New Nebraska Law Will Help Pork Industry

Al Juhnke - NPPA Executive Director

Governor Ricketts recently signed a bill into law—LB 176—which changes Nebraska’s Competitive Livestock Markets Act as it relates to contract swine operations. The new law addresses the ability of these farm operations to raise packer-owned animals.

Until now, Nebraska was the only state that did not allow lease agreements between in-state packers and growers regarding the ownership of hogs. Adding tools like this to the toolbox of our family farmers is important to long-term profitability. Our producers will now have access to the same pork production tools as their counterparts in every other state.

Here are some of the facts regarding this legislation:

- The bill was supported by The Nebraska Pork Producers, The Nebraska Bankers, The Nebraska Corn Producers, The Nebraska Bankers, The Nebraska Independent Bankers Assn., The Nebraska Corn Growers, The Nebraska Farm Bureau, We Support Ag, and the State Chamber of Commerce because they knew that this bill would be good for Nebraska and Nebraska agriculture.

- Nebraska was the last state in the nation with a packer ban.

- In every other state-independent family farms still exist and sell their hogs to packers.

- In Iowa, a state without a ban, on average over 60% (depending on the plant) of the hogs slaughtered are purchased from independent producers.

- Zoning checks and balances exist to allow communities and counties to control the growth of hog facilities.

- Packers can own hogs in Nebraska today—as long as they don’t have a facility in Nebraska-based on a recent Attorney General opinion.

- The ONLY entity that could not own hogs in our state was a packer that has a facility here—which discourages growth of the industry and local jobs (either in new facilities or expansions).

- The reason that our market hogs are declining and our slaughter hogs are increasing is because packers are still slaughtering, but those hogs are being trucked in from other states.

- New Nebraska hog facilities will add to the tax base—both income and property.

- In order for Nebraska to compete globally we need to have the tools for our family farmers to be able to compete.

Nebraska now moves one step closer to creating a climate where pork processors that own Nebraska facilities, employ Nebraskans and pay Nebraska taxes, can work together with Nebraska farmers to raise hogs. Every other state in the nation allows this to occur. Nebraska’s self-imposed restriction on packer ownership was one of the contributing factors as to why neighboring states have expanded pork production at a faster rate over the last decade than Nebraska.

While this new law reflects an opportunity to expand pork production on our family farms, it also reflects expanded opportunities to feed Nebraska-grown grains, as well as generate economic activity that helps boost rural Main Street businesses.

Agriculture remains the backbone of our economy. This recently passed bill will help ensure the profitability and sustainability of our state’s pork production farms—a good thing for us all.

Bacon Stuffed Shell Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 12 oz Canadian-style bacon, sliced
- 1 cup zucchini, shredded
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
- 3 tbsp each, vegetable oil and red wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp each of Italian seasoning and sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 16 conchiglioni (jumbo shells)
- Romaine lettuce

DIRECTIONS (serves 8)

- Cut Canadian bacon into strips. In a large bowl, combine bacon, zucchini, red pepper and Parmesan cheese; set aside.
- For dressing, combine oil, vinegar, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Pour dressing over bacon mixture; toss gently to mix. Cover and chill 30 minutes.
- Cut Canadian bacon into thin strips. In a large bowl, combine bacon, zucchini, red pepper and Parmesan cheese; set aside.
- For dressing, combine oil, vinegar, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Pour dressing over bacon mixture; toss gently to mix. Cover and chill 30 minutes.

