

Season 2, Episode 7: Swine Survivability Conference Recap

Dr. Joel DeRouchey, Kansas State University, and Dr. Jason Ross, Iowa State University, discuss some of the background and key takeaways from the 2021 International Conference on Pig Survivability.



Improving Pig Survivability Project

Improving Pig Survivability is a five-year collaborative effort among the Iowa Pork Industry Center at Iowa State University, Purdue University, and Kansas State University. The primary goal of the project is to reduce overall mortality in the U.S. commercial swine industry. The project is funded by the National Pork Board and Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR).

Conference highlights

Overall, the survivability conference had 450 registrants from 29 states and 5 countries. 175 companies from a wide array of disciplines within the industry were represented. One of the primary goals of the 2021 Swine Survivability conference was to disseminate knowledge to stakeholders, producers, and researchers in the swine industry. Sharing ideas and information is important for advancing the swine industry and improving survivability. Overall, attendees were left with a greater sense of purpose to act and create momentum for change.

Survivability, biosecurity, and collaboration

Survivability is one topic at the forefront of pork industry issues. Currently, one in every three pigs born does not make it to market. Pig livability is really a non-compete area, which has even generated synergies between traditional competitors. Even more, commercial operations are wanting to be involved with this research, a collaboration in which the industry desperately needs. It is important for producers to evaluate their current research and development focuses, as well as which management practices are at top of mind. One key area that needs more attention is wean to finish biosecurity practices. Disease outbreaks on the grow out side of the operation have the potential to track back and impact sow farms, if solid biosecurity practices are not in place. There is also a lot of attention around sustainability in the pork industry. Improving efficiency is critical to improving sustainability. Improvements in survivability go hand in hand with improving the sustainability of any operation.

Feedback and next steps

Many who attended the conference were anxious to know when the next conference would be held. We need to continue to stay in communication and build momentum around the area of survivability. There are many survivability resources currently available at www.piglivability.org. These numerous resources include factsheets, Spanish translated factsheets, research summaries, as well as full length recorded presentations from the 2021 International Conference on Pig Survivability. [Here](#) you can also sign up for email updates about the ongoing survivability project.

Conference recordings: <https://piglivability.org/conference-recordings>

Improving Pig Survivability website: <https://www.piglivability.org/>

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