



*For immediate release*

## **Animal welfare during transportation a priority for Alberta producers**

**Edmonton, AB., February 12, 2008:** The proper care and handling of hogs during transportation – whether it is across the province or across the country – is a priority for Alberta's pork producers.

"All participants in the food production chain – farmer, trucker, and processor – must ensure that our pigs arrive at their destination in good, healthy condition, free from injury," says Herman Simons, Chair of Alberta Pork and a producer from Tees, Alberta.

Alberta Pork issued the statement concerning animal welfare in response to recent concerns from the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) concerning long-haul transport of animals from Alberta to Hawaii.

Mr. Simons says, "Our industry has worked with government and other stakeholders to develop regulations and guidelines for the transportation of hogs. Any mistreatment of animals needs to be investigated and steps must be taken to prevent future occurrences."

He adds, "Alberta Pork expects that the U.S. authorities will investigate the matter and ensure that those individuals and companies handling our hogs are following the rules."

Alberta Pork has taken significant steps to ensure proper handling practices are in place for transporting hogs in Alberta. For example, Alberta Pork is a founding member of Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) which promotes responsible, humane animal care. Alberta Pork and AFAC have implemented a training program for livestock transporters called The Certified Livestock Transporter (CLT) which focuses on the humane and safe relocation of livestock. Alberta Pork has also developed and delivered other industry tools including the *Humane Handling Guidelines for Swine* and Canadian Codes of Practice for Transportation.

"The Alberta pork industry has acted proactively and responsibly to develop programs focused on the humane care of animals," says Susan Church, Manager of AFAC. "They are also investing significant time and money in research focused on improving animal care practices."

Alberta Pork is a partner in a multi-million dollar research project at the Prairie Swine Centre in Saskatchewan on the effects of handling procedures and transport vehicle design on animal welfare and meat quality of pigs. Alberta Pork has also consulted with leading animal care and welfare specialists, such as well-known authority Dr. Temple Grandin of Colorado State University, regarding industry practices.

"At the end of the day, pork producers, the WSPA and consumers all have the same concern which is the welfare of our animals," says Simons. "That's why we're looking at our own practices to see if improvements can be made."

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He adds, “In the case of the animals exported to Hawaii, Alberta Pork together with AFAC will monitor the investigation and use the facts that emerge as part of our ongoing commitments to improve animal handling.”

More information on practices and regulations governing the transportation of livestock is available at Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC): [www.afac.ab.ca](http://www.afac.ab.ca) .

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For more information, contact:

Jodi Hesse, Director, Policy and Communications  
Alberta Pork  
Phone: (780) 491-3528  
E-mail: [jodi.hesse@albertapork.com](mailto:jodi.hesse@albertapork.com)

Susan Church, Manager  
Alberta Farm Animal Care Association (AFAC)  
Phone: (403) 932-8050  
E-mail: [info@afac.ab.ca](mailto:info@afac.ab.ca)