



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Smithfield Swine Herd in Veracruz, Mexico Tests Negative for Human A(H1N1) Influenza

SMITHFIELD, Va., May 14, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- C. Larry Pope, President and Chief Executive Officer of Smithfield Foods, Inc. (NYSE: SFD), sent the following letter to all employees:

To Our Employees:

I am pleased to report that the results of the testing process conducted by the Mexican government have confirmed that no virus, including the human strain of A(H1N1) influenza, is present in the pig herd at Granjas Carroll de Mexico (GCM), our joint venture farm in Veracruz, Mexico. These findings, which are consistent with our earlier communications to you, validate what we believed from the very beginning: that the recent subtype of H1N1 influenza virus affecting humans did not originate from GCM.

Furthermore, the CDC and other regulatory and scientific bodies have continued to confirm that you cannot get A(H1N1) influenza from eating pork or pork products, and none of the people affected had contact with pigs prior to getting sick. Our products remain completely safe to eat and handle.

The recent concern over the health and safety of people and animals at farms only helps emphasize how important it is to keep these facilities, both the ones we operate and those operated by others, as secure and environmentally sound as possible. For this reason, Smithfield takes extraordinary measures to maintain rigorous biosecurity procedures at all of our operations worldwide.

I would also like to take this moment to say how proud I am of the farms that our joint venture GCM operates in Mexico. Not only are those facilities state-of-the-art, but GCM designed, built and has continually upgraded its operations with the environment in mind. As part of this commitment to continuous improvement, GCM is currently testing composting at some of its Mexican farms and has voluntarily introduced biogas digesters to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

In addition, GCM has been well-recognized for its commitment to the surrounding communities through its CSR programs. As a result of these efforts, GCM earned the Mexican Center for Philanthropy's (CEMEFI) prestigious social responsibility award, or Empresa Socialmente Responsable (ESR), for three consecutive years. This is even more impressive as GCM was the first animal production company in Mexico to ever receive the ESR award. These operations are a true testament to the fact that no matter in which part of the world we operate, Smithfield strives to go beyond what is required in terms of compliance.

I realize that this has been an unsettling time for all of us in the pork industry and that some consumers have cut back on pork consumption. However, as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and many others stressed that pork is safe to eat, I am happy to report that we have seen an improvement in pork sales in our U.S. business. We expect this trend to continue.

I want to thank you all for continuing to keep your focus on what we do for a living and do so well - deliver an excellent and safe food product for our customers. Thank you.

C. Larry Pope

With sales of \$12 billion, Smithfield Foods is the leading processor and marketer of fresh pork and packaged meats in the United States, as well as the largest producer of hogs. For more information, visit [www.smithfieldfoods.com](http://www.smithfieldfoods.com).

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