



# Mexico

## Q&A with Production Director Ezequiel Guardado Valdez

### Personal background

I come from a very humble family that had to immigrate from Zacatecas to Jalisco in search of opportunities. I am the fourth of seven siblings. I have always been involved in agriculture. From my childhood I was forced to leave school and start working at age of 13 to help my parents and siblings. From there, the first contact with the pig industry was in 1994 in a weaning of 9000 pigs, for that time it was a large farm. In 1997, I was responsible for 8 farms comprising 3 weaning and 6 finishing facilities. During my period, the farms grew to 18,000 pigs. In 2000, I had first contact with a pig site, and 4 months later, I was assigned responsibility for all the sites the company had (at that time 50,000 females).



I am married and have two boys who are 21 and 16.

### How did you get involved with PIPESTONE?

In August 2015, I left a large company in Jalisco and went to Sonora to start a 10,000 sows project. The owners mentioned to me that they were associated with an American company called PIPESTONE, where I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Gustavo Pizarro and Willy Langholz, great people from whom I learned a lot and I am still learning. In May 2018,

I spent some time back in the Jalisco company, and in September of that same year I started full time directly with PIPESTONE, which allowed me to develop professionally.

### How long have you worked with PIPESTONE?

I have worked for PIPESTONE 3 years and 2 months, starting September 24, 2018.

### What are the best results achieved in Mexico:

- Consistent 32 PSY
- Feed conversion of 2.27 with 127 kgs.
- Wean to Finish mortality of 2.7%

### What are the main challenges of farms in Mexico:

- Health challenges
- Labor (low wages)
- Staff turnover
- Lack of qualified personnel for middle managers

### What is the life of a swine tech like?

In general, life is difficult and a swine tech is not a job that is desired by most people. The average salary is \$100 per week, which is very difficult to live in Mexico.

### What are the challenges of working in Mexico?

Mexico has a few challenges, including: security,

health challenges, politics, and skilled labor.

### What is PIPESTONE's reputation in Mexico?

PIPESTONE's reputation in Mexico is very good, but it certainly generates uneasiness among advisors, suppliers, sellers, etc. who say they are dedicated to the same thing as us.

### What are the good things about PIPESTONE in Mexico?

Something positive is that we are on the side of the producer, providing them with added value. Customers see PIPESTONE as an improvement in their productive results, and therefore in their income. They see a very strong team that can solve any problem that may arise.

### What are the challenges about PIPESTONE in Mexico?:

As we grow, we may lose presence to our customers. It is necessary to find qualified people in order to meet the needs of our customers. It's important to keep up with customer expectations in keeping with PIPESTONE's growth.



Pictured is Ezequiel with Pipestone Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Joel Nerem (left).

### What PIPESTONE has meant for you personally and for the Mexico team?

For me, it has meant a great personal fulfillment. Here I have the balance in a company that values you in your work, that supports you, that gives you a backup, that always gives you support, and that behind you there is always a great team to solve any challenge that may arise. I am very grateful to the entire team, both from Mexico and the United States. For the team it has meant opportunities for my colleagues to have a stable job with a living wage, adding value for the company and for our clients. **I always give my best in everything I do.**



Pictured from left is Ezequiel with Pipestone Management President, Dr. Barry Kerkaert, and Pipestone Latin America President, Dr. Gustavo Pizarro.



Pictured is Ezequiel with Dr. Gustavo Pizarro (left).