To serve, arrange romaine lettuce leaves among salad plates. Place 2 shells atop each plate.
Celebrate Ag Week  
All Year Round at Raising Nebraska  
The winter season is coming to an end, spring is in the air—a great time to celebrate Nebraska agriculture during National Ag Week. Wait—why only celebrate agriculture during National Ag Week? Nebraska agriculture is diverse and something to be proud of—Raising Nebraska is encouraging you to learn more and visit today!  
Field trips, tours and conferences are ways you can actively engage in Raising Nebraska. Let’s check out what each has to offer!  
1. Field Trips: We challenge you to support or sponsor one class from your county to engage in a learning field trip. Field trip programs are age-appropriate and structured to include state standards. They may be called a field trip, but they are really curriculum enhancers. Currently, programs are available for pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. Not able to come to Raising Nebraska? Request a program to come into your classroom! A complete listing of programs is located at raisingnebraska.net/field-trips-events/for-schools-teachers/. Programs are great for 4-H Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts and other youth organizations too.  
2. Tours: Do you have a group coming to central Nebraska looking for something to do? Then set up your personal tour. During the guided tour, learn the background information to how Raising Nebraska came to be, understand the learning objectives of the exhibits, and enjoy an exploration time fit for you.  
3. Conferences & Meetings: Need a new venue for a meeting? Consider having it at Raising Nebraska. During the breaks, explore the exhibits and go home knowing a new fact about Nebraska.  
At Raising Nebraska you can travel across Nebraska in 90 seconds, sit at a dining room table as you discover where your favorite meal comes from, ride in a combine harvesting corn or soybeans, program your pivot, see how your milk, eggs, pork chops, and hamburger get to the grocery store and more.  
Visit Monday–Friday, 9:00 am-noon and 1:00 pm–4:00 pm. Check us out at: www.raisingnebraska.net www.facebook.com/RaisingNebraska, or www.twitter.com/raisingne/  
Raising Nebraska is a joint effort between the Nebraska State Fair, Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (OLLI at UNL) is one of 119 OLLIs across the United States. OLLI offers classes, courses, special events and travel specifically designed for lifelong learners age 50 plus.

Beginning March 31, 2016, Not your Mother’s Pork Chop, nor from your Father’s Pigpen will be offered as a OLLI course facilitated by Bill Ahlschwede.

From 1970 through 1992, Bill Ahlshwede was an Extension Swine Specialist in the Animal Science Department at the University of Nebraska. In that role Bill had a close relationship with NPPA that still continues today.

Course Description: In our lifetime, the production of pork has undergone dramatic changes. Not only has the pork we eat changed for the better, the structure of the industry has been overhauled. Raising pigs, which were once known as the mortgage lifters on Nebraska farms, has been transformed into a structured, technology intense business. Marketing has been standardized, processing streamlined, and new products have appeared in the meat cases of grocery stores and on menus. This course will deal with pork as it is consumed today, its production, and the changes experienced during our lifetimes. Fat has been dramatically reduced. New products are available in grocery stores and restaurants. Litter size has increased more than 40%. Production has shifted from small units on diversified farms to large multi-site enterprises. In 1964, thirty-nine thousand Nebraska farms had pigs. Today, fewer than two thousand Nebraska farms have pigs.

The six classes will deal with the changes in our lifetimes; a virtual hog farm visit; past, present, and future genetics programs; other drivers of change; pork in processed meat, including McRib; and fresh pork from carcass to dinner table.

Assisting Bill with this course are: Benny Mote, Assistant Professor, Animal Science, Extension Swine Specialist; Dennis Burson, Professor, Animal Science, Meat Science, Food Safety; Roger Mandigo, Professor Emeritus, Animal Science, Meat Science; Tim Chancellor, Finishing Manager, Thomas Livestock Company, Broken Bow, Nebraska.

For more information on this course and other learning opportunities contact:
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
College of Education and Human Science
125 Home Economics Building
Lincoln, NE 68583-0000
Phone: (402) 472-6265
Email: olli@unl.edu

Nebraska Pork Talk – March/April 2016
888-627-7675
www.NEpork.org

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Recently, 19 youth nominated by extension educators from across the state participated in a pilot of the Nebraska Youth Pork Conference—“Makin’ Bacon … and a WHOLE Lot More!” This inaugural conference, conducted December 13–15, 2015, was sponsored by the Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Nebraska Extension, and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Department of Animal Science.

Dr. Jon Sonderman, DNA Genetics, opened the conference by providing an overview of today’s pork industry including production and consumption trends, usage of technology, and career opportunities. He challenged our youth to know and understand the issues facing America’s pork industry, and to be proactive in educating our consumers.

