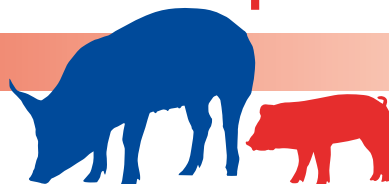


Abattoir Update

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Trichinella legislative testing regime update

The three-year Trichinella legislative testing regime project is two years in, and processors are coping well with the requirements, with even more pig testing being performed in the UK.

In the year before introduction, the period 1 June 2013 to 31 May 2014, 247,315 test results were submitted to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) from self-testers and those using the FSA contract testing service.

In the first year following introduction, this increased by 36% to 383,821, and in the latest year, from 1 June 2015 to 31 May 2016, this number has increased again to 470,966 pigs tested. Please note that these figures do not include tests performed on pigs for the export market.

Emma Bailey-Beech, the AHDB Pork Safety Manager says that the UK will still be part of Europe this time next year, by which time some producers will have three years of negative test results and may wish to apply for the derogation from full testing.

“No matter what happens, testing remains a legislative requirement under UK law,” she adds.

“For this reason, I’m encouraging producers to continue to test because we want to be in a strong position to assure all possible markets that English pork is safe, regardless of the impact that ‘Brexit’ has on applications for derogations from full testing.”

Producers, or groups of producers, who wish to gain a ‘derogation’ from testing need to provide three years of Trichinella-free data to support an application by the FSA to the European Commission. They also need to apply controlled housing conditions as described under the new testing regime.

Self-testers need to make sure their results are submitted to: sla.contracts@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk so we have the evidence required to obtain future derogations.

CCIR project is making good progress

Several workstreams related to CCIR are coming into fruition with a number of initiatives outlined below.

Karro have been using new condition cards to train meat inspectors, which, together with a training supervisor, will endeavour to provide a good result when the plant is reassessed.

The FSA plans to roll out the new K2 software, (which records lesions found by the meat inspectors), and training to the majority of pig plants from mid-November.

Ramon Romero, the FSA FCI/CCIR programme manager, is certain that the partnerships with the industry to further standardise the post-mortem data recording will be delivering quantifiable results increasing public health, animal health and animal welfare, while facilitating improvements at the production stage.

“Both the Karro trial, and the independent work being carried out by Cheale Meats, are promising great improvements on the quality of post-mortem data and processor and FSA operational efficiencies.”

New consumer location app launched

A free smartphone app, called 'Where's This From?' has been designed to provide consumers with more information on the food they buy in UK supermarkets.

Once downloaded, the app can be used to scan the four-digit European Union (EU) Identification Mark, which appears on every packet of meat and mince. These codes link to publicly available data, published by the FSA, on approved meat operators in Great Britain.

Information appears detailing the name and location of the farm, slaughterhouse and transport operators. Users can also see which types of food are handled by that operator. 'Where's This From?' also reveals how each stage of the supply chain fares in the FSA standards for hygienic production and animal welfare, by boiling down ratings to a simple verdict such as 'best in show' or 'could do better'.

Click here to find out more about 'Where's This From?'

The app is completely free and can be downloaded by clicking **here** for iPhones and **here** for Androids.



Open data available from Food Standards Agency

What is open data?

Put simply, it is data that anyone can access, use, or share. It is free at the point of use, and licensed with that principle in mind.

But not all open data is created equally. Often data that is published remains in the original format, usually PDF or other non-interactive formats.

The value and power of open data comes from making sure that data is structured in a way so that it is machine readable. This is why Tim Berners-Lee proposed a 5-star scheme to represent the quality of open data deployments. The FSA wants 'their' open data to average 3 stars (more info on the 5 star scale at <http://5stardata.info/en>).

Why?

Making data open represents an opportunity for FSA, the industry, and consumers. It gives consumers transparency about aspects of foods they eat every day. The FSA Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) data is one of the most popular open datasets available today, and FSA is planning to expand that to other areas of food production and supply.

Open data has transformed the way people use services. Transport for London's open data, showing bus and train arrivals and departures in real time, powers the mobile apps that help you get from A to B.

By making this data available, users are able to answer questions immediately, at little cost to the data owner. FSA wants to do that for food.

How?

The FSA has published an Information Asset Register: www.food.gov.uk/about-us/data-transparency-accounts/information-asset-list. This is a living document that is updated to reflect the current data assets.

The FSA is working through these to publish the associated datasets. Published datasets are available on data.gov.uk/publisher/food-standards-agency

How can you help?

Talk to the FSA! By engaging now, you will have the greatest opportunity to help shape the data strategy and delivery of open data commitments.

The FSA wants you to help them understand where user needs and good governance meet. How to protect personal and commercially sensitive data, but meet the challenge of publishing data that has utility for those that want to use it: the industry as well as consumers.

You can contact the Open Data team at: data@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

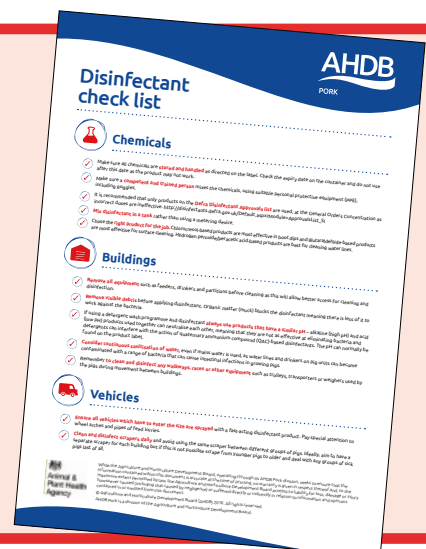
Disinfectant checklist available to download

AHDB Pork has developed a disinfectant checklist to help those who are in charge of cleaning and disinfecting the lairage, with the view of minimising the risk of disease breakout and spread.

