

## The Search for the Secret Sauce

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*“There are many shortcuts to failure, but there are no shortcuts to true success.”*

– **Orrin Woodward**

I believe it's human nature for people to seek out the shortest or easiest way to do something. That's not all bad because it can sometimes lead to legitimately better ways of doing things. It certainly is a good thing if you can save time, money or effort and get the same results. Unfortunately, a preoccupation with searching for shortcuts can often become a distraction and have the opposite of the intended effect. This is what I call the “Search for the Secret Sauce”. Imagine a sauce that you could add to any dish you cooked and it would automatically make it taste like it was prepared by a world-class chef. Wouldn't we all want a sauce like that? The problem is that, unfortunately, the sauce doesn't exist and searching for it is most likely a fool's errand.

As a swine management consultant, I'm often asked about the secrets to achieving high levels of productivity. Some people are disappointed when I invariably tell them that there aren't any real secrets, just fundamentals. I've had the opportunity during the course of my career to work with what I believe to be some of the best pork production systems and farms in the world and I most certainly have worked with some of the worst. The difference between the good farms and the bad farms (and the good farms and the great farms) is the consistent execution of the fundamentals of pork production. There are three key words in that sentence...consistent, execution and fundamentals. Knowing the fundamentals is important, but it's not enough if you don't execute the behaviors based on that knowledge. Knowing the fundamentals and executing the correct behaviors is not enough unless you do in consistently.

Many times, working for clients, I find significant knowledge gaps when it comes to the fundamentals of pork production. That's why I spend a lot of time training production management personal on fundamental aspects of production such as animal care, pig flow, sow lactation feeding etc. It's extremely important to have that base of knowledge, but that knowledge alone is not sufficient. You must develop processes that allow you to execute on those fundamentals on a consistent basis.

At SwineTex, our goal is to help our clients get outstanding business results. In order to do that, we make sure managers and employees have a strong knowledge of the fundamentals of pork production and then we help them develop and implement processes that ensure that those fundamentals are practiced on a consistent basis. It is not a “secret sauce”, but it is a proven formula for achieving performance on par with the best farms and systems in the world.

For more information about SwineTex Consulting Services, visit our website at [www.swinetex.com](http://www.swinetex.com) or send an email to [todd.thurman@swinetex.com](mailto:todd.thurman@swinetex.com).

