

“Raising pork is our family business. We are committed to producing a safe quality, product that all families in our community and around the world will be happy to serve their family.”

—Todd Ballard
Ballard Farms, Benson, Utah



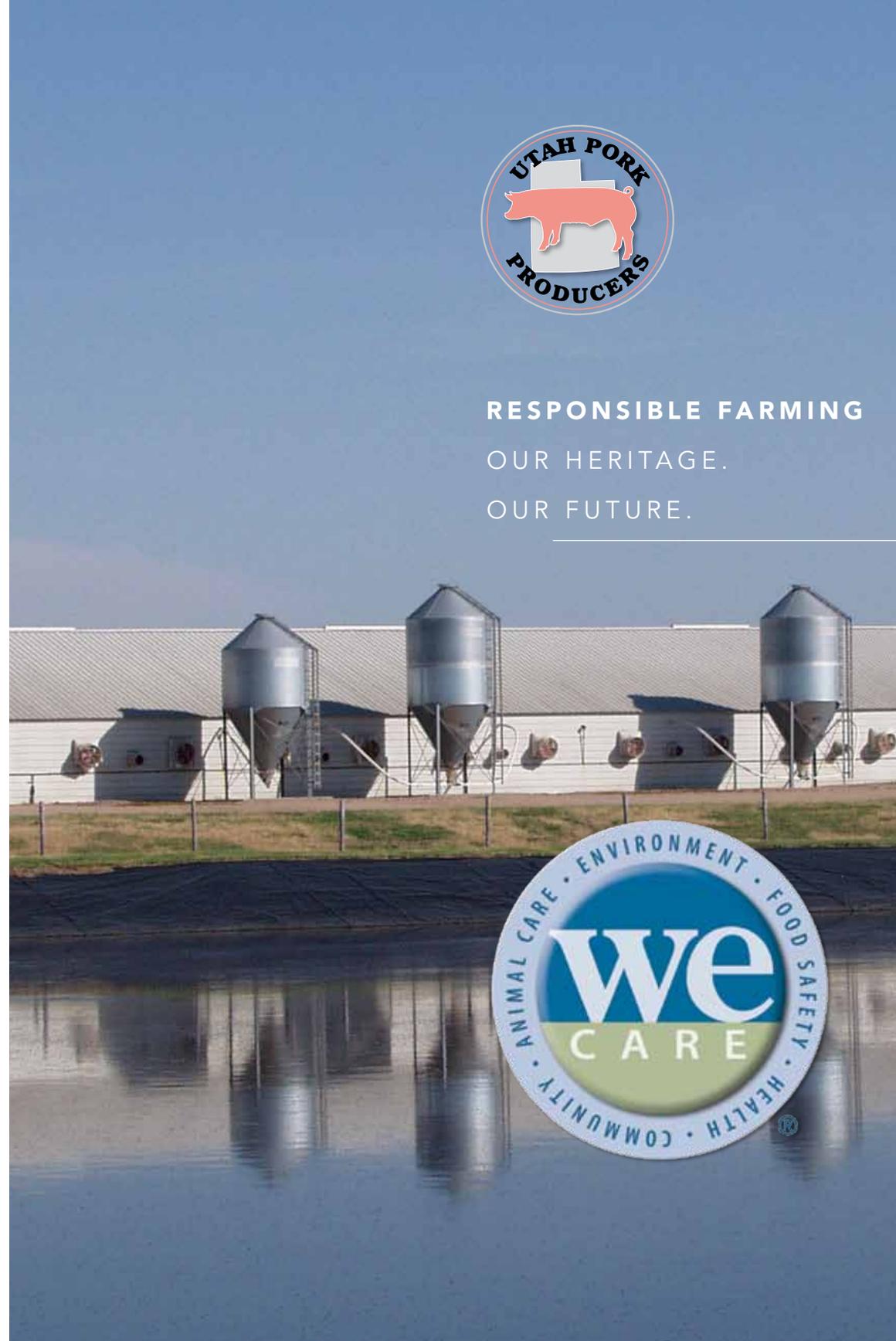
To learn more about We Care, visit
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(800) 456-7675

pork.org



RESPONSIBLE FARMING
OUR HERITAGE.
OUR FUTURE.





The U.S. pork industry has a long, proud heritage of operating farms and caring for animals in a responsible manner. After all, producers' livelihoods are tied to the land and the health of animals in their care. They understand that raising healthy animals by using good production practices not only results in safe, high-quality products, it's the right thing to do.

