



Real Welfare update for Vets – 20th September 2013

No. 4

Following the review on the 9th of September, recommendations were put to the Red Tractor Pig Technical Advisory Committee on the 19th September – a key outcome of this is that the collection of Environmental Enrichment data has been suspended until February 2014, pending a re-design.

1. Real Welfare review – 9th September

A total of 20 people attended a Real Welfare review meeting at Stoneleigh Park. This included producers, veterinarians, Red Tractor and BPEX representatives, based on nominations from PVS and NPA. In addition, written feedback was received from 17 stakeholders (including two who were at the meeting). Fourteen of these were from stakeholders in the veterinary profession, the other three from producers. The aim of the meeting was **to review the Real Welfare protocol with a view to identifying and recommending options for refinements which will enhance practicality of the assessments whilst maintaining credibility of the scheme.** Mike Sheldon from Red Tractor chaired the meeting, which lasted 3.5 hours.

The meeting culminated in four recommendations that were put to the Red Tractor Pig Technical Advisory Committee (RT Pig TAC) on the 19th of September. These are:

1. Suspend the Environment Enrichment portion of the protocol until end of Feb 2014 pending a re-design to be carried out by BPEX and the review group.
2. Measuring severe body marks is proving to be both useful and practicable. Measuring minor body marks is proving to be very troublesome and time-consuming. The group will consider the value of the extra information gleaned from the measurement of minor marks, compared to the trouble and cost of gaining the information.
3. Tail lesions: as 2 above.
4. BPEX and the review group to review the sampling procedure for Real Welfare assessments by the end of Feb 2014 to ensure it is practical (to include i. assessment of sampling strategy, ii. information collected outside the five measures, such as genetics information and iii. whether under or oversampling during one visit should be reflected in numbers sampled in subsequent visits).

The group agreed that welfare measures 'lameness' and 'hospital pigs' were both useful and practical and recommended no change, although recommendation 4 will assess the sampling procedure for these measures also.

The RT Pig TAC accepted all recommendations and these will now be taken further by both Real Welfare Steering Group members and invitees to the Real Welfare review. Both groups will be combined for the purpose.

Updates on progress by this combined group will be reported on later this year, including presentation at PVS in November. A full note of the meeting will be published on the BPEX Real Welfare website.

2. Suspension of enrichment – web-portal guidance

As outlined above, assessment of the ‘environmental enrichment’ measure has been suspended with immediate effect. When entering data onto the web-portal simply leave the enrichment question blank. Please beware that the graph for this measure will now not show a unit level result, as the system records the blanks as ‘no pigs active’.

Those that wish to continue recording this information will still be able to submit this through the web-portal and bureau service in the usual way.

3. Bureau service

Thanks to the amount of data being submitted via the Bureau service, they are now recruiting additional staff to help meet data input targets. Please bear with us whilst this process is completed. If you have any feedback on the Bureau Service, please get in touch (rwtraining@bpex.ahdb.oprg.uk)

4. 2 Batch systems – portal entry and sampling.

For AIAO batch finishers with less than 3 batches completed per year there is the option to select 2 visits per year – To do so (whilst we update this on the web-portal) please select “3” visits – this then gives the correct sampling numbers.

NB sampling numbers for 2 batch systems – calculate sampling as though 3 visits per year are being carried out, but only collect data on 2 visits. E.g. a 600 pig unit would require a total sample of 600 pigs over the year, for a 3 visit strategy this would be 3 x 200 pigs per visit, so for a 2 visit strategy this is a 2 x 200 pigs per visit (so over the whole year, 2/3 of the standard total is required).

5. Multiple sites per Red Tractor number

Numbers required for sampling should continue to be worked out on the basis of all units using this number being one farm. We are reviewing the way we want to receive data from multiple units using one Red Tractor number.

6. Producer access

Trials are underway to allow producers to view their results on the Web Portal. They will not be able to view or edit the pen level data, just review the overall results. If this is successful then access will be rolled out to allow all producers to view their results if they wish.

7. Web Portal

- We have implemented a number of small changes, including a change to the way the graphs are displayed. We are working on a solution to make these easily printable.
- The portal should be running at acceptable speed again (please let us know if you are having any issues - rwtraining@bpex.ahdb.org.uk)
- If you do not receive an email on registration, please check your spam folder.
- Passwords can be reset from the login page – if you do not receive a new password on request (having checked your spam folder), please contact rwtraining@bpex.ahdb.org.uk.

8. Results

- Our software developer is working on a printable version of the results graphs which will hopefully be available soon (the most recent update allows all results to be seen on one screen).
- With regards to explaining the graphs to producers – we will publish a guide to interpreting the graphs on the BPEX Real Welfare website.

Top tips

- **Bureau Envelopes** – please do not send more than 15 sheets per envelope (unless adding extra franking) as underfranking can result in delays in delivery to the bureau service.
- **Datasheets** – Number to be observed this pen / Running total box (last rows above Hospital pig row) – for these rows please record only the number of pigs that will be scored for body and tail measures, e.g. 25 pigs from pens of 40. Incorrect numbers in the “number to be observed” box may result in undersampling errors/warnings in data entry.

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