

## It's GOOD To Get Off The Farm! - The World Pork Expo

Pork, pork and more pork. We were all pork nerds this past week and mighty proud of it! Why were we pork nerds? This is the one time per year that all types of people from all over the world get together and celebrate the pork industry. And this year happened to be the 25th anniversary of the World Pork Expo.



Now I have to admit it has been many, many years since I have attended the [World Pork Expo](#). Being a farmer, timing is everything when trying to leave the farm to attend the Pork Expo. Sometimes our schedule doesn't always work well because we have crops to tend to. But, fortunately, this year our corn and soybeans were planted. So off we went - to the World Pork Expo! (Oh, we needed to sell a load hogs and order soybean meal before we could leave - oh well, so goes the life of a hog farmer). The expo is held at the Iowa state fairgrounds in Des Moines, a place with great agricultural heritage.

So what is at the expo?

Well, of course, pork and lots of pork! And the pork we ate was exceptional. What else is at the

expo? Vendors showing their products and services, a hog show that coincides with the expo, speakers, exhibits, educational classes and many hospitality tents.

What did I enjoy the most? I will highlight a few things:



Best Pork Chop at the World Pork Expo!

Like I said earlier, the food was exceptional. We arrived late on the Wednesday night, but we found our way to the grills manned by the National Pork Board. You can see the picture at the right just how big the pork chops were. I honestly have never seen such a huge pork chop. And believe me, I have eaten a lot of pork chops! These chops took up nearly the whole plate and were probably at least 1 1/2" thick and I am guessing 10-12 ounces. It was phenomenal! It was tender and done to perfection **AND THIS WAS OUR WHOLE MEAL**. The next morning we stopped at the [Devenish Nutrition](#) hospitality tent. We buy our feed ingredients from Devenish so thought we would stop and say hello. They were cooking **smoked shoulder bacon**, which they used in a breakfast sandwich. And the part I liked the best is the meat came from a local vendor, [Welcome Meats](#). It was very good! In fact, a couple of our hogs are scheduled to go to Welcome Meats to be butchered in the next couple of weeks and I am going to ask that they take some of the shoulders and make smoked shoulder bacon. Later in the day, National Pork Producers Council had a whole hog roasted. Pretty comical to hear the comments and watch the people when they saw the roasted hog with the head on! It has been many years since I have eaten at a whole hog roast. Again, it was really good. You see the theme here? Safe to say the pork was superb!



### Smoked Shoulder Bacon

The expo also has a tradeshow which we walked through. To be honest, we really didn't see much in there that pertained to us. We are a well-established, wean-to-finish hog farm. Personally, we are not looking at changing or growing our farm. But the tradeshow would be great for those farmers that are. One interesting observation was seeing people from all over the world. Guess that's why they call it WORLD Pork Expo! The Chinese seemed to be enthralled by all the expo had to offer. Lots of conversations and lots of pictures taken. The Chinese really seem to love pork! Checkout the what the Des Moines Register article had to say about the Chinese, pork and the World Pork Expo.



Rick Berman, HumaneWatch

Also at the Pork Expo were business seminars and speakers. I chose to listen to Rick Berman of [Humane Watch](#) and Brian Klippenstein, executive director of [Protect the Harvest](#). They both talked about what they are doing to counteract the animal activists and HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) agenda. Very interesting and informative perspective by both of them and I, for one, am **very thankful** for what they do for livestock farmers.

But probably one of the best things about the expo are the people. Farmers are like family and you could feel it at the expo. We met new people, as well as old friends. And I was lucky enough to meet some of my social media friends. One particular person I met through social media was at the expo. How did we meet through social media? Well, we met by both commenting (agvocating) on some of the same websites. And then our conversations evolved from there and I soon realized that we both have similar views and values. We both agreed that we would meet at the expo. I was nervous and excited, all at the same time, to meet her in person! Sometimes you don't know what a person will be like in person compared to how they are through social media. Well, I was not disappointed! I was so glad to meet her and her fiancé and I know we had a great time talking with them! In addition, I was also happy to meet and talk to other social media friends. Can you tell I had a great time?



### Whole Hog Roast

The day ended with music. A Chicago tribute band and Little Texas performed. Even though I am not a huge country music fan, it was still good to listen to them. Great music is great music, no matter what kind it is.

So what are my takeaways from the World Pork Expo?

1. **It's good to get off the farm.** It allows farmers to see what new technology is on the market, technology that will continue to have a positive impact on the pork industry. Great way to help us stay educated. Also, camaraderie gives off great energy to help reinvigorate ourselves to be better farmers when we go back to our farms.
2. **We do have great people who support us.** From vendors to organizations such as the Pork Board and the National Pork Producer Council to HumaneWatch and Protect the Harvest. Thank you!
3. **Pork tastes great!**
4. Other countries such as China and Vietnam **love our pork!** So refreshing to hear some days since I hear a lot of negative comments as I advocate.
5. We need to be on the offense in regards to animal activist groups such as HSUS (Humane Society of the United States). We need to reverse the tables of playing defense and start to play offense and we can do that by exposing the real agenda of HSUS and animal activists.
6. **I have GREAT social media friends!**

## Minnesota Farm Living

Connecting Consumers with those who grow your food

<http://www.mnfarmliving.com>

---



Yes, that is bacon on the top of the cupcake!

So the consensus was the World Pork Expo was a success. I enjoyed it and will definitely go back!  
Enjoy pork!