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Swine Newsletter
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Be Aware of Disease Threats as Temperatures Drop

Changing seasons definitely have an impact on health and performance of swine herds. Just as summer challenges pork producers to keep their breeding herd comfortable despite high environmental temperatures that create reproduction issues, cooler fall and winter seasons ushers in problems like fall abortion syndrome, swine influenza, PRRS and pneumonia.

Fall Abortion Syndrome

Every year I deal with a few herds where there is a rash of abortions in November and December. We suspect PRRS but the samples come back negative. I end up acknowledging another case of Fall Abortion Syndrome. You see, if the sows are in their natural environment and they sense that winter is approaching i.e. harder to find food, cooler, shorter daylight.... then their body somehow knows that it is hard to raise a litter in winter time and will naturally abort the litter. Sort of an amazing phenomena if you ask me! Anyway, we can easily avoid this by simply increasing the

feed that they receive in the fall, leave the lights on for 14-16 hours per day, and prevent draughts. Often, it will be the outside row of sows housed in gestation stalls right beside the curtains or inlets that suffer the abortions.

Of course, if you didn't decrease the feed provided to the dry sows in the spring, and they are already too plump, then it might be impractical to offer them more feed now.

PRRS

New strains continue to emerge. In my opinion PRRS continues to be the number one disease and the most costly disease that pork producers face.

We often become abit complacent during the summer months about bio security. It is time to re-evaluate our procedures. Is your Danish entry way system in place? Is everyone respecting the protocols?

Swine Influenza Virus

I've already seen several cases of SIV this fall. There is no question that we've had increased challenges with influenza A viruses. It seems to be consistent right across the country. It is causing more trouble than it did 15 years ago. I didn't used to recommend Influenza be included in a breeding herd vaccination schedule, but I do now! Even if you are vaccinating for SIV it is possible that a new strain could cause some problems; but much like PRRS virus, it will impact on the herd less if there is some titres (exposure) to vaccine strains then if the herd is totally naïve.

Strep Suis Type II; Glasser's Disease, Pasturella Multocida, etc.

We are constantly challenged with these bacteria. The challenge is less in the summer time when ventilation rates are high. Right now we're just in early autumn and temperatures are still warm, but as we move forward we will start to see more of these bacteria pathogens.

Be sure to look at your pigs every day, and to do something (give an appropriate treatment) to any pig that appears to be sick or injured. This is good stockman ship and of course we should do this each and every day. But I'm always concerned about distractions (corn harvest, plowing, cropitis) that pull good herds people out of the barn.

Summary

Now is a good time to make adjustments and changes in preparation for cooler weather. Check fans, inlets, and controllers. Re-evaluate biosecurity protocols, rodent baiting, feeding programs, and vaccination and medication schedules. I

know your still busy with beans, corn, planting wheat, getting manure out and other outdoor endeavours but don't overlook what needs to be done in the barn.

Have a busy, productive month.

Reg
RR/cp



