



Foreword

Dr Mary Carr, Chief Veterinary Officer, South Australia

AUSVETPLAN is our overarching guidance policy document for undertaking a disease response. However, there are no guarantees when it comes to emergency animal diseases that things will roll out exactly as planned.

We need to remain adaptive and responsive to the situation we are faced with on the day. What we do know is that biosecurity is the key to preventing disease outbreaks and onward spread.

What you do at your farm or business now is important as it will influence the size and the length of the outbreak and the resulting impact on industry.

Those with high biosecurity will also be better positioned to provide the assurances that underpin approvals for movement permits which will help maintain business continuity and alleviate potential animal welfare impacts.

The South Australian pig industry biosecurity project is a partnership with the whole supply chain which aims to improve biosecurity so that we have the best defence ready to tackle an emergency animal disease outbreak should one ever occur here in Australia.

Pork Supply Chain Biosecurity ...

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Overview of benefits

Australia faces an increasing risk of serious diseases such as foot and mouth disease and African swine fever.

A biosecurity incursion would have huge implications for the pork industry. Producers need to keep pigs moving to prevent animal health and welfare problems and to capture their value. Added to that, there is limited capacity in the supply chain to hold onto pigs and catch-up on any processing backlog.

If an abattoir were to be contaminated, this would result in industry-wide impacts up and down the supply chain.

When it comes to a disease outbreak, recovery starts at the same time as the response for the pork industry.

Recognising these risks, Pork SA has developed partnerships with the South Australian Government and commercial entities to invest in biosecurity measures along the pork supply chain to:

- Help prevent introduction of the disease to farms in the event of a disease outbreak.
- Prevent wider spread to industry and other areas of the supply chain preventing shutdowns.
- Reduce the occurrence of high-risk trace premises.

- Support producers to access movement permits in the event of a disease outbreak.
- Support supply chain business continuity, including:
 - assuring supply of safe pig semen to producers
 - maintaining supply of pigs to abattoirs
 - keeping abattoirs safe and operating
 - maintaining product supply to retail markets
 - maintaining customer and consumer confidence in pork
- Minimise cost and impact to industry and government in the event of an outbreak.
- Reduce the risk of industry-wide animal and producer welfare problems.
- Minimise the size of any outbreak, eradicate and return normal production in a disease-free environment as soon as possible.

These measures provide a response toolkit for government and industry.

Investing in biosecurity preparedness across the supply chain is critical for all South Australian pig producers.

These investments support official eradication of any diseases, minimising adverse supply chain disruption and underpin business recovery.



Andrew Johnson, Chair Pork SA and Dr Mary Carr, CVO, SA.

The investments

- Biosecurity infrastructure
 - preventing spread of contamination at crossover points
 - maintaining semen supply (SABOR) and transport biosecurity at abattoirs
- Biosecurity capability – pig industry biosecurity officer
 - Projects:
 - Benchmark farm biosecurity to target improvements
 - Assist in the development of on farm destruction, disposal and disinfection plans
- Biosecurity portal – 1Biosecurity (onebiosecurity.pirsa.gov.au)

How

Industry has worked to identify secondary spread points of any disease incursion. From here, industry-level controls have been identified to mitigate spread from these points.

Key links in the supply chain identified as a priority include:

- boar stud/semen supply
- farm production including property-to-property movements
- transport and abattoirs

One Biosecurity

One Biosecurity is an online platform developed by PIRSA that documents individual producer on-farm biosecurity practices and assists in biosecurity planning and improving practices.

It is planned that biosecurity standards for the pig industry are based on the Voluntary Enhanced Biosecurity Standards (VEBS).

This will allow producers to document and plan their farm biosecurity and record audits (both internal and external) in a way that will allow the information to be readily available to provide the biosecurity assurances likely to be needed for movement permit approvals.



Funding for these projects has been provided through joint investment from producers through the Pig Industry Fund, SABOR, processors Big River Pork and JBS Australia (Seven Point Australian Pork) and the South Australian Government.

Pre-assessment (audit) of controls implemented will provide government with assurances to support decision-making in a disease response, including assessing movement permit applications and approving abattoir operations.

