



# Unlock New Value from Porcine Co-Products

Transform overlooked materials into market-ready opportunities.



## SSR Crowdsourcing Challenge

### The Goal

Sustainable Swine Resources (SSR), a subsidiary of Johnsonville LLC, is seeking new ideas on how to optimize the sustainability and monetization of porcine (swine) tissue, blood, bone, hides/skin, organs and fat that are not used in Johnsonville’s sausage-making process. SSR is soliciting ideas from university professors, students, research laboratories, subject-matter experts, entrepreneurs and other institutions or individuals who may present a breakthrough idea (or ideas) for SSR. Monetary awards for the top ideas (see selection criteria below) will be presented at the close of the challenge term.

### Background Information

SSR generates a variety of high-volume co-product streams—including porcine blood, hides/skins, bones, organs, tissue, and fat—where portions are currently underutilized or sold into low-value commodity markets (e.g., leather, rendering). SSR is focused on moving these materials up the value chain into premium markets, pursuing applications with specialty ingredient manufacturers, pharmaceutical or medical device companies, pet food manufacturers, bioprinting and tissue engineering firms, and others. Existing internal capacity is limited; innovative solutions could involve creating minimally processed intermediates for sale, supporting new technology adoption, or forging partnerships with established buyers in functional foods, advanced biomaterials, regenerative medicine, and nutraceuticals.



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SSR is considered a medium-sized harvester, predominantly sow, with plants in Wisconsin, Kansas, and Canada. Due to size of the animal, materials are often larger, stronger, and have more biologically active components available than those from butcher sized pigs. The harvest operations do not chill carcasses and have more freezing than refrigeration space. Each plant has designated space for materials going to life sciences with several items already designated as raw materials for wound healing medical devices. A few materials are used as raw materials for pharmaceuticals and multiple items are transferred into pet food/pet treats by our customers.

SSR values proposals that directly address one or more of the following goals:

- Unlocking higher value uses or markets for porcine co-products (blood, bone, hides/skins, organs, tissue, fat)
- Establishing or expanding sales to new buyers and buyer segments
- Demonstrating clear pathways to commercialization, including regulatory, scalability, and partnership considerations

## Areas of Interest

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the following industry applications:

- Biotechnology (e.g., functional proteins, tissue culture, ECM/extracellular matrix)
- Medical Devices & Diagnostics (e.g., hydroxyapatite for bone grafts, bioinks)
- Medical/Surgical Applications (e.g., regenerative medicine scaffolds, heparin substitutes)
- Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods (e.g., collagen peptides, plasma proteins)
- Pet Food & Animal Nutrition (e.g., high-protein feed, plasma for immune health)
- Cosmetics and Personal Care (e.g., collagen/gelatin for beauty products)
- Advanced Materials (e.g., bioprinting, wound healing, sustainable packaging)
- Any other areas that may help SSR to increase distribution and profitability, especially those that provide a credible route to a high value, differentiated buyer or market.

***\*NOTE: Please feel free to forward this challenge brief to others in your network who you feel may be qualified to submit a response.***



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## Selection Criteria

Monetary prizes will be awarded to the top 5 ideas providing insights that match the following criteria:

- Likelihood of unlocking higher profits and value-added revenue for SSR
- Direct and specific need for porcine co-product(s) in the proposed idea
- Clear pathway to the sale of porcine products, with prioritized focus on premium/end-use buyers
- Potential for long-term B2B or partner relationships (e.g., with manufacturers, specialty processors, R&D companies)
- Scalability and feasibility for SSR's operational scale and footprint
- Regulatory viability (food/medical/environmental)
- Sustainability or circularity impact beyond conventional solutions
- Degree of novelty or technical innovation in comparison to status quo

## Areas NOT of Interest

- Biodiesel production via conventional rendering
- Traditional composting, bulk rendering, or landfill avoidance/diversion
- Any use cases or markets that represent a low-value or “commodity” end use, unless part of a credible stepped value-creation strategy

## Other Considerations

- Solutions may include proposals for vertical integration (SSR adopting new internal capabilities or processes to enable the new idea)
- 3rd party partnerships or joint ventures with other organizations, including established manufacturers, technology providers, or distributors
- SSR may consider incubating/funding startups or consortia that present especially promising technologies
- Preference for proposals that identify or make contact with specific potential buyers, or show knowledge of their requirements and procurement dynamics



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## Submission Guidelines

Successful entries should:

- Specify which waste stream(s) are being used (blood, bone, hides/skins, organs, tissue, fat)
- Describe the technical or process steps proposed
- Identify targeted end-use application(s) and likely buyer segments
- Address any anticipated challenges regarding regulation, scalability, or sustainability
- Provide a business model or partnership plan for commercialization

## Challenge Schedule

Challenge Launch

**February 3, 2026**

Idea Submission Period

**February 3 – April 3, 2026**

First Round Winner Selections

**April 15, 2026**

Second Round Idea Refinement Submissions

**May 15, 2026**

Second Round Winner Selection

**June 15, 2026**

Challenge Prize Structure

First Round Top 5 Winners - **\$1,000 each**

Second (Final) Round Winner(s) – **Up to \$10,000\***

*\*Up to \$10,000 can be awarded to one team or split among teams based on final submissions meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> round criteria. Final winner(s) will be selected from the top 5 finalists from the First Round, and based on a “Pitch” session that will be scheduled between Rounds. In order for Second Round Winners to receive a prize, the Pitch must show a marked value-based enhancement from the original idea submitted in the First Round.*



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## Registration

To register, please go to <https://ssr-innovation.com>. At this site you will be able to set up your profile and submit your idea. You will also have access to the leaderboard to see how your idea progresses.

**Note:** Optional webinars and open Q&A sessions will be scheduled for prospective applicants; links to select relevant buyers and technology partners may also be provided.

*Please ensure you review the most current SSR Challenge guidelines and context, as updates may be posted based on new buyer intelligence or strategic directions.*