

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from Northwest Indiana. As strange as the year has been so far, I find myself excited about the progression of the foundation over the first ten months of startup. We created the foundation with the mission to further the education about pigs and pork across Indiana and our nation. We are off to a good start with the help of industry stakeholders. Educating the general consumer about the pig industry is not an easy job; however, it is my belief that it ranks as one of the more important tasks for our industry. Each generation is one step further removed from agriculture and food production, while simultaneously demanding it at their fingertips without disruption. Younger generations still believe food just comes from grocery stores.

In order to eat the proverbial elephant, the first bite was to at least get started. Our vision for LEAP may be starting small, but we know the need is great and we will work hard to extend our reach. Today our key areas of focus revolve around the Pig Adventure at Fair Oaks, our virtual field trips to elementary students, our yearly pig production intern and our weekly donations of pork to the local food banks. All together we believe we will provide an educational message to a diverse set of consumers and ages.

To date, we have raised funds from 41 companies across the agriculture industry, and I cannot thank them enough. We hope you will reach out to your contemporaries and encourage them to help out as well. Together, we can make a real difference - one bite at a time.

Thanks,  
Nick DeKryger

## PORK DONATIONS

### Governor Praises Farmers for their Generosity during COVID-19 Pandemic

April 7, 2020

[Michael Gallenberger](#)



Hoosier farmers are getting praise from the governor for their generosity during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Our agriculture sector has long been our state's original calling card, for over 200 years, since we were forging our way out of the forest," Governor Eric Holcomb said during Tuesday's COVID-19 press conference. "And still to this day, they are stepping forward and having an impact on the most vulnerable, making sure that our communities are all stitched together and every mouth that's in need is being cared to."

Governor Holcomb listed several agriculture businesses and organization that have been donating food to their communities. He noted that Belstra Milling has donated over 1,600 pounds of ground pork to an area food bank, and the American Dairy Association of Indiana has been passing out gallons of milk at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

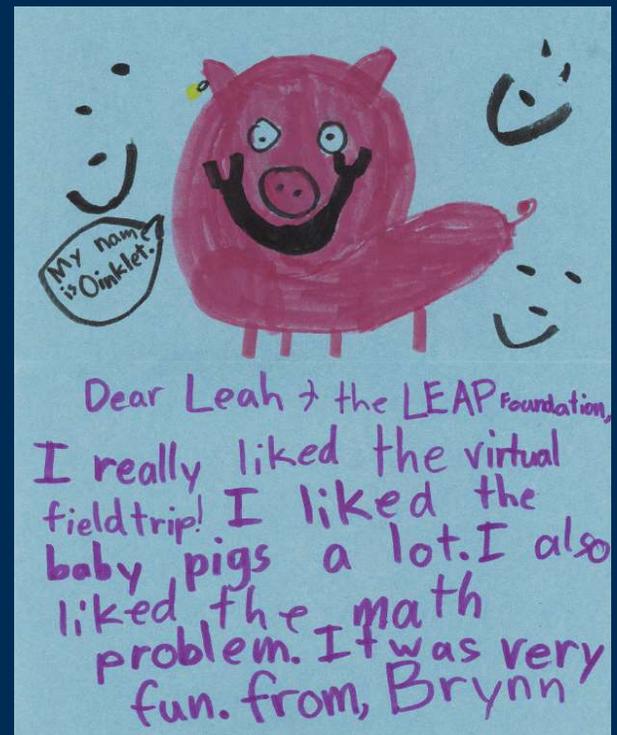
For 12 years, Belstra Milling has been donating three pigs a week to local food pantries in the form of ground pork. Donating ground pork allows for 100 percent of the meat to be used in the most efficient way. At the beginning of 2020, the LEAP Foundation took over this program on behalf of Belstra. When COVID-19 really started ramping up, food pantries were seeing a spike in demand and the need for fresh meat, so LEAP upped the donation to six pigs per week. With the help of IN Pork, recipe cards for ground pork were handed out to each family when they picked up their packages of meat. On April 7, we were recognized by our Governor for the donations during the pandemic.



## THERE'S A PIG IN MY CLASSROOM

This past summer, LEAP was able to begin work on a new interactive distance learning platform focused solely on pig and pork education. In partnership with the Indiana State Fairgrounds, a new virtual field trip was developed for Indiana elementary schools. Even before COVID, school corporations were gaining interest in distance learning opportunities as new technology was allowing for new experiences. The cost of field trips and travel are becoming a barrier, especially for those in more rural areas with less opportunities. Our new program will feature a virtual interactive tour of a working sow farm along with in-class pre and post curriculum approved by the Indiana Academic Standards. 3rd through 6th graders from all over Indiana will Zoom into a conversation with the host from the Indiana State Fairground and our LEAP tour guide inside the farm. Not only will it be a two-way conversation, but there will also be other interactive games and scavenger hunts for the kids to stay engaged. Our goal is to provide this program free to all schools so that cost is not a barrier. To date, we plan to teach over 4000 kids during the fall of 2020, and hope to grow that number over 10,000 in 2021. We are excited for this new opportunity as we can envision the potential to extend our educational reach into new communities and other states.

Pictured: The first field trip was held for 3rd-6th graders at a local school. We received great feedback from both teachers and students.



# WELCOME INTERN

*Eryn Risner*



**Eryn Risner**

Pig Farm Intern

Eryn is a student at Purdue University -  
West Lafayette

*Welcome Eryn!*

“

While at Belstra, I hope to learn how to properly care for sows and their piglets through the gestation and farrowing processes. It means a lot knowing that I get to be involved in going from pigs to pork.

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## LEAP INTERNSHIP

This summer, LEAP was able to sponsor Eryn Risner as our pig production intern. Eryn completed her first year at Purdue University with the idea of going into vet school, but quickly realized that was not where she wanted to be. Since she still had a passion for animals, she wanted to gain some experience and knowledge by working in a farm. Eryn spent her summer working in all areas of production at a 2,500 head sow farm. She was able to spend time breeding and pregnancy checking sows, as well as farrowing sows, processing baby pigs and weaning piglets.

**We asked Eryn to reflect on her time and some key takeaways:**

### **What were some key takeaways?**

I learned that it takes a lot of hard work, dedication, and passion to run a successful and healthy sow farm. It isn't a job made for one person; it takes a team.

### **What did you like best?**

What I liked best about my internship was the amazing people I worked with, and who I formed great friendships with. My coworkers taught me what it means to be a pig farmer, and I can proudly say that I am honored to have been a part of such an incredible company.

### **What did you like the least?**

What I liked least was having to make the choice of whether or not to euthanize a pig, and then following through with that action. It isn't easy to make a choice like that, but it is part of the job. Making this choice allows you to end a life of suffering and potentially increase the wellbeing of the other pigs in the herd.

### **What would you tell others about working with pigs?**

Working with pigs is so rewarding because you get to get to see how intelligent and interesting pigs truly are. Most people don't get a chance to experience, first-hand, the value and importance that pigs bring us. The more you work with them, the more you begin to respect and appreciate these animals.



LEADING  
EDUCATION  
ABOUT  
PIGS

FALL 2020

# Annual LEAP Report



LEADING  
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308 15th St. SE  
DeMotte, IN 46310

**For questions:**  
Nick DeKryger  
[nickd@belstramilling.com](mailto:nickd@belstramilling.com)

**Visit us at:**  
[Belstra.com/community/LEAP](http://Belstra.com/community/LEAP)

*Together* Let's Lead the  
Education About Pigs