Working in small groups, conference participants were challenged with tackling one of three issues related to pork production and/or consumption of pork products. They conducted research and developed interactive group presentations to address issues from the viewpoint of consumers, pork producers, and the meats industry. Issues discussed included the usage of antibiotics, the World Health Organization’s implication that meat causes cancer, and animal welfare. To provide youth with background information and future trends, Dr. Benny Mote (Nebraska Swine Extension Specialist) discussed the “Facts vs. Perception” of swine handling and housing systems, and Dr. Dan Ciobanu provided research data to show the impact of genetic improvement on pork production factors, particularly swine’s resistance to disease, which could ultimately impact the usage of antibiotics in the pork industry. Through this activity, not only did participants learn more about the issues, the truths and fallacies; they better understood the importance of good communication—what we say, and how we say it.

Another significant goal of the program, according to Dr. Bryan Reiling who developed and coordinated the program in consultation with Kyla Habrock, Education Director of the Nebraska Pork Producers Association, was to educate youth about the pork industry and pork product utilization through a variety of engaging activities that simultaneously functioned to enhance basic life skills including leadership, teamwork, and communication. Understanding pork, as a wholesome, flavorful, and versatile food product for the consumer was a primary focus of the conference. Drs. Dennis Burson and Steven Jones helped youth fabricate pork carcasses into retail cuts. They learned that the pig’s not all chops, or ribs, or bacon; and they learned how the origination of those cuts, in addition to consumer demands, affect value. Then, Dr. Gary Sullivan provided a demonstration on “makin’ bacon” as he discussed the nature and purpose of non-meat ingredients associated with cured pork products including ham and bacon.

From the meat laboratory to the new Food Innovation Center on University of Nebraska’s Innovation Campus, conference participants were able to experience the versatility of pork as an entree. Two chefs, Mr. Kevin and Dr. Roger Mandigo, provided culinary instruction as youth prepared and served a multitude of pork entrée items ranging from gluten-free breaded pork cutlets and pan-seared pork chops to seasoned and sautéed fresh pork belly. Conference participants experienced first-hand why certain cuts of pork are best prepared using moist heat rather than dry, or vice-versa. They learned how muscle tissues are broken down and how that process impacts palatability.

Drs. Dennis Burson and John Rapnow provided related lessons on food safety. Yes, we have the safest food supply in the world, but the pork industry continually strives to further enhance the safety of their product through incorporation and usage of HACCP (Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points) programs. Conference participants learned the importance of proper temperature control and sanitation in the handling and preparation of food products; that consumers must also take responsibility for food safety.

There were numerous activities designed to reinforce basic life skills, but the Escape Room was definitely the highlight. Small groups of conference participants were locked together in a room; using the tools and clues provided, they had one hour to break the code that would allow them to escape. All 19 youth agreed or strongly agreed that the Escape Room was an effective “capstone” activity to showcase the importance of leadership, communication, and teamwork!

Upon conclusion of the conference, all participating youth indicated they would recommend the conference to others, and 84% indicated an enhanced interest in both pork industry careers and in attending the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Post-conference, youth indicated enhanced awareness of pork career opportunities (100%), industry issues (100%), usage of science in pork production (100%) and product utilization (95%). Youth also better understood the importance of leadership and communication skills (100%). Overall, this pilot of the Nebraska Youth Pork Conference was very successful, and evaluation input provided by inaugural participants will be used to further enhance future programs.
Recognizing a lifetime of service to the Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Reynold Vering was inducted into the NPPA Check-off Hall of Fame during the 2016 Annual Meeting.

In 1976 Reynold Vering began investing time and assets into pig production in Northeast Nebraska. He believed in partnerships with local producers who had skills and resources that helped them diversify their farms. In the late 70’s and early 80’s Reynold facilitated the marketing of western Nebraska feeder pigs to Eastern Nebraska Farms.

