

ALBERTA BIOSECURITY CHAMPIONS

Alberta Biosecurity Champions

SPRING EDITION

January - March

Perception Versus Reality

CFIA's Animal Health Biosecurity Campaign

- CFIA Key Messages
- Ropin the Web update
- FMD Travel Advisory

Biosecurity

Contact Information



PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY

Preventing introduction of infectious disease onto farms and limiting transmission of disease between segregated units are mandatory conditions of sustainable hog production. Contemporary biosecurity concepts grew out of the need to control disease within the current infrastructure of our hog industry, today's barn design and existing production methods.

Modern biosecurity practices in the pork industry are founded on 3 basic principles:

1. Preventing introduction of disease into barns
2. Limiting the transmission of disease between groups of swine in a production unit, and
3. Breaking the cycle of transmission from one generation to the next

While many good biosecurity practices have been an integral part of swine production for decades, the ability to objectively measure their impact remains elusive. Commodity-wide development of national biosecurity standards and benchmarks will help create tools that can be used to quantify and measure the value of biosecurity.

It is generally recognized that the greatest risk of introducing new pathogens into herds is associated with introduction of new animals. Risk can be minimized by carefully monitoring the health status of source herds and isolating replacement stock long enough to assess the health status of new arrivals. Though these and other basic biosecurity measures seem intuitive, they are frequently not implemented. Large-scale studies in Spain ¹ involving farm-level managers of extensive corporate swine enterprises associate lack of compliance with:

- Poor training of farm personnel
- Lack of communication between organizational levels providing health care
- Lack of motivation for following established protocols
- Poor record keeping
- Failure to audit compliance
- Discrepancy in perception of biosecurity priorities

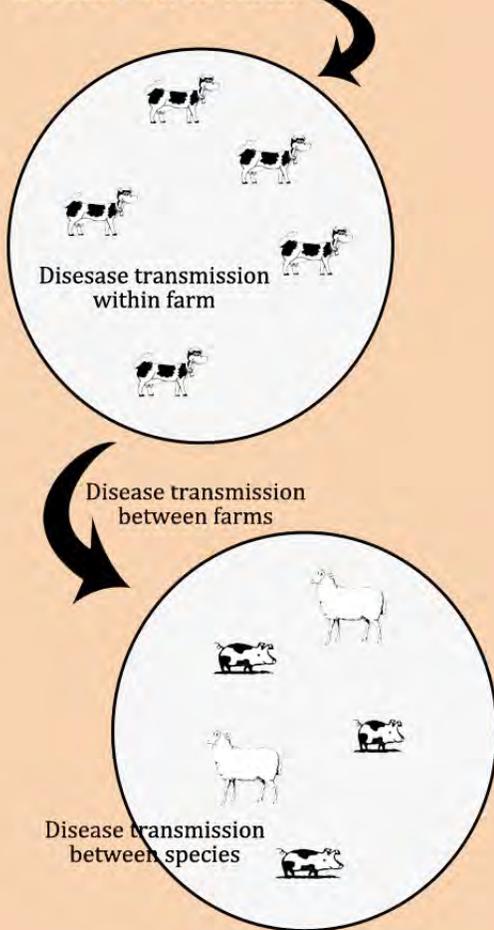
Perceptions about the importance of various biosecurity measures vary widely among producers as do perceptions about the overall level of biosecurity actually practiced on individual farms. The 10 most important biosecurity measures identified by farmers in the Spanish study included:

1. J.Casal, A. DeManuel, E. Mateu, M. Martin. Biosecurity measures on swine farms in Spain: Perceptions by farmers and their relationship to current on-farm measures. Preventative Veterinary Medicine. November 2007.



BIOSECURITY NEED'S 'U'!

Disease on to farm



Biosecurity practices can minimize the introduction and/or transmission of disease on a given farm, between farms and between species.

- Health status of source herds for replacement stock
- Visitor records
- Availability of dressing rooms and showers
- Changing into boots provided by the host farm
- Vehicle control onto and off farms
- Disinfection of vehicles
- Sanitary ford (disinfection zone)
- Fencing
- Bird proof nets, and
- Worker hygiene (including worker contact with other pigs)

Of the top 10 measures, only changing boots and attention to the source of breeding stock were regularly applied on all farms. Although the health status of replacement breeding stock ranked highly it had little relationship with adoption of other biosecurity measures like routine isolation of new arrivals.

