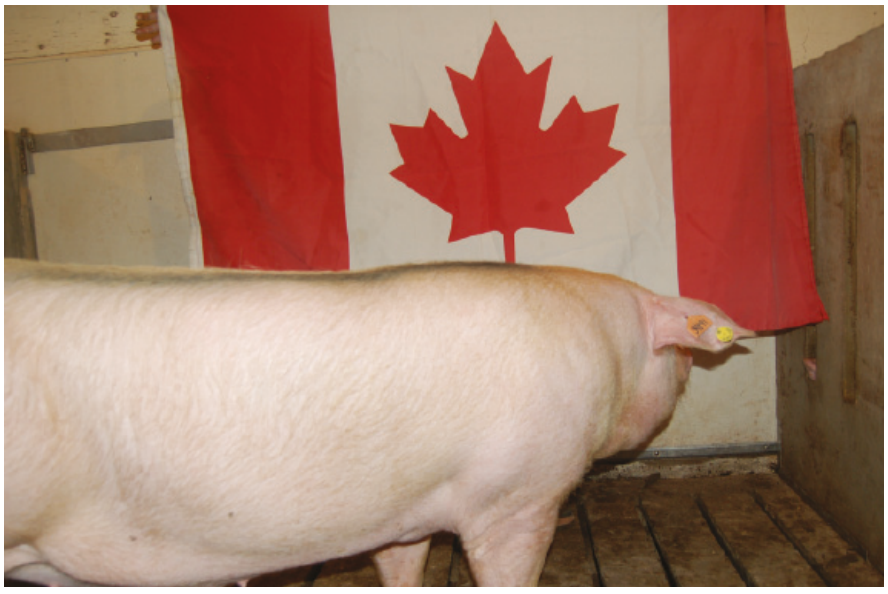
The Insider

TOPIGS Norsvin Canada & USA | Spring 2015

Topigs Norsvin
PROGRESS IN PIGS



First Norsvin Landrace in Canada

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Norsvin Boars Enter Canada

Topigs Norsvin Canada reached a historical landmark on January 12, 2015. Since the merger of Topigs & Norsvin in June of 2014, careful planning has resulted in the first importation of Norsvin lines into Canada. After receiving approval from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to operate a company owned importation quarantine, plans were put into action for regular importation of Norsvin Duroc and the Norsvin Landrace boars. Under federal law, and under the supervision of the CFIA, any live swine entering Canada must remain under strict quarantine for a minimum of 30 days. During this quarantine period, animals are regularly observed and tested for various diseases by CFIA veterinarians. Upon clearance by the CFIA, the boars become "Canadian citizens" and further blood testing is done to prepare the boars for entry into Canadian AI stations.

Customers of Topigs Norsvin Canada have awaited the arrival and availability of the Duroc and Landrace boar semen for some time now. "Performance results of these lines in the USA and many other countries around the world have generated a high level of interest in Canada" states Cam McGavin, General Manager of Topigs Norsvin Canada. The Norsvin Duroc has been bred and selected for meat quality, high Average Daily Gain (ADG), along with very good Feed Conversion Rates (FCR). The best boars coming off test are achieving as low as 1.76 FCR from test weights of 35kg -120kg. The Norsvin Landrace has been selected for high productivity along with excellent FCR. All sires from these lines originate in Norway through semen importation to the USA nucleus farms and have undergone extreme testing protocols including the Computed Tomography (CT) scanning process for carcass composition. For detailed testing and genetic background, annual reports for the Duroc and Landrace lines are available.

"The Norsvin Duroc and Landrace lines will complement our already successful Topigs lines here in Canada" says John Sawatzky, Sales Manager for Topigs Norsvin Canada. Regular importations of these two lines are scheduled to increase the availability across Canada. The Topigs 20 female is clearly an industry leader and is in very high demand across Canada. The Topigs terminal lines of Tempo and Talent will continue their popularity among producers for the excellent traits they contribute to hog production. Terminal boars such as the purebred Duroc have always been in high demand by producers and packers. With access to the Norsvin Duroc, producers will soon be able to produce very efficient, fast growing hogs to packers that demand Duroc sired carcasses.