Objective

The objective of these investment is to have supply chain biosecurity controls audited in advance of any outbreak in order to immediately capture their benefits in the case of an emergency animal disease response.

Having these controls in place prior to an outbreak will greatly alleviate pressure and time delays on critical response operations such as tracing, resolving property status, permitting and surveillance.

SABOR BOAR STUD UPGRADES

An expansion and biosecurity upgrades at the SA Artificial Breeding Centre (SABOR) have been funded by SABOR, the South Australian Government Regional Growth Fund and Pork SA.

The expansion and upgrades at SABOR have been completed and a site visit undertaken by the SA Chief Veterinary Officer.

This means SA's pig industry and the semen producers rely on is already being protected. This is critically important given the rising threat of African swine fever and foot and mouth disease.

Benefits to producers

Investments in upgrading biosecurity and expanding capacity at SABOR will:

- Ensure there is minimal risk of SABOR becoming infected in a disease outbreak
- Prevent spread of infection
- Underpin recovery by supporting business continuity for pig producers
- Safeguard high-value genetics
- Support the pig industry nationally

Up to 90 per cent of the Australian pig industry is dependent on regular deliveries of fresh semen to breed pigs through artificial insemination.

SABOR is Australia's largest pig artificial insemination centre, based in the Clare Valley. A \$1.3 million investment in the expansion of SABOR has increased its capacity to service sows in SA from 65 per cent to 90 per cent.

SABOR's expansion also significantly boosts national reserves should there be disease infections in boar studs interstate.

In addition to expansion, there have been upgrades to biosecurity at the centre. The centre now has additional physical barriers in place that restrict workplace movements of people and animals that will enable separate parts of the facility to be locked down in the event of a disease incursion.

These upgrades will help to protect the pig industry's high-value genetics in the case of an outbreak



New boar shed that has expanded capacity.

Source: SABOR



High security fence and compacted boundary to exclude pest animals.

Source: SABOR



High security quarantine facility to house boars in isolation prior to introduction.

Source: SABOR

Upgrades include:

- Improved showering and transport washdown facilities
- Increased disease testing of animals
- Double fencing to reduce access of pests and other species to the property
- Enhanced biosecurity procedures for each work section of the facility

that will also improve the chance of containing and preventing diseases

The biosecurity enhancements at SABOR, combined with routine semen delivery off-site (i.e. no direct interaction at breeder-sites) provide multiple layers of protection, maximising prospects of business continuity.

ENHANCED FARM BIOSECURITY

What

A Pig Industry Biosecurity Officer – Chelsea Dossett – has been employed by PIRSA Biosecurity with matching Pork SA funding support. Chelsea will help pig producers to improve biosecurity practices and prepare for the potential incursion of emergency animal diseases, including African Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease.

The biosecurity officer role will help to provide a network and build partnerships with industry, stakeholders, research organisations and regional communities to guide the development and delivery of important biosecurity programs to improve disease preparedness, resilience and recovery.

Chelsea's first project was to benchmark 35 farm biosecurity standards across the suppliers of pigs to SA abattoirs. Her initial report covered farms supplying more than 75 per cent of pigs processed by the two large abattoirs in SA.

Initial work by Chelsea will assist to develop capabilities that help to assure the safe movement of pigs in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak.

This applies to routine shipment to slaughter and routine property-to-property movements for multi-site producers.

Her work identified key biosecurity preparedness gaps at the industry level that will inform what assistance needs to be provided and by whom to improve biosecurity compliance with higher biosecurity standards.

Chelsea will also support the industry to increase capacity for development of destruction, disposal and disinfection (DDD) contingencies for farms. This will involve working on guidelines for both inside the farm gate but also with organisations outside the farm gate such as local government and the Environment Protection Agency.

How

The biosecurity officer role is funded by matching contributions from producers through the Pig Industry Fund and the South Australian Government. The initial project-based contract is for two years.

Being based within PIRSA Biosecurity, Chelsea brings key industry knowledge to support development and delivery of government programs.



Chelsea's work program is overseen by a steering group which meets fortnightly, comprising of Pork SA representatives, industry and government veterinarians and is chaired by the Chief Veterinary Officer.

