



The

DNA™ EDGE

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G&W PORK MENTORS NEXT GENERATION OF PRODUCERS

Al and Kathy Wulfekuhle, owners of G&W Pork in Quasqueton, Iowa, don't just talk about mentoring tomorrow's pork producers – they make it happen. It's an integral part of their operation. "I enjoy seeing a young producer become successful," Al said. "Successful producers need to mentor their employees and give them the opportunity to have some ownership."

A perfect example of this is Al and Kathy's relationship with Nick and Meghan Leibold. Nick was leasing facilities and selling weaner pigs on the open market before he and Al met in 2009. Al was informed by one of his employees that Nick was contemplating exiting the business and liquidating his herd, due to market conditions at the time. Al gave Nick a call and within days put together a win-win agreement. That agreement allowed Nick to remain a pork producer, and G&W Pork to put in a DNA Genetics multiplier which Nick manages. "Nick started during a rough market situation," Al said. "He deserved a second chance to prove himself. In our agreement Nick has the option to buy out my share at any time. He knows it's going to be all his someday."

Nick appreciates the ability to operate his farm independently, but draw on the knowledge and experience of the entire system. "I believe that our arrangement works so well because Al allows me to run this farm the way I see fit, as long as I stay within G&W's protocols of animal management and production remains high," Nick said. "But at the same time, everyone gets together to figure out a solution to any production problem. It's a great community of producers to deal with when you know everyone in the company has your back."

G&W Pork is making a significant, positive impact in Northeast Iowa, as well as the entire state. Al currently serves as President of the Iowa Pork Producers Association. He and his wife, Kathy, own G&W Pork which



Al Wulfekuhle (left) and Nick Leibold put together an agreement in 2009 allowing Nick to remain a producer and providing G&W the opportunity for their own multiplier.

is a farrow-to-finish operation with 1,600 sows and marketing 34,000 pigs per year. The 350 sow multiplier provides sales of 4,000 Line 241 females to a dedicated group of area producers: Twin Prairie, New Generation, C&K Pork, and Newton Pork. The Line 241's are weaned into two different on-farm nurseries to accommodate the different delivery schedule and group sizes each of these different producers need.

In addition, they farm 565 acres of cropland and their feed mill purchases grain from local producers. But Al and Kathy's influence goes beyond these facts and figures. They are building relationships and providing a positive influence to many in our industry, in particular their employees. As Al told National Hog Farmer recently, "Helping the next generation is more about being a mentor rather than a boss."

Multiplier partners like G&W Pork have helped make the Line 241 the fastest-growing maternal line in North America. Thankfully for our customers, there are many

more multipliers like G&W Pork producing our product than ever before. The result is a steady supply of gilts for much of the United States and Canada.

We've made significant investments in multiplication the past two years, and so have our multipliers. These investments encompass all aspects of a winning formula: health, genetic improvement, product integrity, and customer interaction.

Curt Gentz, production manager of G&W Pork, said, "The multiplier has been working out great... it's nice to have control or manage the maternal side and to know its flow." Curt explained they had struggled with other companies in getting a good return on their investment due to low live born, pre-wean mortality, and sow longevity. "The Line 241 has been a tremendous asset

for G&W Pork. With DNA, our p/s/y keeps going up when health issues are at bay. We think this is apparent with DNA's growth in the industry." Curt also offers some advice for those wanting to become a multiplier. "Do your research and choose a company that communicates well with their farms... one that is always moving forward for their customers and helpful in how to get the optimum from their sows."

There are plenty of good reasons the Line 241 has become the fastest growing maternal line in North America this issue will explore. But to truly understand what's behind the best genetics, you have to look to the people involved. Having a multiplier partner like G&W Pork is just one of the reasons we say DNA Genetics – best people, best pig, best genetic option. 

