



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Melanie Wilt, 937.688.3787 or 937.604.9210

Ohio Pork Farmers Hope Changes Will Increase Enjoyment of Pork

COLUMBUS, OHIO (May 25, 2011) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture this week announced new guidelines for pork that will help ensure families enjoy more flavorful tender meat. The new guidelines – that pork can be safely cooked to medium rare at a cooked temperature of 145° F., followed by a three minute rest time – is the ideal preparation for today’s pork, which is much leaner than it was 18 years ago when the guidelines were last updated.

“I’ve been preparing pork at this temperature for years and have felt safe doing it, and I’m glad that now others can enjoy pork at its best,” said Connie Surber, a Wilmington area farmer. “Farmers like us across Ohio work hard to provide safe, consistent pork, and these changes should enhance everyone’s experience with our product.”

Food service professionals have also known this secret to a safe, delicious product since 1999 when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) adopted the same regulations for pork: cooking to 145° F. followed by a three minute wait time.

“Families will now be able to confidently enjoy pork that is slightly pink in the center,” said Julie Kennel, program specialist in nutrition for Ohio State University Extension.

The regulations state that pork chops, roasts and tenderloins can be safely cooked to medium rare at a final internal cooked temperature of 145° F. as measured by a food thermometer, followed by a three minute rest time. Ground pork, like all ground meat, should still be cooked to 160° F. Pre-cooked ham may still be reheated to 140° F. or enjoyed cold on sandwiches.

-30-

About the Ohio Pork Producers Council

OPPC was established in 1968, beginning with nearly 800 pork producers dedicated to the task of promoting their own product. Currently, the Council has approximately 2,500 members. OPPC’s mission is to serve and benefit members regardless of size, in the areas of member service, legislative and environmental issues, consumer and producer education, and market development.