The world's most innovative swine genetics company

Topigs Norsvin
PROGRESS IN PIGS

Egbert Knol receives George Foxcroft Lectureship 2015 Award



Dr. George Foxcroft (left) with Dr. Egbert Knol (right)

During the Banff Pork Seminar 2015 in Banff, Canada, Egbert Knol received the *George Foxcroft Lectureship 2015 Award.* The George Foxcroft Lectureship in Swine Production has been established to allow the Banff Pork Seminar, in conjunction with the University of Alberta, to host speakers who are conducting high profile research that is applicable to the pork production industry and that will potentially improve production efficiency.

Dr. Michael Dyck of the University of Alberta and seminar co-chair stated during the ceremony: "Dr. Knol has made many contributions to animal breeding and breeding management, having worked to understand and select for important production traits including piglet survivability, maternal traits and mothering ability (including teat numbers and many aspects of reproductive performance). Based on the quality of his research, and the contributions that he has made to the swine industry, he is being recognized with this award.

Hans Olijslagers, CTO of Topigs Norsvin, has congratulated Egbert Knol with this award. "We are proud that Dr. Knol has been awarded this lectureship. It is recognition of Egbert's tremendous work, talent and dedication. He has worked for many years in pig genetics and has realized many important breakthroughs.''

Copies of Dr. Knol's *"Are genetics up to the challenges in North America?"* presentation at the Banff Pork Seminar are available upon request.

Family Value Ag – Top of the Topigs Norsvin USA Genetic Pyramid



Family Value Ag – 1,200 Sow Nucleus



Family Value Ag – Pen gestation room with Norsvin Landrace gilts

Topigs Norsvin USA has entered into an agreement with Family Value Ag to construct a new 1,200-sow nucleus herd in northern Wisconsin, USA. Family Value Ag (FVA) began stocking in October and biosecurity was the top priority throughout the planning and construction of this new facility. Located in an area of very low pig density, FVA is fully filtered, has its own dedicated truck wash, and sources its feed from a local mill that feeds no other swine. Construction was completed in only 100 days.

Family Value Ag will produce Norsvin Landrace, Topigs Norsvin Z-line (Large White), Norsvin Duroc and Topigs Tempo breeding stock for both internal use and external sales to customers. This facility utilizes pen gestation and operates on a five-group batch farrowing system with farrowing every 28 days. Animals are off-tested at a separate, nearby facility and returned to FVA once per month via an isolation unit. Semen will be sourced from Norway and from Topigs Norsvin USA's new "Grand Vertex" boar stud in Illinois, currently under construction.

Producer Profile - Nova Scotia

What would you do if the economics of raising hogs where you lived had changed so much that you could no longer conduct business as you had done in the past? Could you look around, make the changes needed to survive and move forward, or would you exit the swine industry? That was the question facing three Topigs Norsvin customers and their families in the eastern Maritime province of Nova Scotia.

Terry Beck started his pig career in 1978 with two purebred Landrace sows on his parent's property near Kingston, Nova Scotia. In 1979 he bought 40 commercial bred sows and started producing feeder pigs in the barn of a dairy farmer he was working for. In 1980 he married Heather and they bought another small commercial sow herd and doubled in size. Just two years later the family moved to the property they purchased from the dairy farmer that had employed Terry. Their children, Nicole and Justin, helped on the farm during their school years. In early March of 1988 the Beck's barn was completely destroyed by fire They later rebuilt a facility for 150 sows and produced feeder pigs for sale to local farmers until the late 1990s. At this time Terry started to finish more of his feeder pig production by building three hoop style buildings. These buildings proved to be very inefficient, so in 2002 and 2004 another two conventional finishing units were constructed. This allowed him to finish about 70% of his production from his 200-sow herd. In 2007, the decision was made to increase the herd to 700 sows which enabled them to grow and finish approximately 16,000 hogs annually.