FUTURE DIRECTION TO IMPROVE MATERNAL PERFORMANCE

By Dr. Tom Rathje

The DNA Genetics program has always enjoyed a strong track record of genetic improvement in maternal line performance. Between 1992 and 2002 there was a three pig improvement in litter size due to selection for total born (born alive + stillborn). A significant shift to emphasize both pig survival and litter size occurred in 2004 when live pigs at 5 days of age™ replaced total born in the selection objective. This industry leading trait began to address the undesirable effects of large litter size by placing equal emphasis on pig quality and survival relative to total born. Nielsen et al. (2013) documented from 2002 to 2009 an increase in LP5™ of 1.7 and 2.2 pigs in Landrace and Yorkshire, respectively. At the same time, total born increased 1.3 and 1.9 pigs per litter while pre-weaning mortality fell by 4.7% and 5.9%. This approach to selecting for litter size results in more pigs born but also harvesting more of the pigs available by improving their viability. LP5™ is also a better predictor of number weaned than total born (Su et al., 2007) resulting in more predictable economic gain.

The modern sow presents significant challenges. Through the course of the last 25 years we have produced a sow that is very lean and highly muscled, grows rapidly to heavier market weights, matures later in life, is extremely efficient

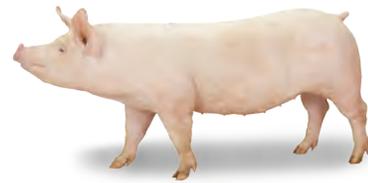
(caloric conversion) and produces at least 6 more pigs than she did 25 years ago. Many of the paradigms for managing our sows do not



— DR. TOM RATHJE —

14/14 Initiative

Sows with the Ability



to Produce



and Wean **14** 14 lb. pigs

at



days of age

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apply today. We've become an outspoken advocate of sow research in order to ascertain proper feeding and management practices for these high performing animals.

Management is important to extract genetic potential of animals, but we have to address the fundamental abilities of our sow to continue to lead the industry in performance. To do this, we are embarking on our '14/14' initiative. Translated, this means producing a population of sows that have the ability to produce and wean 14, 14 pound pigs at 21 days of age...all without major assistance and intervention. Someday, our target may be even more aggressive. To reach this medium term goal there must be data collected on pig

birth weight, pig wean weight, a sow's ability to add weight to a group of pigs she is allowed to nurse, and a sow's ability to consume during lactation and efficiently convert those calories into weight of pigs while maintaining her own body condition. Identifying these genetics will come at the cost of detailed data collection, understanding the biology and relationship between the traits, application of genomics and disciplined selection. All of which are hallmarks of the approach DNA Genetics has taken to their selection process for many years. 

NORTH AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING MATERNAL LINE

By Brett Bonwell



— BRETT BONWELL —

It's been known by most in the North American swine industry that the DNA Line 241 parent gilt is the best overall female in the market. The only problem - the supply has always been **sold out!**

This has been the case over the past several years. As more and more producers hear and see just how pro-

ductive the Line 241 is in all commercial settings, we've not been able to keep up with demand

We've been working very hard the past few years to build a reliable and healthy supply of Line 241's to provide more producers access to the best parent gilt in the world. By the end of 2016, we will have 45,000 sows of retail multiplication online which has not yet been completely sold.

We've built this pyramid of multiplication based on the following principles:

- Reliable multiplier partners

- High health
- Quality
- Consistent supply

We're continuing to look for multiplier partners so we can keep up with the fastest-growing maternal line in North America. We've built, and we'll continue to build, a supply chain that will provide the market with a reliable supply of parent gilts. We understand that having the best female is great; but if producers can't get them, they must settle for a reliable supply of a lesser female.

So why do producers want the Line 241?

- Industry-leading quality pigs weaned
- Easy and efficient female to manage
- Offspring that have efficient lean growth in a commercial setting
- Robust offspring that live and make it to market

So please don't take it easy on us. Keep the demand coming and we will work very hard to provide that reliable supply. If you have been waiting please remember this: "**She is worth the wait!**" 

A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IN MULTIPLICATION

By Dr. John Sonderman

As I write this article, we have just finished a conference for all of our multiplication partners titled “Excellence in Multiplication.” This conference was our inaugural event focused on bringing together information on all aspects involved in being a multiplication partner with DNA. It took the accumulated knowledge and experience of the entire DNA Genetics organization to provide a resource that could improve their operations.