Reynold had a passion for pig production. He helped producers upgrade farrowing facilities and nurseries to raised decks. He also worked with University of Nebraska extension educator Dr. Mike Brumm on ventilation in nursery remodels, finishing and farrowing facilities. Dr. Don Levis also visited Howells and helped producers with breeding and gestation design through Reynold. Reynold continued his involvement in local organizations like Placo Pork Producers and the Nebraska Pork Producers Association by testifying on bills at the capital supporting producers ability to farm freely and expand in Nebraska. Reynold also owned and operated Vering’s Feed Service, which farrowed and fed pigs in and around Howells for more than 25 years. He is always willing to share his experiences and help anyone interested in pork production. He still owns and operates several swine finishing facilities in Northeast Nebraska and continues to be involved in pork production and its development.

Reynold and Rose Marie Vering have five children, 13 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

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Reynold Vering Inducted into Hall of Fame

High health and pasture raised feeder pigs (mortgage lifters) were transported by the thousands to Colfax, Cuming, Platte, and Stanton County producers.

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Reynold and Rose Marie Vering have five children, 13 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.
Nebraska's Pork Industry Gathers for Annual Meeting

February 17, 2016, Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln

Shannon Dierking, a member of the 2015 Pork Mentorship Program shared some remarks.

Governor Ricketts discussed agriculture, economics and property taxes.

Executive Director Al Juhnke opens the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting breakfast was surprised by an impromptu visit from 3rd District Congressman Adrian Smith.

Participants of the 2016 Pork Mentorship Program. (L-R) Michael Liermann of Wisner; McKenzie Beals of Friend; Amanda Korus of Lindsay; Kelsey Scheer of Saint Paul; Kate Likens of Swanton; and Erica Lewis of West Point.

President Elect Russ Vering thanks retiring President Scott Spilker for his leadership.

Executive Director Al Juhnke opens the Annual Meeting.
Timing Good for Williams Pork Facility

By Loretta Sorensen
Midwest Producer

"Reprinted with permission. Originally printed in Feb. 19, 2016, edition of Midwest Producer"

PLAINVIEW, Neb.- The only way Scott and Dawn Williams might be happier with their new pork facility south of Plainview is if they had built it at least 10 years ago.

Scott, who grew up in Indiana watching his father raise between 1,000 and 1,500 head of pigs in open-air pens with dirt floors, said raising a total of 5,000 pigs in the new building will be easy.

"I grew up with pork production, worked as a hog buyer for 25 years and managed a wean-to-finish unit for several years. I knew it was time for me to set up my own building," he said.

Scott and Dawn Williams have partnered with The Maschhoffs, the largest family-owned hog production company in North America. The company is owned by fifth generation Dave Maschhoff and his wife, Karen, and Ken Maschhoff and his wife, Julie. The Maschhoffs partner with nearly 550 family farmers across the Midwest in nine different states.

The Maschhoffs process for working with producers includes providing weanling pigs that weigh around 14 pounds. They also supply all the feed, veterinary support and supplies and production management expertise. A Maschhoffs representative will visit the Williams barn on a weekly basis.

Once the pigs are ready to go to market, The Maschhoffs provide transportation to a Nebraska packing house that contracts with them. Alan Stephens, Maschhoffs senior business development manager, said his company has worked closely with the Williamses since the couple decided to build the pork facility.

"We assist with permits, securing a bank loan and working with local contractors to construct the building," Stephens said. "Over the next 12 years, we'll send the Williams a monthly check, whether there are pigs here or not. At the end of that time, they will own the building and we'll renegotiate our contract."

Some 25 of The Maschhoffs pork production partners are located in Nebraska, finishing pigs produced by Maschhoffs' Nebraska farrowing operations. In recent years, many of the Nebraska-born piglets have been transported to Iowa for finishing.

Availability of more finish barns in Nebraska gives The Maschhoffs opportunity to reduce piglet transportation times and costs.

