The things we learn by participating in these types of FAD exercises are critical to knowing not only where we stand today in our readiness, but in determining where the gaps exist so that we can address them now rather than having to find out during a real crisis,” Day added. “It’s all about continually getting better and you can’t do that without testing where you are today.”

## FADReady.org: A One-Stop Tool

For over a year, Ohio producers, swine veterinarians, and other industry stakeholders have had access to FADReady.org, the nation’s first comprehensive, interactive online tool to help reduce the risks from FAD such as ASF by helping guide them through all the major programs and tools available that can help with preparedness and response.



Created by the Ohio Pork Council and now overseen by the National Pork Board, the Checkoff-funded FADReady.org dashboard is a one-stop portal to get to where you need to go on the path of FAD preparedness. Everything from Secure Pork Supply, Premises identification, AgView, and much more is laid out in a user-friendly format.

Visit [FADReady.org](https://www.fadready.org) today to help you check off some of your FAD preparedness tasks.

While some may equate ongoing warnings about FADs to the fable about the little boy who cried wolf too often, we must ensure our industry heeds the lesson of this cautionary tale and not become complacent. Taking the necessary action today can make all the difference tomorrow for our industry’s business continuity and producers’ livelihoods.



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**To be your  
voice, we need  
your voice.**

**Ryan McClure**  
Hillside Acres, LLC  
Grover Hill, OH

“Raising pigs is something that I’m very passionate about, and I always want what is best for the pork industry. By being an investor in the National Pork Producers Council’s (NPPC) Strategic Investment Program (SIP), I know for certain that I am contributing to what is best for our industry. I regularly see my return on investment through the victories that NPPC and the Ohio Pork Council (OPC) have notched both domestically and abroad.

NPPC and OPC work tirelessly to make sure lawmakers are educated on our issues so that burdensome regulations don’t see the light of day and detrimental foreign animal diseases are kept out of the country. Because of my SIP investment, I’ve had firsthand involvement in many policy discussions over the years. This has directly helped the success of my family’s farm, which is why I’d ask you to join me to fight for a prosperous tomorrow and become a SIP investor today.”

