



### **Indiana Pork – MRSA/NY Times Column Statement 3-12-09**

*Indiana Pork has issued the following statement in response to the New York Times op-ed column by Nicholas Kristof. The statement can be attributed in part or in its entirety to Mike Platt, Executive Director, Indiana Pork.*

“If you read between the lines of Mr. Kristof’s column, there is telling language. The author uses phrases including ‘far from conclusive’, ‘the uncertainties are huge’, more investigation is necessary’ and ‘the study was small.’ Regrettably, it is this combination of unsupported allegations and scare tactics that can induce unwarranted concern among pork consumers.

“Indiana’s hog farmers are committed to protecting public health, and that means using antibiotics responsibly both to protect the health and well-being of our hogs and to ensure a safe food supply for our consumers. Both small and large pork producers use antibiotics in feed, when necessary and in consultation with veterinarians, to treat illness and prevent disease in our herds, as well as for nutritional benefit.

“The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have concluded that there is no documented relationship between meat consumption and handling and MRSA transmission. Further, none of the investigations of community-associated MRSA infections in the U.S. has identified animal exposure as a risk for infection.

“Consumers of Indiana pork products can be confident that the food they buy is safe, and that our farms are operated to protect public health in the communities where we live and work.”

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**Editor’s notes:** Indiana is the fifth-largest pork-producing state in the nation, with more than 3,000 hog farms in the state. The industry employs more than 13,000 Hoosiers.

MRSA is an abbreviation for *methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus*.