The Beck farm includes some arable farm land so it made sense to utilize their own grains to the fullest extent. In 2011 they began contracting a local farmer to grind and mix their own corn. They are currently building a feed processing facility at home and this project should be completed in the coming months. Another generation of the Beck family began their farming career in 2013. Their son Justin had been working part time on the farm and in 2013 came home to work with Terry full time. Justin looks after the production of corn and hay on approximately 250 acres of land. These products will be used in their own feed mill and fed to the sow herd.

Currently the Beck family is focused on selling high volumes of quality weaner pigs. Another smaller but key market for them is several local niche markets that Terry has been working hard to establish. In two small contract finishing units they raise pigs which they use to supply several small abattoirs and farmers markets. For the past several years, they have also been raising "outdoor pasture pork." Beck family pork is sold at Getaway Farm Meat Mongers located in the Seaport Farmers Market in the province's capital city of Halifax. Meat Mongers is a local full-service butcher shop selling a wide range of local, sustainably raised meats. The Becks are very community minded. They participate in and support the local 4-H clubs and Hockey Nova Scotia. The family is working hard toward making the public aware of the hog industry and how important it is to the agricultural industry in Nova Scotia.



Terry and Justin Beck

Hollewand Farm started in 1988-89 when Rene and Jose van Vilsteren came to Nova Scotia from the Netherlands on a work visa. Later they emigrated and purchased the farm they live on today near Canning, Nova Scotia. Rene and Jose started their operation with 325 sows producing 30 lb. feeder pigs.

In 1991 they rented a finishing unit which allowed them to finish half of their production. Over the next decade they bought that property and moved toward full farrow to finish, building in 1998 which allowed them to finish 75% of their production. In 2001 they completed their move to full finishing with another addition to the finishing barn. The decision in 2007 was made to move to a 900 sow iso wean production batch farrowing once a month and finish them off in US. In 2009 Rene and Jose started sending all of their production to Ontario. This has worked out and still continues today. In the fall of 2013 the decision was made to make their own feed. The milling is done on a neighbouring farm where a mill and bins already existed. The neighbour looks after the grinding and delivery of feed which leaves Rene free to work in the barns. Rene and Jose do not crop any land but buy all their corn locally.



Wohlgemuth Farms Ltd.



The van Vilsteren Family

In 1994 Ron and Mildred Wohlgemuth moved their family from Manitoba to Nova Scotia. Their decision to enter the swine business with 160 sows sparked the interest of their sons Henry and Robert. Over the years the herd grew to a 240 sow herd selling feeder pigs. In 2001 Henry and Robert took over the operation from their father. Several years later they looked seriously at building a finishing barn to move to 240 sows farrow-finish. However, with the instability in the industry at the time other options were explored. In 2007 they depopulated the herd, expanded and repopulated with 800 sows selling weaners. Their choice to use the Topigs 20 females was a good one giving them an additional 1.5 pigs weaned/sow/year. To continuously improve their production, they participate in the annual SMS benchmarking program with Topigs Norsvin.

Today Henry and Robert, together with their families, own and operate Wohlgemuth Farms Ltd. near Aylesford, Nova Scotia. The farm includes the 800 sow unit, their own feed mill and a 33 acre apple orchard. The apple business continues to grow and is part of their diversification strategy to help wade through turbulent times in the hog business.

The mid to late 2000s were difficult years in the pig business but that was especially felt in the Nova Scotia. The industry was shrinking from a peak of 240 producers marketing 220,000 hogs. The main packing plant for the region closed in 2010 leaving a very limited market for finished hogs.

The Beck, van Vilsteren and Wohlgemuth families along with four other producers in Nova Scotia all made the decision to move to weaner production. All expanded their sow herds and went to batch farrowing to assemble large groups of piglets for shipping. Initially the Nova Scotia farms combined their piglet production with some larger farms in New Brunswick. They retained ownership of the pigs under contract finishing agreements in Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. The group was producing approximately 300,000 pigs a year. This unfortunately did not work out and ended in 2008.