Benefits

Investing in enhanced farm biosecurity provides benefits to the South Australian pork industry, including:

- Fostering a culture of increased biosecurity among pig producers that results in a change in practices
- Preventing introduction of infection into and spread of disease from herds
- Supporting the safe movement of pigs in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak

Disease preparedness exercises have highlighted that higher biosecurity practices will be critical in keeping the size of the outbreak small (less chance for spread) and will assist producers/industry to safely move animals when

permitted during the response and recovery to a disease incursion.

These practices are enshrined in the Voluntary Enhanced Biosecurity Standards (VEBS) developed by industry and government, endorsed by the Animal Health Committee, and delivered to industry via the APIQ quality assurance platform.

Pre-assessment of higher biosecurity standards provides the Chief Veterinary Officer with key information to:

- Assess risk of disease introduction and spread
- Assess herd risk classification
- Assist in assessing a herd as negative for infection and increase assurance the negative status is likely to still be the case (introduction is unlikely to have occurred just prior to or after sample collection)
- Assess farms as an assured supply of safe pigs to abattoirs and grow-out facilities.

Having the right information can also help producers to prioritise key areas or mitigations for improvement with on-farm biosecurity.

When

Farm biosecurity benchmarking results were delivered to industry veterinarians and participants in November 2022.

An industry report on the benchmarking results will be delivered by the end of March 2023.

Reports and an extension program will target commercial producers who supply South Australian abattoirs.



TRANSPORT BIOSECURITY – VEHICLES AND DRIVERS



Dr Mary Carr, CVO SA and Andrew Johnson, Chair Pork SA.

- Prevent escalation of industry-wide adverse effects due to abattoir closure.

Pig abattoirs are a point where pig transporters co-mingle, creating cross-over points that may lead to disease spread.

Transport hygiene presents a significant risk to supply chain biosecurity. African swine fever and foot and mouth disease are both known to spread via contaminated vehicles, people and equipment.

It is plausible that abattoirs could already be contaminated prior to an industry diagnosis. Consequently, there is the potential for a large number of trace premises needing to be assessed in an outbreak due to the high volume of transport in the pig industry.

Therefore, the Chief Veterinary Officer and pork industry stakeholders need assurance of transport biosecurity as a routine before any serious outbreaks occur, which will be a basic requirement to keep pig transporters moving safely and potentially limit restrictions placed on farms that comply.

When

The truck wash, disinfection and driver facility points are currently under construction. The Big River Pork facility will be fully commissioned in mid 2023, while the facility at Seven Point Australian Pork will be commissioned by the end of 2023.

What

Truck and driver wash and disinfection facilities are being installed at export pork abattoirs Big River Pork, Murray Bridge, and Seven Point Australian Pork (JBS Australia), Port Wakefield.

These disinfection points include driver hygiene facilities so they can shower between trips back to farms.

The new facilities will provide:

- Livestock crate and under-truck carriage washing capability
- Barriers between bays to prevent cross-contamination
- Disinfection capability and drainage systems which prevent recontamination of trucks
- CCTV for auditing compliance
- Waste management which isolates contamination and meets Environment Protection Authority (EPA) requirements.

These upgrades will ensure control criteria endorsed by the Federal Government's Animal Health Committee to prevent disease spread are implemented. This includes ensuring trucks attending abattoirs are not a source of disease spread and transport biosecurity is managed as a key part of emergency animal disease permitting requirements for movement.

The upgrades are an essential element of wider abattoir controls and the

Approved Processing Facility status that will be needed to operate in a response and recovery scenario.

How

These upgrades are being funded by pig producers through the Pig Industry Fund, matched by funding from the South Australian Regional Growth Fund and a substantial cash contribution from processors, reflecting their strong commitment to industry biosecurity.

Benefits to producers

Wash and decontamination facilities for trucks and drivers at both major pork abattoirs will support:

- Keeping pigs moving safely in the event of a disease outbreak
- Help minimise disease introduction and spread to farms



Testing new truck wash and disinfection facility at Big River Pork.

More information

porksa.com.au



**Government of
South Australia**



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