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Contact: name, phone number, email address

**MEDIA RELEASE: XXXXX County Pork Producers introduces individuals with disabilities to animal agriculture with Bacon Buddies® program**

XXXXX, Iowa – The xxxxxx County Pork Producers are working with Special Olympics Iowa to give local individuals with disabilities the opportunity to show a pig at the XXXX County Fair. The Bacon Buddies® program, developed by the Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA), helps those Special Olympians experience acceptance by working with 4-H and FFA mentors. Participants also gain the opportunity to talk to a livestock judge in a public setting, and earn a blue ribbon for their efforts.

The Bacon Buddies event at the XXXX County Fair will take place in (city) on (date).

“Bacon Buddies is a great opportunity for our Special Olympics athletes to be exposed to something new and socialize with friends,” said John Kliegl, president and CEO of Special Olympics Iowa. “Our athletes want to do what their peers are doing, and it’s a great opportunity to work with the 4-H and FFA youth who see them as their equals. It’s all about equality and a great partnership with the Iowa Pork Producers Association.”

Bacon Buddies was launched by IPPA during the Iowa State Fair in 2019. The program has since expanded to dozens of county fairs.

(quote from county pork producer organization)

“What happens in the show ring isn’t the main event,” says IPPA President Matt Gent. “Rather, it’s the connections, friendships and memories built as participants prepare for the show. Those of us in the pork industry know that when you work pigs together, you develop relationships. Our effort here is to honor our We Care principles of caring for people and for our communities.”

To encourage local Bacon Buddies shows, IPPA established [Bucks for Bacon Buddies](https://www.iowapork.org/community/youth/bacon-buddies/bucks-for-bacon-buddies), providing up to $500 for groups that plan and host these events. The money can be used for event signage, T-shirts, awards, and advertising.

Additional details are available at [iowapork.org/baconbuddies](https://www.iowapork.org/community/youth/bacon-buddies).

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