The Beck, van Vilsteren, and Wohlgemuth families then started selling their weaners into Ontario. Although buyers have occasionally changed, this has continued to present day. The distance to the buyer is large but there are advantages to these weaners. The health is excellent and with only a few producers remaining in Nova Scotia, disease risk is very low. All three farms use the Topigs Norsvin InGene genetic program. Only semen is purchased to produce their replacement gilts in-house, so there are no live animal introductions. Terminal semen from the Topigs Norsvin Talent boar line is also purchased. Good genetics, high health and good biosecurity practises make them excellent sources of high quality healthy weaner pigs.

Today all that remains of the Nova Scotia swine industry is 8 to 10 producers which produce 60,000 weaner pigs and 6,000 to 7,000 market hogs. The Beck, van Vilsteren, and Wohlgemuth families have survived by being determined to make the swine industry in Nova Scotia work and innovative enough to make the changes necessary to do so.



Beck Pork at Getaway Farm Meat Mongers

New Employees at Topigs Norsvin USA



Les Cain

Les Cain has joined the Topigs Norsvin USA team in the capacity of Chief Operating Officer (COO). His responsibilities will encompass the planning and management of all aspects of the general business and production operations. Les comes to us with many years of experience in senior management roles in the US and Canadian pork industries. Most recently he served as Director of Business Operations and Support Services for Hormel Food's subsidiary, PFFJ – Farm Operations. Prior to that, he was the Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President for Genex Corporation in Canada. He also spent time in the position of Sales Director for PIC Canada.



Lars Terje Bogevik

A native of Norway, Lars Terje Bogevik returns to Topigs Norsvin USA in the role of Senior Genetic Technician. Lars' time is divided between establishing phenotype and data collection procedures at Topigs Norsvin USA's new nucleus farm (Family Value AG), and coordinating Topigs Norsvin's Robust Pig Project in the USA. Lars brings many years of Norwegian experience with multiplication management, off-test platform development, trial coordination, technology evaluation and technician training.



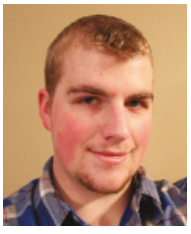
Ron Ledger

Ron Ledger has joined the Topigs Norsvin USA team in the role of Multiplication and Sales Support. Ron has already made a significant impact in supporting Topigs Norsvin USA multipliers in South Dakota, Ohio and Kentucky, as well as working with key customers. Ron comes to us with many years of experience in swine production and technical service roles that include positions with Hintzsche Pork, Louis Dreyfus, Seghers, and Genetiporc. Ron's expertise and passion will be a major asset in helping our customers to achieve the full potential of our products.



Curt Hull

Curt Hull has joined Topigs Norsvin USA in the role of Multiplication and Sales Support and brings a wealth of experience to our company. During his career, Curt has been responsible for breeding stock and multiplication herds for DeKalb Swine Breeders, Carroll's Foods, and Premium Standard Farms. Curt then worked at Holden Farms where he was production manager with responsibility for 30,000 sows and a 300 head boar stud. Curt will use his extensive people and management skills and swine production knowledge to assist multipliers and key customers to get the best from Topigs Norsvin products.



Tyler Leete

Tyler Leete has joined Topigs Norsvin USA in the role of Genetic Technician. In this role, Tyler collects off-test data (weights, backfat and loin measurements, exterior scoring of animals) for Topigs Norsvin's selection program at both the multiplier and nucleus levels. Tyler is a recent graduate in Animal Sciences from Iowa State University where he was active in the Meat Science and Block & Bridle Clubs.

New Topigs Norsvin USA Nucleus Boar Stud Stocked

Grand Vertex, the new nucleus level boar stud for Topigs Norsvin USA, received its first load of boars the week of February 16.

More boars will be delivered to the brand new 200 head filtered facility in the coming weeks with plans to begin sending semen out to customers in April 2015. Having this project completed, and starting to send out doses from the best of the best in the US, is an exciting step forward for Topigs Norsvin. Watch for more details to come.



