



thescoop

Thinking Back...Looking Ahead

By Tom Koch, Director, Organizational Development

It is common to make New Year's resolutions. Making positive changes is good. Thinking ahead is smart and at the same time, I believe is important to reflect on the past. Do you have...

- Anything to celebrate? Did you make progress towards a goal? If so, it's OK to celebrate. Go out for dinner, treat yourself to a massage or enjoy a walk in the woods.
- Anything to forget? Don't let the past hold back your future. Learn what you can from your mistakes and press on. Trying and learning is crucial, allowing mistakes to hold you back today is crushing. There is a lot of truth in the adage, "Learn your way through!"
- Anyone to forgive? Life is too short for grudges and anger. Forgive, forget and enjoy life. Don't allow small annoyances to continually irritate. Rise above!

Learn from the past and live forward!

Are you "in the know"?

Have you been receiving our Beef, Dairy and Swine Solutions E-Newsletters in your inbox?

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THE CERTAINTY OF UNCERTAINTY: Are Technologies to Improve Animal Performance Worth It?

By Lori Stevermer, Marketing Specialist

All livestock sectors experience cycles of profitability and loss. For example, the first quarter of 2017 looks to be economically challenging for the US pork industry and the adage of “make hay when the sun shines” certainly comes to mind. Times of high prices make it relatively easy to determine when the sun is shining and farmers are more likely to utilize technologies to improve performance since there is a high likelihood they will experience positive returns. However, the cloudy weather of low prices often make it difficult to determine profitability and if the technologies implemented are providing a positive return. Using tools such as the Hubbard Crush App or the Beef Breakeven Dashboard can help when the forecast isn’t as clear.

For example, today’s pork markets are dealing with fluctuating economic weather. We need to assess feeding strategies of pigs on feed that will be sold well below breakeven along with those upcoming groups of weaners/feeders placed that will soon be placed on feed and marketed in the more profitable summer months. Between now and next summer a lot is going to change, a new administration, VFD enactment, potential mycotoxin concerns and an additional 12 +/- million annual hog slaughter capacity.

So, as a feed supplier, should your recommendations on feeding programs and the use of performance enhancing technologies change based upon market conditions? The answer, as always, is “it depends”. On what you ask? Consider these factors:

1. Some farms may be partially or fully hedged, or may have a “speculative” position in which only grain(s) are bought or hogs/beef cattle are sold.
2. Some farms may opt to venture into non-antibiotic feeding rather than navigate VFD regulations.
3. Animal health (enteric and/or respiratory challenges).
4. Marketing, fully open to fully contracted, contracted based on what, cash and/or cut-out?

Once all the factors are identified and understood, then an assessment of feeding strategies can accurately take place and the challenging task of adjusting a feeding program begins. Adjustments can range from increase or decrease in nutrient levels to the use of by-products and the addition or removal of feed additives aimed to improve health, gain, or efficiency of gain. In a well-formulated nutrition program, all ingredients/technologies are incorporated for valid reasons, so the elimination or modification of an ingredient/nutrient will have unfavorable impacts on performance. The degree of the current or future economics dictates the cost efficacy of the program change. In other words, certain technologies to improve animal gain or efficiency may not always provide a positive return.

As you review these factors with your customers it’s important to remember that things change. For example, this past December when hog markets were at low, weaned groups of pigs were being placed on feed to be marketed in the profitable months of May and June, 2017. A feeding program that was designed to minimize losses for December pigs should now be changed to maximize returns for June pigs.

As a Hubbard Feeds dealer, you have access to tools such as the Smart Choices Feed and Marketing Dashboard, the Crush App and the Beef Creep Feeding Dashboard to help determine profitability under various performance and economic conditions. Work with your Hubbard account manager and technical team to use these tools to help your customers get a thorough evaluation of the products they are using. Many farmers may be tempted to remove certain nutrition technologies from their feeding programs in times of low market prices. However, this could be the wrong move to make causing unintended consequences.

The moral of this story is that a constant and clear line of communication is needed between you and your customers and all facets of their business to assure that their nutrition program is primed “to make hay” when the sun is shining.