The overall theme was to achieve operational excellence. Operational excellence is achieved by striving for continuous improvement. Operational excellence is crucial for DNA Genetics and our multiplication partners to continue to create value for our customers.

We have chosen the Quality Circle (pictured below) to describe the relationship between all the aspects necessary to create and deliver products that create value for our customers.

Health

- Maintain superior health status through disciplined biosecurity
- Have a health monitoring program so that if health status is breached, we do not take it to our customers
- Health is more than PRRS, Myco, APP, and PED
- Without health we have expensive market animals

Genetic Improvement

- This is what customers pay for and expect
- How can we do this better than all alternatives?
- Working together to reduce genetic lag within our pyramid
- Utilizing multiplication data to improve genetic trends
- Being the Best

Product Integrity

- What we ship to our customers is very important
- Great health and genetic potential only has value if the gilt can express it at the slat level
- Our focus and our actions need to be measured by customer satisfaction

- Every gilt shipment needs to reflect our commitment to excellence



— DR. JOHN SONDERMAN —

Customer Interaction

- Communication is the most important element
- Utilize our business principles “Do what is right, do the best you can, treat others the way you want to be treated”
- Measure customer satisfaction to help us improve
- Create satisfied customers that can describe the value we create in their operations



Value to the Customer

These practices will help ensure that all DNA gilts will have good, consistent quality no matter which multiplier they come from. What are some of the ways this benefits our customers?

- 1) Prevention of health concerns reaching the customers
 - By following strict biosecurity guidelines, best management health practices, and extensive monitoring, we reduce the risk that a customer would receive health compromised animals.
- 2) Genetic lift for customers that results in less genetic

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lag and better performing gilts with better performing offspring.

- For example, using Post-Cervical Artificial Insemination (PCAI) and index-based mating decisions insure that only the highest indexing females produce replacements.

3) Better quality and service to our multiplier customers

- The DNA customer service department will follow-up with customers on a systematic basis to measure the quality of product delivered and service received. This will help us improve our product quality and processes.

Measuring Our Progress

Management thinker Peter Drucker is often quoted as saying, "You can't manage what you can't measure." This means that you can't know whether or not you are successful unless success is defined and tracked.

The DNA customer service team spearheaded a team of DNA team members, representing all of our departments, to develop a Multiplier Scorecard. DNA support staff will interact with our multiplication partners on a regular basis and on farms a minimum of twice per year. During these farm visits, an audit will be done covering the items mentioned above and many others. These audits will be combined with results from customer surveys to provide a blueprint for our multipliers and DNA to improve their operations, and in worst case scenarios, prevent multipliers from shipping product, until the issues of concern are corrected.

Goal

DNA and our multiplier partners want to set ourselves apart in the industry. We want our products and services to not

only create value, but to be better than any other alternative the customer has.



NORTH AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING MATERNAL LINE. BY NOW, THAT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE.



Do the right things the right way, and good things happen – including genetic progress in maternal lines. That's why more North American producers are moving to the **DNA Genetics Line 241 F1** than any other. With superior performance and a steady supply, the spotlight has clearly shifted. See the light at dnaswinegenetics.com.





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WELCOME BRADY MCNEIL AND TIM DREADIN, GENETIC PROGRAM SPECIALISTS



— BRADY MCNEIL —

DNA Genetics is pleased to announce the addition of Genetic Program Specialists, Brady McNeil and Tim Dreadin. In their roles, Brady and Tim will be working with multipliers and gene transfer centers to maximize genetic potential and provide technical support. Brady will be working primarily with producers west of the Mississippi River, and Tim with producers to the east. Brady earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science and Master of Science degree in Animal Breeding, with a minor in Statistics, both from Iowa State University. Tim earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Auburn University. Dr. Tom Rathje, Chief Technical Officer, said, "Brady and Tim bring a great deal of knowledge and personal experience to our technical service team. They are individuals who have a passion



— TIM DREADIN —

for what they do, are committed to improving the overall quality of our products and ensure we are creating the greatest possible value for our customers." Dr. Rathje added, "They are good communicators, but better yet, they are good listeners. I believe DNA customers will find their humble and service-oriented approach to be refreshing."

