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Swine Newsletter January 2, 2014

Happy New Year,
And may good times roll!

A year ago most pork producers had finished up a woeful year but 2013 was much better. For those of you who have hung on and weathered that long storm (2007 – 2012), last year certainly helped underline the fundamental principles and values that make the pork industry sound. Here's hoping that supply stays light and demand very strong.

I would also like to thank all of you for your support of our business during the past year. It has been a tough go for all agri businesses too. A lot of good clients have exited the industry. We are hoping for stability too.

It is winter time. Thirty years ago most pig farmers really worried about TGE making the rounds in winter and early spring. Then that problem subsided and PRRS became the big threat. Obviously, PRRS can break in a herd at any time of year, but more often they occur in the winter than in the warmer months. And now we are all worried about Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED). Just like TGE, this virus likes the cold weather. It is susceptible to heat and UV light but can survive and move around via vehicles during cold weather.

I think it was very timely that we all had those National Biosecurity Courses a couple of years ago. Having a proper Danish style entry way and having truck sanitation in some control will really reduce the chance of getting various diseases, not just PED.

Sincerely,

R.G. Reed
RR/cp

OSHAB Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) Communication

The Ontario Swine Health Advisory Board and Ontario Pork are working together to identify and implement PED prevention measures that can be implemented quickly with the knowledge that we are working in a very high risk time given that virus survivability increases with cold weather. PED is not in Canada and the primary risk of bringing it into our industry is on contaminated pig trucks from the US. Ontario transporters are willing to do whatever they can to help us prevent the transmission of PEDV and this one of many good news stories and for that we thank our industry.

We have identified and implemented many risk reduction measures already:

1. Separation of US contact and Ontario contact loading chutes.
2. Separating US contact scrape out from Ontario scrape out.
3. Biosecurity controls for foot traffic.

4. Stopping washing and communal scrape out in the US (because these sites may increase the viral load on returning trucks).
5. Increasing the number of dedicated trailers.
6. Auditing and improving wash bay procedures and protocols.
7. Using dry disinfectants on trailers and load chutes.
8. Constructing “transfer stations” at the level of loading chutes to reduce the risk of infecting pigs remaining in the facilities due to contamination from dirty trailers.
9. Testing trailers for prevalence of PED virus.
10. Increasing communication about PED prevention measures to the Ontario pork production industry.
11. Working on index case containment and elimination plans.

We do not have the infrastructure to wash, disinfect and dry all pig transport trucks and one or more facilities to do all stages of this process could cost in the range of 3+ million dollars. There is also a big difference between “washed” and “no risk of disease transmission” procedures. We think that a primary removal of manure seems like the most logical next step, for example a high volume hot water wash in proximity of border crossings which will improve ability and capacity to generate clean trucks as the first stage of cleaning (removal of solids) will already be done. However, we as an industry need to consider ways to make this cost effective and most importantly, ensure it achieves the outcomes we need to reduce PEDV transmission into Ontario.