timelytopics

january

- *This is a great time to plan and hold some producer meetings in your area. Consider coordinating it with your local veterinarian.*
- *Review your plan for selling silage inoculants. 45% of all inoculant sales take place between January and April.*
- *It's a great time to renew Big Easy Feeder Finance Contracts and sign new customers up.*
- *Prevent dehydration and horse colic by heating drinking water in winter.*
- *Think about the CRYSTALYX® products you may want to feature this time of year!*



february

- *Consider positioning Sheep-lyx® for ewes prior to and after lambing time. Then, send out a sales postcard to your sheep producers featuring the Hubbard lamb starter and grower products.*
- *Develop a list of local 4-H & FFA groups & promote Show-Rite® Show Feeds.*
- *Promote STOCKMASTER® Calving and Breeding mineral products.*

march

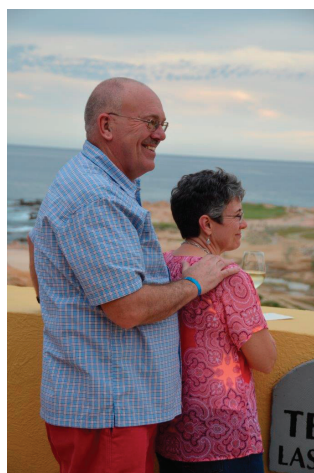
- *Plan a Chick Day event with the Hubbard® Life Homestead® Poultry products.*
- *Put up a Show-Rite® Feed display and feature an influential livestock breeder and winner pictures with some testimonials from your area.*

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

Farewell to Tom Linn and Scott Davidson...You will be missed!

After 33 years in the feed sales business, Tom Linn retired from Hubbard on October 17, 2016. Tom was not only one of the most successful salespeople ever to work for Hubbard, he was also one of the most liked and respected by his peers and customers. He spent time as an Account Manager, Beef Specialist, and Assistant Sales Manager for both the Botkins, OH and Shipshewana, IN plants. He was a member of the Pioneer Club, and during his time at Hubbard he achieved a total of 8 Pinnacle Club awards.

Tom will continue to reside in Wapakoneta, OH with his wife Clara as they are both now retired.



Scott Davidson retired from Hubbard Feeds the end of September. Scott was very well known and respected by those he worked with out of the Shipshewana, IN plant as well as many others throughout Hubbard Feeds and Ridley.

Scott's 16 years of employment as an Account Manager and Dairy Specialist in the state of Michigan were very successful. He earned the Pinnacle Club sales award 11 times out of 15 years of eligibility. That earned him a place on the highest level of the Pioneer Club. In his last year he achieved the largest Dairy Feed sales territory within Hubbard Feeds. Prior to working for Hubbard, Scott served 16 years in the US Navy and 30 total years in the reserves.

Scott will still be very active in his retirement years. We know he and his wife, Joyce, will be heavily involved with their family and their church.

SAFETY FIRST: WINTER TIPS

- When walking on ice, angle your feet out, like a penguin, this will increase your center of gravity.
- Lean slightly forward and walk flat-footed to keep your center of gravity directly over your feet.
- Taking short steps will help you keep your balance
- Extend your arms out to your sides to maintain balance. If you must carry a load, try not to carry too much; leave your hands and arms free to balance yourself.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets. Putting your hands in your pockets while walking may keep them warm, but it decreases your center of gravity, balance, and increases your chances of slipping and falling.
- Watch where you're walking, focus on the path in front of you, and take your time
- When walking on stairs always use the hand-railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.

Walking on a slippery floor can be just as dangerous as walking on ice. Keep these tips in mind when entering a building:

- Melting ice or water on the floor can make it slippery.
- Watch for floors and stairs that may be wet and slippery, walk carefully by outer doors.
- Determine the best path to take to get to your destination and take a little extra time to get there
- Be sure to use floor mats when entering a building to remove moisture from the soles of your shoes – this will help protect you, and others, from having to walk on wet or slippery surfaces


Winter weather can be irritating enough without adding injury to the equation so think safety first!



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WHERE ARE WE?

- National Western Stock Show & Rodeo – Denver, CO, Jan. 7-22
- South Dakota Pork Congress – Sioux Falls, SD, Jan. 11-12
- Pheasants Forever River City Expo – Council Bluffs, IA, Jan. 20-22
- Minnesota Pork Congress – Minneapolis, MN, Jan. 17-18
- Iowa Pork Congress – Des Moines, IA Jan. 25-26
- Botkins Dealer SKILLS Meeting & Dealer Awards Banquet – Dayton, OH, Jan. 28
- Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo – Rapid City, SD, Jan. 27 - Feb. 5
- Hubbard BHSS Dealer Meeting – Rapid City, SD, Feb. 4
- Illinois Pork Expo – Springfield, IL, Jan. 31 - Feb. 1
- Iowa Beef Expo – Des Moines, IA, Feb. 12-19
- Pheasant Fest – Minneapolis, MN, Feb. 17-19
- Lancaster SKILLS Meeting – Camp Hill, PA, March 4
- Shipshewana Dealer SKILLS Meeting & Awards Banquet - Battle Creek, MI, March 11
- Central Plains Dairy Expo – Sioux Falls, SD, March 28-30
- P. Allen Smith Poultry Workshop – Roland, AR, April 1





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