



# Country Chronicles

## Accounts of Land O'Lakes Swine Feed Success

### Jim, Bob and Wes Holmes, Alta, IA

The Holmes' are a partnership of father and two sons. Wes has 175 sows and sells feeder pigs to Bob and Jim who finish them in their facilities. Wes uses A.I. to produce terminal-cross pigs and maternal-line gilts for replacements. He batch-farrows his sows and over the last 12 months



has averaged 10.2 pigs born alive/litter and 8.6 pigs weaned/litter. He uses the UltraCare™ Sow Program from Land O'Lakes Feed for his sow herd, including PUSH™ in his sow lactation diet. In June, 2006 Wes began to incorporate NewtraStart™ feed, also from Land O'Lakes Feed, in his lactation feeds to try and improve sow feed intake during the hot summer months. Wes said it worked! ***"Since putting NewtraStart™ in the sow feed, lactation feed intake has really improved. Two and a half tons used to last 14 days, now it only lasts 10 to 12 days."***

With just a few months of data collected, it's too early to tell what kind of positive impact the elevated feed intake will have on sow productivity in the Holmes' operation. However, university research has documented the increase in pig weaning weights and the reduction in return to estrus interval when lactating sows consume more feed.

In the nursery, the Holmes use the UltraCare™ Starter feed program and the UltraCare™ Gel. Wes recalls nursery pig performance prior to using UltraCare™ Gel:

***"Before using the UltraCare™ Gel product, pigs would loose their bloom. Now they maintain their sleek appearance in the nursery after weaning. Nursery death loss has been cut in half. UltraCare™ Gel is a great product."***

Every pork producer understands the value of getting newly-weaned pigs off to a great start. Great nursery performance sets the stage for great finisher performance. Jim Holmes agrees: ***"I have fed UltraCare™ Gel to newly weaned pigs in our operation for 8 months now. I saw an immediate difference in how the pigs took off and maintained their sleek appearance."***

Research from LongView<sup>SM</sup> Animal Nutrition Center has also documented a reduction in body weight variation of pigs leaving the nursery when they have been fed UltraCare™ Gel. Minimizing pig weight variation from the nursery minimizes weight variation at market and means fewer culls.

The Holmes work closely with their Land O'Lakes Swine Consultant, Doug Davis. Davis consults with the Holmes on a monthly basis. He helps them set annual production goals through the Land O'Lakes FinPig software program and provides pig performance production records. Davis also delivers ration balancing and feed budget services utilizing the Land O'Lakes DNS software. Davis comments that the Holmes' are always receptive and eager to adapt new technology supported by research, which can improve their pork production profitability. It is easy to see that the Holmes use a **program**-approach in their operation - the **UltraCare™ feed program** from Land O'Lakes Feed.

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