CHOICE GENETICS’ R&D TEAM - LEADING INNOVATION

Defining R&D and breeding strategies in order to realize the performance objectives, is a core task of the Choice Genetics R&D team. It is a complex topic which needs a very systematic approach. We take into account the product requirements of all the players of the pork value chain: producer, slaughterhouse, processor, retailer and – the most important actor – the end consumer of pork. At the center of Choice’s evaluation process is the economic relevance of the different traits which differ from market to market and which evolve over time. Once an economic weight is given to each trait, they are all combined in an overall selection index. Thanks to the implementation of a powerful combination of innovative selection tools and methodologies, we were able to speed up dramatically the genetic progress which is translated into top field performance of Choice Genetics products as is proven in several comparative trials.

Choice Genetics conducts its R&D activities in nucleus farms on three continents. Our R&D centers in the USA, France and China allow for the selection under different environments in order to deliver genetics adapted to specific market conditions.

Enjoy this issue of the Choice Genetics Newsletter and I’m looking forward to seeing you in the near future.

Pieter Seghers, CEO
Choice Genetics USA has established a new boar production nucleus farm. The entire facility has been built to the company’s specifications in order to create a unique and technically superior boar development and selection unit. Choice Genetics USA maintains the most sophisticated research technologies in the US swine industry. With an investment of over $2.5 million in specialized selection equipment, Choice Genetics USA leads all competitors, measuring the most accurate phenotypes and maximizing genetic improvement.

Paramount is located in a remote area of Missouri, and features:
- Housing for 1,800 paternal line EBX and Duroc sows
- NEDAP Pig Performance Testing (PPT) feeders
- A proprietarily designed computed tomography (CT) barn

This PPT feed recording system, the first in the US, monitors daily growth, feeding events and feed consumption. Data from the PPT feeders shows which animals perform best; therefore, enabling continuous, simple and accurate optimization of genetics.

The uniquely-designed CT barn provides capacity to scan 500 pigs per week. This site, along with CT scanning at Choice Genetics USA’s maternal nucleus, places Choice Genetics as the lone genetics company employing this level of CT technology in both male and female genetic lines anywhere in the world.

“Paramount is an illustration of Choice Genetics’ leading innovation through investments in selection tools that deliver more value to our customers today and support rigorous improvement for the future. The combination of extensive CT scanning and the NEDAP PPT feeders is the most powerful tool to date to maximize genetic improvement in lean/fat accretion and feed efficiency. We are also excited to announce that we will be starting a new maternal nucleus farm project in 2016 to incorporate many new genetic selection concepts from a maternal/mothering ability standpoint,” said Dr. Derek Petry, Choice Genetics USA CEO and Global Director of R&D.
If you think about it, a brand is really a promise. Brands, and the products offered underneath the brand, are developed to convey certain standards of quality, of processes used, or even reasons behind the company. Sakamoto Farm has adopted and accelerated this marketing principle and Choice Genetics, along with our distributor CF East Japan, are proud to have a part in their great success.

Sakamoto Farm was established in 1965 by Hideo Sakamoto, the father of current company President Kazuhiko Sakamoto, for the production of pigs in their local Japanese market. As control of the farm passed between generations, he desired to capture more value and to move beyond pig production into pork production then went even further along the food chain and blossomed into a multi-segment branding effort.

In 1991, they started production of ham and sausages, products new to and not yet widely desired in the Japanese market, under the brand name of Warzwein. The business grew through restaurant placement and a retail shop but the most rapid growth came when they started their online business with countrywide distribution. (See screenshot below.)

In 2004 they began working with CF East Japan as their genetics partner to help improve production and quality. Soon after, they realized they were now producing something special and embarked on a new project to capture even more value; a fresh pork brand. Busyu-ton is the Sakamoto Farm premium brand for pork sold in regional supermarkets and in fine dining restaurants in Tokyo.

The Busyu-ton brand is the Sakamoto promise to their consumers of production standards and superior meat quality. Katsuyuki and Ryutaro Sakamoto have joined their father in Sakamoto Farms and the expansion of their brands.

Congratulations to Sakamoto Farms on their 50th anniversary.
NEW TEAM MEMBERS

CHOICE GENETICS USA

Dr. Gonzalo Martinez
Choice Genetics USA is proud to welcome Dr. Gonzalo Martinez to the Choice Genetics USA R&D team. Dr. Martinez earned his PhD from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and has extensive experience in livestock improvement. He will be based in the West Des Moines office with his primary responsibility being the Choice Genetics Genetic Evaluation processes.

