Helping English pig producers and processors
to become more productive and profitable

AHDB
PORK

AbattoirUpdate

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Know your ACCPs

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point assessments are the bread and butter of product and process food safety in abattoirs. But, increasingly TACCP and VACCP are becoming vital processes to prevent food fraud and ensure authenticity.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)

HACCP assessments are normally carried out by the quality assessment team, who evaluate the entire production process from killing through to cutting and packing.

In some cases, the intake and selection of animals is included and pigs with consistently poor health or high salmonella levels may not be accepted or, they may be killed last on a slower line to avoid cross contamination.

HACCP helps to identify where physical, microbiological or chemical contamination could occur and allows remedial or corrective steps, such as metal detectors, to be put in place. These steps are then continuously validated, verified and reviewed.

You may recall cases of small needles being found in final products. This is an example of when the critical control point failed and was reviewed.

Threat Assessment Critical Control Point (TACCP)

Threat Assessment Critical Control Point, known as 'TACCP' was developed to deal with the increasing threat of intentional and deliberate cases of food fraud.

There are examples where reputations have been damaged and consumers mislead – such as species substitution in red meat and fish. There are also cases where human health has been damaged, for example, the horrific melamine in 'milk' scandal in 2008, which hospitalised thousands of babies in China.

Economic gain is often the outcome that links all food fraud cases and with ever increasing complexity of the supply chain, traceability and communication is becoming vital in prevention.

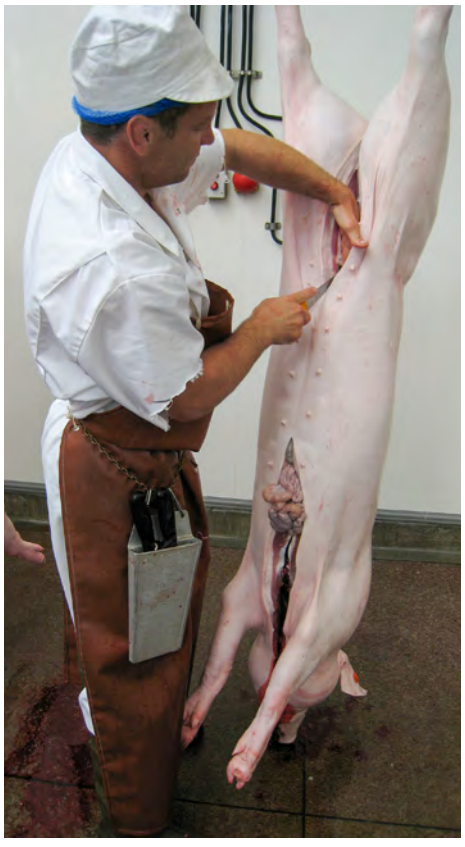
Vulnerability Assessment and Critical Control Points (VACCP)

And finally, Vulnerability Assessment and Critical Control Points (VACCP), another link in the food processors armoury to demonstrate authenticity.

It provides a standard process to help identify where vulnerability occurs in the supply chain, be that an environmental vulnerability, such as a failing harvest affecting supplies or a social vulnerability such as animal disease outbreaks.

This is particularly relevant to cutting plants carrying out further processing, where ingredients are bought in. There are websites that record availability of raw materials, so these should be consulted to help determine risk markers for all ingredients.

Remember, if something seems too good to be true… maybe ask some more questions!



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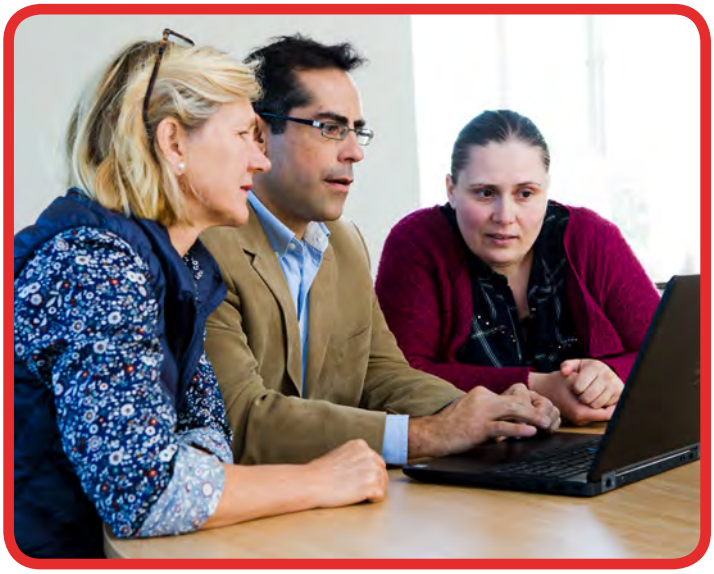
Meet the new BHPS team

HallMark Veterinary & Compliance Services were recently appointed as the new supplier for the Pig Health Scheme, commonly referred to as BPHS, following a tendering process.

