



BANFF PORK
seminar

news release

4-10 Agriculture Forestry Centre, University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2P5
Phone: 780 492-3651 Fax: 780 492-5771
Email: info@banffpork.ca Web: www.banffpork.ca

For Immediate Release:

Pork industry must look for ‘game changers,’ says international agri-food leader

Banff, Alta., January 22, 2009. The pork industry needs to look for “game changers” in order to stay competitive in processing, retail and export, says a category manager with Cargill, one of the largest privately-held integrated food companies in the world. He was speaking at the Banff Pork Seminar, a leading-edge seminar that attracts industry members from around the globe.

Cellular phones and high-definition television are examples of innovations that changed an industry overnight, says Brian Knudson. Some in those industries adapted and prospered while others did not. The challenge for the pork industry is to find the changes that can revitalize the industry and then embrace them as opportunities rather than threats.

“This is not the first time or the first industry where there have been difficult market conditions,” he told pork producers. His advice: along with finding game changers and leading with courage, build food protection to create security for the consumer and serve customers by managing costs and revenues.

“For example, what is your industry’s culture of food protection?” he asked the audience. “In food processing, one truckload of salt can ultimately affect millions of people, so downstream numbers are significant.”

All of this requires forethought as to how to stay relevant and compelling, two factors key to success in business, he says. “You need to ask questions such as ‘Does this matter?’ and ‘Does this apply?’ If it does, you need to ask yourselves if you are the best available choice.”

Taking charge of the future through this type of approach is exactly what the Alberta Livestock and Meat Strategy (ALMS) is set up to help facilitate, according to Jeff Kucharski, CEO of the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA). ALMS has been set up as a framework to help the livestock industry capture value through differentiation based on animal health, food safety, public health, environmental stewardship and traceability. ALMA, working in partnership with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, will take a leadership role in implementing the ALMS.

...Banff Pork Seminar – Game changers – continued

“ALMS and ALMA have been set up as a catalyst for revitalization,” says Kucharski. “They are based on a fundamental principle of becoming more responsive to our customers, in the process developing markets, supply chains, innovations, and industry capacity and capability we hope will bring long-term profitability to the livestock industry.”

The Alberta Pork Revitalization Strategy introduced last year is a strong example of this thinking in action, he says. “ALMA supports the work Alberta Pork is doing. It is conceivable that, together, Alberta Pork and ALMA will help set the stage for new and innovative industry programs that will enhance overall competitiveness and profitability in the future.”

Held since 1972 in Banff, Alberta, the Banff Pork Seminar is coordinated by the Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science, University of Alberta, in cooperation with Alberta Pork, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development and other pork industry representatives from across Canada. Program and proceedings of the Banff Pork Seminar are available on the Seminar Web site, www.banffpork.ca.

-30-

For media assistance from Jan. 20-23, contact:
Jodi Hesse, Director of Policy and Communications
Alberta Pork
Phone: (780) 446-0571

For media assistance after Jan. 23, contact:
Ruth Ball, Conference Coordinator
Banff Pork Seminar
Phone: (780) 492-3651
Web site: www.banffpork.ca

Media note. For news releases and photos from the Banff Pork Seminar, please visit the ‘Banff Pork Seminar Special Meeting Report’ at www.meristem.com.