Everyone agrees that the future of the industry depends on maintaining demand for pork products and meeting the needs of the marketplace. However, the marketplace has evolved over time, and today, companies throughout the food chain are being held to higher standards. Increasingly, food producers and suppliers are expected to demonstrate responsible practices in a wide variety of areas, including animal care, environmental stewardship and food safety. To secure access to markets, producers must meet these changing customer requirements and provide assurance that all members are, in fact, doing the right thing day in and day out. It has taken time to earn the public trust, and producers must now work to retain it.



“There is an old saying, ‘If you take care of the pig; it will take care of you.’ Proper animal care is what we do every day; it’s who we are.”

—Dwight Potter, General Manager
Circle Four Farms, Milford, Utah

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Unlike generations ago, today consumers have a limited understanding of pork production. Product recalls, food-safety scares and isolated examples of improper animal care continue to play out in the media and give rise to growing skepticism and mistrust among consumers. Consequently, the pork industry faces growing challenges regarding its image and production practices. Now, more than ever, pork producers and allied industry must work together to communicate a more accurate picture of modern pork production.

WE CARE TELLS THE STORY

In 2008, the Pork Checkoff, the National Pork Producers Council and state pork associations representing pork producers launched the We Care initiative, a proactive, multifaceted effort to build trust in the pork industry. We Care is a promise to the public and to industry stakeholders that pork producers and production employees will carry out responsible and ethical practices in all areas of production. We Care also makes clear that pork producers and their employees are dedicated to continually improving production practices and making this industry better for all concerned: pork producers, food industry partners and consumers worldwide.

UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST PRINCIPLES

Every individual throughout the pork supply chain has a role in building and maintaining trust in the industry. From facility owners to animal caretakers to drivers who transport hogs, everyone has the responsibility to do his or her part to demonstrate a commitment to responsible pork production. This begins with a pledge to uphold a core set of ethical principles. These principles make clear the industry's values in food safety, animal well-being, worker safety, community outreach and protection of both the environment and public health.

By affirming these principles, America's pork producers acknowledge their responsibility to:

- *Produce safe food*
- *Protect and promote animal well-being*
- *Ensure practices to protect public health*
- *Safeguard natural resources in all of our practices*
- *Provide a work environment that is safe and consistent with our other ethical principles*
- *Contribute to a better quality of life in our communities*



A RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT

People involved at every level of pork production are being asked to demonstrate their commitment, not just in words, but also in actions. Every action that supports the We Care initiative benefits the entire industry. The Pork Checkoff offers numerous resources and education and training opportunities that not only help build trust in our industry, but also have proven to be useful to thousands of producers in increasing production efficiencies and lowering costs. Pork producers (and when appropriate, production employees) are urged to take the following actions that will contribute to the success of the We Care initiative:

- *Attain individual certification in Pork Quality Assurance® Plus (PQA Plus®)*
- *Schedule a site assessment as part of PQA Plus*
- *Complete Transport Quality Assurance® (TQA™) training and certification*
- *Implement planning and education tools (e.g., Workplace Safety Assessment, Biosecurity Planning, Emergency Action Plan, Nutrient Management Planning)*
- *Verify that all employees and affiliated workers fully understand proper practices and receive education and certification in PQA Plus and TQA*
- *Demonstrate community citizenship by volunteering time, donating to worthy causes and listening to members of the community*

“Our family’s life is farming as pork producers. We know our farm operates in a socially responsible manner and produces safe, nutritious and affordable pork for our family and future generations.”

—Mike Falslev
Falslev Livestock, Benson, Utah

WHAT IS AT STAKE

Increasingly, customers, such as supermarket chains and foodservice operators, require certification in best-practices training programs and on-site farm assessments. When producers take the actions outlined in the We Care initiative, it sends a clear signal to these industry partners that the industry is committed to responsible practices and continuous evaluation and improvement. If 100 percent of producers participate in industry-sponsored programs and uphold the ethical principles, the likelihood that customers will develop their own requirements will be significantly reduced.



PLEDGE. PARTICIPATE. BE PROACTIVE.

The time to act is now. Taking actions that support We Care is not only the right thing to do; it is vital to our future success. Pledge a commitment to the ethical principles, engage in responsible production practices and participate in the industry’s training and certification programs, such as PQA Plus and TQA.

All producers must be proactive to ensure a bright, prosperous future for the pork industry. The National Pork Board and the National Pork Producers Council stand ready to help all industry members fulfill the promise of We Care. To learn more about the initiative and how producers can help support the shared mission, call (800) 456-7675 or visit pork.org.