



2020 Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program: Ractopamine

The Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program is a joint effort between the Indiana State Fair and Purdue Extension – Indiana 4-H, reflecting a shared commitment for the ethical exhibition of animals. This program focuses on Indiana youth learning to raise and exhibit livestock with responsible animal care standards while endeavoring to provide fair competition.

The Indiana State Fair and Purdue Extension – Indiana 4-H believe that it is in the best interest of our exhibitors to allow ractopamine use in market hogs, specifically 4-H barrows for the 2020 Indiana State Fair. The Indiana State Fair 4-H Barrow Show is non-terminal except for the top five barrows selected for the Celebration of Champions. The 2020 Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program will incorporate one change regarding ractopamine. This year we will measure the amount of ractopamine in the top five barrows that are harvested in the Celebration of Champions. The maximum United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) allowable level of ractopamine in hog muscle product is 50 parts per billion (ppb). Muscle product from exhibited hogs that measure above 50 ppb cannot enter the food chain and will also be in violation of the Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program.

Ractopamine remains a Food & Drug Administration (FDA) approved medicated feed additive that can be used in hogs harvested under the USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) to enhance growth and lean composition in finishing hogs and has proven over decades to be safe and effective when fed according to label instructions. Ractopamine is labeled for use when fed as part of a complete feed ration to finishing hogs weighing not less than 150 pounds and is available domestically under the trade names Paylean® (a Elanco product) and Engain™ (a Zoetis product). Ractopamine can also be part of other swine feed products and will be identified on feed ingredient labels.

The Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program established this expressed position on ractopamine because recently major pork processors including JBS USA, Tyson, Smithfield, Routh and Hormel have decided that they will no longer accept delivery of hogs that have been fed or exposed to ractopamine. Eliminating ractopamine from their facilities will allow domestic processors to sell into international markets where ractopamine is currently banned or unapproved. The elimination of ractopamine by primary pork processors was established due to international trade agreement specifics and not for reasons regarding food safety or animal health.

The elimination of ractopamine by primary pork processors has limited harvest market access for breeders and exhibitors of ractopamine exposed hogs. Due to the limited market access, ractopamine exposed hogs need to be marketed through domestic secondary markets, local butcher shops or other means of safe and responsible animal harvest. Before starting the swine project, plan your harvest strategy and have the components of a harvest plan in place.

The exhibition hog project remains an important and valuable teaching opportunity that enhances the human and animal connection. Make sure you're being responsible by reading and following all food safety, food processor, feed ingredient and prescription label instructions.

For additional information regarding the Indiana State Fair 4-H Animal Testing Program, contact:

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