The checklist covers information on mixing and handling disinfectants,

practical tips for cleaning the lairage and relevant information for vehicles that are being kept on site.

The checklist can be downloaded **here**. Please feel free to print this list so it can be displayed clearly for all to see.



Help tackle food waste

In the face of a growing world population, tackling the huge amount of food that goes to waste is a vital step in securing sustainable food supplies, and pig processors can help make a difference.

Studies show that the volume of meat waste across the food chain is relatively low compared to other sectors, with about 20% of meat produced being lost. But that waste has a substantial impact in terms of the land use and carbon footprint, particularly in high-income regions.

One way processors can make a difference is through better utilisation of carcasses, according to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), a non-profit organisation working on behalf of governments across the UK to tackle waste.

There are other issues that abattoirs can tackle to help limit waste. For example,

abattoirs with low throughput, or those in rural areas, can collaborate with others to find ways to optimise waste collection or exploit market opportunities while still following biosecurity criteria.

Meanwhile, processors can look to international markets to think about how to make use of cuts that don't appeal to home markets but could be popular elsewhere. Working closely with pig farmers to develop less wasteful production processes is another area where processors can make improvements – such as appropriate fasting times before slaughter.

Of all the areas for processors to make changes, water use remains top of the list.

According to the Environment Agency (EA), water consumption and emissions to water are the most significant environmental impacts of meat processing.

Measuring the amount of water used for different processes can lead to water-reduction measures that cost little, if anything, to processing facilities. Encouraging staff to think about how they use water can also help cut usage as much as 30%.

Other measures can include on-site water-treatment facilities, smart facilities in toilets or improved efforts to reduce pipe leaks to cut water waste.

UK processor cuts water use 15% and saves £400,000 a year

Recognising the potential to make significant improvements, Tulip, one of the UK's largest pig processors, committed to several voluntary initiatives to reduce waste across the supply chain.

And, following a five-year drive to decrease water use as part of a WRAP campaign, the processor reduced its water use by 15% by implementing a series of simple measures.

Amending its cleaning-in-place systems saves the processor 20,000 litres of water a day, while increasing manual debris removal and introducing reduced-flow taps and waterless urinals in staff areas have also lowered water consumption.

Pinpoint hot spots

Improving its relationships across the supply chain has also helped the

processor pinpoint hot-spot areas of water use and waste, leading to cost savings of nearly £400,000 a year.

As well as working with producers and retailers to improve pig specifications at slaughter and reduce food waste, the processor has looked at ways to reduce processing losses.

This includes training inspection staff to identify variability in pig meat and make sure there is less inconsistency in final products. Tulip has also introduced performance trackers to monitor the performance of every production run.

A second phase of work is now focused on the root causes of yield variability, including non-uniform loins due to presses not working properly, inconsistency in production runs and out-of-spec intake leading to additional processing and downgrades.

Undercover auditor: Pig tails

Occasionally, the undercover auditor is allowed out into the wider world and so I attended the European Association of Animal Production (EAAP) Conference in Belfast at the beginning of September.

The conference was a truly international gathering of scientists who presented research findings and debated topics in a wide range of areas, but high on the agenda was antibiotic use and the development of antibiotic resistance.

Now, given the recent media coverage of ESBL e.coli levels in supermarket samples of chicken and pork products, the concerns expressed at the conference appear justified.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified specific classes

of antibiotics as critically important, (in terms of 'preserving' their effectiveness against otherwise resistant bacteria), and evidence suggests that these need to be a key focus in any reduction programme; specifically within agriculture, as noted in the recently published O'Neill report.

In practical terms, this relates to third and fourth generation cephalosporins and fluoroquinolones; and some retailers have gone as far as to specifically restrict the use within their supply

chain under all but the most exceptional circumstances.

However, there is still some confusion at farm level as to what this means in practice.

A recent case in point being a producer who earnestly described how aware he was of the issues and so had stopped the 'Baytril at day 3' routine in piglets...before explaining that he now used Naxcel instead!

Processors have a role to play in raising awareness and working with producers in reduction and replacement

strategies. It is important that there is 'whole chain' engagement with stewardship initiatives while the process is still voluntary; or risk draconian restrictions on drug use in food animals.



Meet the team: Jean Pierre Garnier



I don't usually speak about myself because I believe there are plenty of others things to talk about in terms of the ever-changing world of meat trade. However, a bit of background is always interesting.

I'm the fourth generation of our family to work in the Paris charcuterie business, a very traditional but declining trade and I'm accompanied by my parents, both grandparents, and a great-grandparent.

Back in the 1960s, it was quite common for employees and bosses to live together in the same house, eating breakfast, lunch, and sometimes supper together. We were running a relatively big business retailing and processing pork, fresh, salted, cooked, smoked and processed in all its guises from all pork cuts, offal, ham, sausages, bacon, pastry products, salads to galantines, pâtés, rillettes, black pudding and so on, all of amazing quality but very labour intensive.

Being brought up in this environment gave me the strong passion that I still have today. Unsurprisingly, I chose to study meat trade and technology at university which still helps me today when the subjects of microbiology, biochemistry and abattoir engineering are discussed. The course ran in

parallel with my management degree which included accountancy, law and marketing.

I finished university at nineteen with some pig abattoir and meat market experience but felt that I was very young to apply for a management position. So, following military service, I went for a job as a trainee in a beef, veal, horse meat and sheep abattoir in rural Normandy to complete my training.

This example shows that anybody looking for a career should look at the meat processing sector for a varied, rewarding and hands-on experience blending tradition, skills and technology. It all starts with training.

Jean Pierre currently works as the head of exports for AHDB Pork.

AHDB Pork contact

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