“We are very pleased to announce that Dr. Gonzalo Martinez to the Choice Genetics USA R&D team. Dr. Martinez earned his PhD at the University of Nebraska and has many year’s experience in the field of livestock improvement. He will be based in the Des Moines office where he will be responsible for the Choice Genetics genetic evaluations and assisting with technical aspects of our growing Latin American business,” said James Rohl, Quantitative Genetics Lead.

CHOICE GENETICS CHINA

Mr. Gu Yaping
Mr. Gu Yaping graduated from Shanghai Agricultural University in 1985 and received his bachelor’s degree in animal science. He worked in a key role with Research Institute of Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine of Shanghai Academy of Agriculture and PIC China for 24 years, and then joined COFCO, a state owned group corporation, as COO for 3 years. During his 30 years of experience working in pig industry, Mr. Gu has gained rich experience in swine genetic improvement, marketing, management of the large integrated pork chain system, team building, budget and strategic development. In August 2015, Mr. Gu joined Choice Genetics China as the General Manager. He said, “I am really proud of the opportunity to join a global swine breeding company. It will be a new start to my career, and I believe that with the support of the Choice Genetics global team and the effort of our local team, we will develop the best pigs with international standards for local market to provide the core value for our customers.”

Yao Yao (Nicole)
Miss Yao graduated from University of La Verne in 2015, and received a master degree in Business Administration. Along with the experience in different marketing departments, Miss Yao is skilled both in online and offline marketing, excelling in event planning, online communities and social media platforms to increase brand awareness and boost brand loyalty. In September of 2015, Miss Yao joined Choice Genetics China to grow with the dynamic company. As a marketing assistant, her duties include brand promotion, designing marketing materials, market research, marketing activities and administration.

Wu Longji
Mr. Wu Longji, graduated from Huazhong Agricultural University in 2006, and received a bachelor’s degree in animal medicine. After graduation, he joined an international pig breeding company as production manager of a nucleus farm. During this period, Mr. Wu was in charge of 5 nucleus farms and gained a lot of experience in team building and daily production management. In August 2015, Mr. Wu joined Choice Genetics China as a supply chain director. His job duties include overseeing production, breeding pig selection, quality control and assurance, availability, and logistics of Choice Genetics China nucleus farms.
The three Choice Genetics R&D departments met in West Des Moines, IA for their annual "Genetic Review". Teams of geneticists from Choice Genetics France and Choice Genetics USA were present for the event, as was Dr. Fu, representing the new subsidiary: Choice Genetics China. Olivier Demeure, Groupe Grimaud’s Chief Scientific Officer, was also present to lend his scientific expertise and cover the cross-species dimension.

The two-day event was an opportunity to assess the general targets for Choice Genetics’ commercial products, set during the company’s last product review. This information was then used to specify the positioning and direction of the paternal and maternal lines. The teams also grappled with a wide variety of other themes in R&D: resistance through disease tolerance, genetic environment interaction through use of commercial data for selection, carcass composition using computed tomography, and maternal abilities by monitoring sows. The longer term outlook for reproductive selection and application for intestinal flora were also covered.

Improved feed efficiency is a major objective in a context where a growing number of clients evaluate the value of our male and female lines before using the product. To this end, in two days following the event, company representatives attended the International Conference on Feed Efficiency in Omaha, NE.

“This is always an exciting annual event for our international R&D effort as we discuss direction and genetic advancement. Many concepts and markets are discussed and this gives us a chance to improve our products for those markets,” said Dr. Derek Petry, Choice Genetics USA CEO and Global Director of R&D.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **CAHE**
  Qingdao, China
  May 16-20, 2016

- **World Pork Expo**
  Des Moines, IA
  June 8-10, 2016

- **NPIC**
  Wisconsin Dells, WI
  July 10-23, 2016

- **SPACE**
  Rennes, France
  September 13-16, 2016

- **Leman Conference**
  St. Paul, MN
  September 19-22, 2016

- **Sommet De L’Élevage**
  Clermont-Ferrand, France
  October 5-7, 2016

- **Leman China**
  Nanjing, China
  October 16-18, 2016

- **Euro Tier**
  Hanover, Germany
  November 15-18, 2016
Choice Genetics is a global pig genetics company powered by Groupe Grimaud, the second largest multi-species animal genetics company in the world, marketed in more than 25 countries. Choice Genetics is committed to cutting edge, long term investment in R&D advancement to address current and future industry demands.

MORE MEAT
Utilizing less feed

ASK me how.