Among the advantages the Williamses have in working with The Maschhoffs is a ready source of piglets and ready market for finished pigs. There’s no need for the Williams to worry about market demand, genetic qualities of finished pigs or maintaining top nutritional rations.

"In the long term marketing agreement we have with our buyers, we work to meet their specific requirements for numbers and quality of pigs," Stephens said. "Through innovative genetics, nutrition and management strategies, we're positioned to be their supplier of choice."

The 80 x 220 deep slatted pit facility is equipped with fully automated feeders, waterers and ventilation. "Wet-dry" feeders are utilized to optimize consumption of feed and growth rate.

Green Gable Contracting in Fort Calhoun, Neb., works with The Maschhoffs facilities in Nebraska. Kelly Cobb said Green Gable partners with local contractors in each Nebraska facility for concrete, equipment and every aspect of the building.

"The Maschhoffs have specific specs for their buildings," Cobb said. "Some of our swine buildings constructed 15 years ago are still highly productive. Regular maintenance will go a long way in extending the life of the facility."

The Maschhoffs have also refined gating design, incorporating extra gates in specific areas so producers can create the best possible pen configuration to meet sorting and development needs.

Utilizing state of the art ventilation technology, the Williams facility will be temperature controlled by way of a staged power ventilation system. The design offers consistent temperature control and greater biosecurity.

"The basics of this barn are what you would find in all the barns our partners have constructed," Stephens said. "Years of testing and development have resulted in a design that optimizes pig performance while minimizing labor for producers so they can focus on pig health and development."

Among the benefits the Williamses will realize from their barn is availability of manure they will apply to their pastures where they graze a 90-head cow/calf operation.

One of the reasons the Williamses decided to set up their building at this stage of their farming career is to provide their children with a farming option in coming years.

"If we want to keep young people in the ag industry, these are the kinds of opportunities we need to offer them," Scott said. "Is it a good time to get into the pork business? No one can really answer that question. In this kind of partnership, cash flow is somewhat tight for a year or two, after that it will generate good income."

“Sweet Fire” Porterhouse Pork Chops

SERVES 4

4 porterhouse (bone-in loin) pork chops, about 3/4-in. thick
2 tbsp. olive oil
1 1/2 tsp. ground chipotle chile*
1 1/2 tsp. coarse salt
Zest of 1 large orange, grated
2 tbsp. garlic, minced
1/2 c. honey

Combine oil, ground chipotle, salt, orange zest and garlic in a small bowl. Spread mixture over both sides of pork using a rubber spatula. Let stand 15-30 minutes.

Prepare grill to medium-high heat. Place chops on grill and close lid. Grill over direct heat, turning once, about 4-5 minutes per side until internal temperature is between 145°F (medium rare) and 160°F (medium). During last 2 minutes, brush chops on both sides with honey. Remove from grill and let rest 3 minutes.

*Substitute another smoked chile powder per heat preference.
It's official. With the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently issuing the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) final rule on antibiotic use, the countdown has begun for the nation’s livestock producers, veterinarians and feed providers to come into compliance by December 2016. Fortunately, through their Pork Checkoff, America’s pig farmers already may have many of the tools in place that will put them well on the road to adhering to this new regulation.

Antibiotics aren’t going away, but on-farm use will change. Producers should sit down with their veterinarians to discuss how to apply VFDs and other herd-health strategies,” said Jennifer Koeman, DVM, director of producer and public health for the Pork Checkoff.

The FDA’s goal is to work with the production sector to eliminate the use of medically important (to human illness) antibiotics for growth promotion and to bring therapeutic use to treat, control or prevent specific disease—under veterinary oversight. Pork producers should take steps now to prepare for the changes. “The end of 2016 may sound like a long way off, but producers need to start getting ready,” Koeman said. “Producers should sit down with their veterinarians to discuss how to apply VFDs and other herd-health strategies.”

At the centerpiece of FDA’s policy are 283 products that will be added to the VFD list, said Bill Flynn, DVM, deputy director for science policy at FDA’s Center for Veterinary Medicine. Over-the-counter sales of the products will be eliminated, and their use will require veterinary oversight and diagnosis for a specific animal-health condition. Producers will need a VFD to gain access to the affected feed-based antibiotics and a prescription for water-based products.