Established in 2002, HallMark are based in Gloucestershire and their £6m+ operation employs 43 Field Inspectors and a total of 120 Vets and Meat Inspectors who will bring consistency and a wealth of experience to BPHS.

They have carefully selected nine vets to service the scheme and you can find out more about the new team below.



Guda van der Burgt, Diego Sprekelsen and Teodora Balan from the BPHS team

Teodora, Guda and Diego making an on-site assessment

Mr Diego Sprekelsen (Senior Project Manager and Veterinary Assessor)

Senior Veterinary Manager with over 16 years' experience in veterinary public health, food safety, animal health official controls and regulatory compliance within the agri-food sector.

Mrs. Guda Marina van der Burgt (Lead Veterinary Assessor)

Guda spent the first 15 years of her career in practice, after which she joined the then Veterinary Laboratories Agency in Luddington, near Stratford-upon-Avon, working as a Veterinary Pathologist for 11 years.

As well as being an experienced veterinary assessor, Guda is assisting HallMark with the training, delivery and quality assurance for this project.

Mr Peter Wills (Lead Veterinary Assessor)

Peter worked for HallMark when the company was involved with 'Official Controls' in Yorkshire. After this, he worked part-time as an assessor for BPHS through a local veterinary practice since the commencement of the scheme back in 2005.

Mr Carlo Bianco (Veterinary Assessor)

Having conducted research as a Veterinary Pathologist and worked providing post-mortem inspection services for over a year, Carlo is very familiar with the identification of pig lesions and conditions at post-mortem.

Mr German Sanchez (Veterinary Assessor)

Official Veterinarian with over seven years' experience in veterinary public health, food safety, animal health, animal welfare and official controls and regulatory compliance.

Mr Walter di Filippo (Veterinary Assessor)

Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree in and medicine in 2010 from the University of Napoli (Italy). Postgraduate studies in inspection of animal origin food. Official Veterinarian with over four years' experience in veterinary public health, food safety, animal health, animal welfare and official controls and regulatory compliance within the meat production sector.

Mrs. Teodora Balan (Veterinary Assessor)

Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Medicine with one year's experience in post-mortem inspection. She is one of the most valuable Veterinary Inspectors we have in the HallMark South Wales team. She has been working in all the slaughterhouses around Wales.

Mr Florin Gaina (Veterinary Assessor)

A new member of the team, who joined HallMark primarily to assist with this project. He was selected following scrutiny of CV and excellent referral from existing HallMark colleagues. He is a young, enthusiastic veterinarian with over three years' experience in food safety, including post-mortem inspection.

Mr David Ionut Lucian (Veterinary Assessor)

A new member of the team selected due to his experience and particular interest in pig production and strong recommendations received from established HallMark staff.

Sensor technology developed to detect boar taint

A new sensor technology has been developed, at the Centre for Research in Biosciences (CRIB) at the University of the West of England, which can detect boar taint – the unpleasant taste and smell found in some cooked pork, from entire male pigs.

Existing methods of boar taint detection are laborious, expensive and cannot provide results at the point of test, which means samples have to be sent off to get analysed elsewhere.

However, the new novel technology would provide immediate results 'online', at the point at which the measurements are taken, saving time and money. What's more, testing could be conducted by existing staff at the facility.

Further research is currently being carried out to convert these promising initial results into a commercially available analytical and workable system in the near future. Find out more in the next abattoir newsletter.

Key benefits of the new sensor technology

- Allows 'online' detection of boar taint at abattoirs, providing results at the point of test
- Technology developed in collaboration with industry partners, ensuring it meets the requirement of end users
- Results are provided in minutes, allowing the technology to be incorporated effectively into existing abattoir processes
- Can be used on carcases, as well as raw and processed meat

AHDB Pork contact

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