Topigs Norsvin boars relaxing in their new home at Grand Vertex

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Topigs Norsvin Canada

Contacts

John Sawatzky
Sales Manager
(204) 981-0243
john.sawatzky@topigsnorsvin.ca

Gordon Edwards
Ontario Sales Manager
(519) 440-8128
gordon.edwards@topigsnorsvin.ca

Rick Beunen
Ontario Business Development
(519) 317-7403
rick.beunen@topigsnorsvin.ca

Ron Musick
Manitoba Business Development
(204) 223-3193
ron.musick@topigsnorsvin.ca

Glenn Kuhn
Manitoba Business Development
(204) 871-1448
glenn.kuhn@topigsnorsvin.ca

Art Friesen
Alberta & Montana Business Development
(403) 382-9741
art.friesen@topigsnorsvin.ca

Canada
AI Stud Stations

Magnum Swine Genetics Inc.
Fort Macleod, AB
Andrew Buesekom
(888) 553-4844

Carlo Genetics Inc.
Ste. Anne, MB
George Goossen
(204) 355-4012

Total Swine Genetics Inc.
Tillsonburg, ON
Stuart De Vries
(800) 844-9913

C & M Genetics
Lucan, ON
Dr. Corneliu Oltean
(888) 259-7594

Sunrise Genetics
Amherst, NS
Mike MacDonald
(902) 661-7883

Topigs Norsvin USA

Contacts

Jon Feitz
Director of Sales
(574) 220-1969
jon.feitz@norsvinusa.com

Craig Jarolimek
Sales & Marketing
(701) 866-4444
cjarolimek@topigsusa.com

Mike O'Neal
Sr. Sales & Business
Development Manager
(641) 485-7221
mike.oneal@norsvinusa.com

Ron Ledger
Multiplication & Sales Support
(309) 267-9006
ron.ledger@norsvinusa.com

Curt Hull
Multiplication & Sales Support
(952) 607-9936
curt.hull@norsvinusa.com

USA
AI Stud Stations

Eastern Iowa AI
Sprague ville, IA
Doug Peterson
(563) 689-6661

Mar-Ke Semen Service
Sharon, WI
Keith & Marie Rithamel
(262) 736-2345

Dutch Sires
New Carlisle, OH
Stacey Voight
(937) 313-1138

Ai Partners
Morris, MN
Bruce Zierke
(320) 760-3504

Whole Hog AI
Hartington, NE
Ron Brodersen
(402) 254-2444

Topigs Norsvin Insider Quiz

How to Play
Please answer the questions in our Insider Quiz. All the answers are in this newsletter. Then fax, mail or email your answers, along with your name, address, and phone number to - Fax: 204-489-3152
Email: info@topigsnorsvin.ca

Entries are to be received by April 30, 2015. The first 10 entries drawn with the correct answers will receive a $20.00 Walmart gift card. The Topigs Norsvin rep in your area will deliver the prize. Employees of Topigs Norsvin and their subsidiaries are not eligible.

How large is the herd at the Topigs Norsvin nucleus? _____

When did the first Norsvin boars enter Canada? _____

Which year did Wohlgemuth Farms repopulate with Topigs females? _____

Which award was presented to Egbert Knol in Banff? _____

Name: _____

Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Topigs Norsvin INSIDER Quiz Winners
Here are the winners from the last issue: Leonard Decker, Rustic Acres Colony, SD; Jacob Wollman, East Raymond Farming Co., AB; Daniel Waldner, Evergreen Colony, AB; Joshua Gross, Mayfair Colony, MB; Jacco Van de Bruinhorst, A&L Van de Bruinhorst, ON; Joel Waldner, Cool Spring Colony, MB; Sammy Wipf, Rockport Colony, SD; Arnold Gross, Pincher Creek Colony, AB; Randon Waldner, Evergreen Colony, MB; Paul S. Stahl, Westwood Colony, SD

Each winner receives a $20.00 Walmart Gift Certificate. The Topigs Norsvin rep in your area will deliver your prize. Congratulations!

Topigs Norsvin Canada
201-1465 Buffalo Place
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 1L8
www.topigsnorsvin.com

Topigs Norsvin USA
12750 Nicollet Avenue S
Suite 300
Burnsville, MN
USA 55337

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