Koeman added that the new rules coming from FDA’s Guidance 209, 213 and VFD in December 2016, will change the requirements needed to use certain antibiotics and will more directly involve veterinary oversight. Although a change for the industry, Koeman noted, the new rules also provide a great opportunity for farmers to work with their veterinarians to revisit all herd-health practices. The goal should be to decrease disease, enhance performance and produce a safe, wholesome product for the global market.

“Producers need to understand what is different, but they already have most of the tools they need to comply,” Koeman said.

Four Steps to Take Today

“Most producers already work closely with their veterinarian to achieve proper decisions and use of antibiotics when needed to ensure healthy pigs and safe food,” said Paul Ruen, a swine veterinarian at the Fairmont Veterinary Clinic in Minnesota and former president of the American Association of Swine Veterinarian. “But there will be some individuals—producers and veterinarians both—that will need to get on board as changes come into play.”

Here are Ruen’s recommended steps to initiate today:

1. Secure a good working relationship with your herd veterinarian and build familiarity with your production system.
2. Sit down with your veterinarian to evaluate all animal-health management protocols and herd vaccination programs. Review all swine medications currently being used.
3. Discuss which products are affected by veterinary feed directives and prescriptions and how the process will work on the farm.
4. Walk through the record-keeping requirements and strategies.

For more information on the upcoming antibiotic use changes and more, go to the Pork Checkoff Antibiotic Resource Center located at www.pork.org/antibiotics.
2015 Outstanding Pork Service Award Winners Recognized

The Outstanding Pork Service Awards are given annually to recognize exceptional work by an individual, company, or organization that has advocated and supported the fundamental efforts of the Nebraska Pork Producers Association. The service award winners encourage profitability and sustainability of Nebraska’s Pork Industry and serves as a positive voice and leader within the industry.

Gold Level ($2,000)

Silver Level ($850)

Thank you Allied Members for all of your support through the years and welcome to our new Allied Members. We are greatly appreciative of our members continuing to renew your membership and support of the Nebraska Pork Producers Association. We look forward to a successful 2016 with our three tiers of membership.

If you have any questions, please contact Sandra Kavan at sandra@nepork.org or at (402) 472-0493.

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Gold Level ($2,000)

Russ Vering
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Silver Level ($850)

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Kelly Cobb
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Ryan Schulz, Senior Account Manager for Hormel Foods, accepts the 2015 Outstanding Allied Member plaque from President Scott Spilker.
### Silver Level ($850)
- Elanco Animal Health
- Fast Genetics, USA
- Hermitage NGT
- Holmes, Murphy and Associates, LLC
- JES Environmental Services, Inc.
- Kemin Industries, Inc.
- Livingston Enterprises, Inc.
- Lynch Livestock, Inc.
- Madison Farm Supply
- Midland Vet Services
- Motomco, Ltd
- National Pork Board
- National Pork Producers Council
- Nebraska Corn Board
- Nebraska Corn Growers Association
- Nebraska Rural Radio Association
- Nutrient Advisors
- ONCE, Inc.
- Osborne Industries, Inc.
- Phibro Animal Health Corp.
- PIC
- Pinnacle Bank
- Proovni North America, Inc.
- Purina Animal Nutrition
- Sandy Pine Systems
- Standard Nutrition
- Swine Management Services, LLC
- Wahoo Concrete Products
- We Support Ag
- Whole Hog Genetics
- XFE Products
- Zoetics
- Zoltenko Farms, Inc.

### Bronze Level ($350)
- Elanco Animal Health
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- Hermitage NGT
- Holmes, Murphy and Associates, LLC
- JES Environmental Services, Inc.
- Kemin Industries, Inc.
- Livingston Enterprises, Inc.
- Lynch Livestock, Inc.
- Madison Farm Supply
- Midland Vet Services
- Motomco, Ltd
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