

Eau Claire County Fair and Use of Ractopamine.

Ractopamine-free swine production is now a market specification/requirement throughout much of the U.S. pork packing industry. Beginning with the 2021 Fair, the Eau Claire County Fair Committee is making it a requirement for exhibitors not to use the feed additive Ractopamine, also known as (Paylean®, Engain®) for feeding project animals.

Ractopamine is a feed additive that changes how the pig partitions nutrients and energy to muscle and fat cells. It increases the amount of protein deposited in muscle cells and increases the rate that fat is removed from storage. The net effect is that a greater portion of the carcass is lean protein.

This change is coming in part because the United States has the opportunity to increase its pork exports globally. While Ractopamine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, it is banned in many countries that are potential buyers of U.S. pork and as a result many processing plants will not accept swine that have been fed the additive. An integral part of the Livestock Project is understanding the marketing of our animal products to industry and what the consumer of those products is looking to purchase.

Moving forward, the Fair Committee is banning the product in 2021 in project animals and placing testing protocols in place to ensure the product we are providing to our consumers is meeting industry standards. The Eau Claire County Fair Committee is urging exhibitors to check feed tags to make sure Ractopamine is not added to their animal's feed. Exhibitor's animals will be tested randomly, those testing positive for Ractopamine will be required to pay for any testing and replace any carcass purchased through the Eau Claire County Fair auction. The exhibitor may be ineligible for future participation in the Livestock Project and Fair.