



## *Youth PQA Plus® State Program Equivalency Process*

The Pork Checkoff's Youth Pork Quality Assurance Plus® program is modeled after the Pork Quality Assurance Plus® program. Both programs emphasize the 10 good production practices that allow pork producers to demonstrate their commitment to 'quality assured' pork production through food safety, responsible antibiotic use and animal well-being training and education.

Pork producers worked together through the Pork Checkoff to create the Pork Quality Assurance™ Level III (PQA™) program in 1989. Youth participated in PQA until official youth certification became available in 2003. Youth PQA™ allowed youth to be presented materials at the appropriate educational level.

During and prior to the implementation of the first Youth PQA certification, some states chose to take a proactive approach to youth quality assurance education. Some of the state programs include other livestock species in addition to swine and supplemental material deemed valuable at the individual state level, such as ethics and character training. These state programs provide a state database of youth participants.

After introduction of Youth PQA, an equivalency process that allowed the National Pork Board to verify that these multispecies state quality assurance programs addressed all of the minimum standards and key learning objectives of the Youth PQA program was developed. With this in place, PQA principles were taught in addition to other materials covered, making the individual states programs more streamlined. To date, seven states including Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Texas and Wisconsin have taken advantage of this process.

In 2007, Youth PQA became Youth PQA Plus®. The states with programs previously deemed equivalent to Youth PQA were granted until June 2009 to review and update their programs to continue to remain equivalent.

The Pork Checkoff officially acknowledges that the following state programs meet and exceed the minimum standards and key learning objectives of the Youth PQA Plus program:

| State     | Contact Name                 | Phone        | Email                    |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Iowa      | Mike Anderson                | 515-294-8617 | mikeande@iastate.edu     |
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| Wisconsin | Bernadette (Bernie) O'Rourke | 608-263-4304 | borourke2@ansci.wisc.edu |

These state programs have undergone a thorough equivalency review in which they proved that:

- The program met or exceeded all of the minimum standards (attached) addressed by the Youth PQA program.
- The program addressed each of the key learning objectives (attached) identified by the Youth PQA program within the content of their multi-specie curriculum.
- The state has developed and implemented a system for training advisors responsible for delivering program content that ensures the integrity of curriculum and instructional methods.
- The state has developed and implemented a curriculum for youth that ensures that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to produce safe, wholesome pork in a manner that is consistent with industry standards and that they understand practices important for animal well-being.
- The program assesses student learning in a manner consistent with that of the Youth PQA program. Students are given the opportunity to participate in an instructor-led course. They also are given the option to take and pass an approved exam for certification, given that they have reached the appropriate age bracket, based on standards also consistent with that of the Youth PQA program.

State programs that have been approved are granted the Pork Checkoff's Seal of Approval (shown at right) for use on their state-specific certificates or identification materials.

For more information, call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at (800) 456-7675 or check the Internet at [pork.org](http://pork.org).

