



## Joe Higgins

Joe Higgins is the sow division manager for Cooper Farms headquartered in Oakwood, Ohio. Cooper Farms is a family-owned business with sow farms and turkey breeding, laying, hatching and processing operations throughout northwestern and western Ohio. Cooper Farms' swine operation has more than 12,000-head of sows that produce 300,000 pigs annually. Joe joined Cooper Farms in 1997 and is responsible for monitoring production practices at the company's sow farms.

From 1993 to 1997, Joe was a farm manager for Kalmbach Feeds in Upper Sandusky, Ohio – a family-owned business that manufactures and sells feed and animal nutrition product and also operates sow units that produce 83,000 pigs each year. Joe was in charge of building the company's sow units. He also served as farm manger for CEW Farms in Gainesville, Ga. from 1988 to 1993 and assistant farm manager for the former Dinner Bell Farms in Goldsboro, N.C. from 1986 to 1988.

Joe has been a longtime member of the Ohio Pork Producers Council and has served on its Further Education Committee. He currently serves as a PQA-Plus (Pork Quality Assurance) Advisor for the National Pork Board. The PQA-Plus program provides farm assessments and audits, and educates producers to ensure quality animal care. Joe received a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture with a major in animal science and a minor in agriculture economics from The Ohio State University, Columbus, in 1986. He has been a Certified Livestock Manager since 2004, a license obtained from the Ohio Department of Agriculture that is required for individuals who manage more than 10,000 animal units. The certificate also demonstrates that the individual is trained in the operation of large-scale animal production.

Joe is a native of Elyria, Ohio. He and his wife Tamara, and their 10-year-old son Brian live in Dupont where he is active in the Dupont First Church of God.