High on the list of measures perceived as reducing risk was controlling access of people and vehicles although practices in this regard were inconsistently applied. Use of signs, provision of clean boots and coveralls and clear demarcation of clean and dirty zones were variable. Disparity between farms related to the use of bird proof netting, rodent control and off-site exposure of farm workers to other pigs was clearly evident.



In swine producing areas, a high percentage of disease outbreaks are due to transmission of infectious agents from neighboring farms. Only 1 in 10 of the respondents in the Spanish study considered distances between farms important.

While there was an association between biosecurity measures considered important by individual farmers and those actually adopted on farms, the level of understanding how diseases were transmitted varied as did perceptions about the relationship between a given biosecurity measure and the reduction in risk it represented.

CFIA'S ANIMAL HEALTH BIOSECURITY CAMPAIGN

In January 2010, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) launched a national awareness campaign on biosecurity. Producers and veterinarians across Canada are receiving tips and information about biosecurity measures. A variety of mediums have been employed. CFIA promotional material includes:

- A calendar with biosecurity tips
- Direct mail pieces for producers and veterinarians
- Instructional video on core biosecurity principles
- On-line tools and resources
- Exhibit resources for use at meetings and trade shows
- Radio spot promoting the fact that animal health starts on the farm through biosecurity

Among the key messages promoted by CFIA:

- Farm-level biosecurity is a good investment
- Healthy animals are essential to food safety and public health
- Animal health starts on the farm
- Have a biosecurity plan
- Regularly observe animals for signs of disease and report abnormalities to a veterinarian early

Further information is available at CFIA's website: www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity or call 1-800-442-2342

Ropin' the Web Biosecurity Webpage undergoes re-design

The Biosecurity Webpage on Ropin' the Web took on an entirely new look in August of last year. The new web page has updated biosecurity information and important links to the biosecurity activities of other key organizations. A great deal of information exists on emerging biosecurity issues, development of national standards and the down-to-earth stuff of how we incorporate biosecurity into everyday production practices. Visit the new webpage at www.agric.gov.ab.ca/biosecurity.

FMD travel advisory and awareness material

Concerns about foot and mouth disease (FMD) in Asia and the potential of the highly infectious virus finding its way to North America in imported food products or as a contaminate on belongings of ten's of thousands of people visiting Canada from countries with FMD remains front and centre. To create awareness about FMD and the dire effect FMD would have on our economy, Alberta Agriculture and CFIA has collaborated in the production and distribution of posters and brochures to a wide audience involved with the livestock industry in Alberta.





If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, or if you have any ideas for future articles, please contact the Growing Forward Biosecurity Program office in Edmonton at: 780-422-6630. This is a toll-free call through the Government RITE line by dialing 310-0000-780-422-6630

Growing Forward Biosecurity Program is accepting applications for 2011/2012

Contact: Cara Dary
R. 780-643-1077
F. 780-427-1437
E. cara.dary@gov.ab.ca

**Government
of Alberta** ■
Agriculture
and Rural
Development

O.S. Longman Building
9th flr 6909 116 Street
Edmonton, AB T6H 4P2
T. 780-422-6630
F. 780-427-1437

www.agriculture.alberta.ca

BIOSECURITY:

- minimizes introduction of disease onto farms
- reduces transmission of disease between animals
 - limits the spread of disease between farms
- controls the spread of disease between animals & people
 - is about identifying risk & taking action
 - supports sustainable agriculture
 - doesn't have to be expensive to be effective
 - represents good business
 - is about doing the small things right everyday
 - prevents unintended & expensive accidents
 - involves all types of livestock & poultry
- risks include livestock, people, supplies, equipment & barns
 - depends on monitoring herd & flock health
 - increases competitiveness
 - works best when people work together
 - happens best when "reasons" are understood
 - is everybody's business
- influences animal health, food safety & public health
 - starts on the farm
- requires a plan with regular review by a veterinarian
- is about preventing rather than reacting to problems



Distributed compliments of the Biosecurity Champions