



Protein Sources Swine Update September/October 2013

Keeping up with Record-keeping! Lori Feldmann, DVM

Some of you have probably noticed that record-keeping requirements have been increasing dramatically on farms over the past few years. Much of this started with producers wanting to meet the standards of the PQA Plus Site Assessments that they were required to complete so they could continue to market their pigs. Last fall, Tyson rolled out their Farm Check program and starting October 1, 2013 all producers marketing pigs to Hormel should have their Farm Animal Care and Treatment Specifications (FACTS) program in place. The three programs have led to a lot of questions about why we suddenly have three program standards to meet in many of the production systems we work with.

The PQA Plus program has been updating every few years to keep up with changes in the industry, focusing on antibiotic use and animal welfare. We not only discuss how to use antibiotics in a way to keep pork safe for human consumption, but also how to keep appropriate records of that usage and a number of general animal welfare principles. The PQA Plus program was updated in June 2013 with two major changes. There is now a testing component as part of the PQA class with a 25-question test at the end of the class. The PQA Plus Site Assessment is now more in-depth with more accountability for both the producer and the assessor. If you do not meet all of the standards at the time of the assessment a written plan is made and the assessor will follow-up on your progress.

Tyson and Hormel each have their own animal welfare programs and also expect producers to meet all standards of the PQA Plus program. Tyson's program consists of the PQA Plus requirements along with a weekly check sheet for sow farms or a monthly check sheet for grow/finish to audit their compliance with the standards. Hormel's program requires producers to have 13 specific standard operating procedures (SOPs) on site along with records of everything done on farm. These records include everything from mortality and medication records to facility maintenance records and euthanasia equipment maintenance. All three programs randomly select a certain number of sites each year for an audit.

If you are not familiar with these programs, you are probably wondering what each actually requires.

PQA Plus requires the following records:

- Vet/Client/Patient relationship.
- Daily observation (keep for 12 months)
- Medication and treatment records (keep for 12 months after animals are marketed)
- Caretaker Training

Tyson's Farm Check program requires the above records for PQA Plus along with their weekly or monthly check sheet that should be kept on file for 12 months.

Hormel's FACTS program requires the PQA Plus records along with:

- Written animal care policy and records of training
- Written animal abuse reporting policy and records of training
- Monthly testing of alarm, curtain drops, and/or generators
- Record of activated alarms
- Euthanasia equipment maintenance
- Facility maintenance
- Rodent/Pest management
- Animals dead and non-ambulatory in transit

The required SOPs for Hormel's FACTS program are:

- Biosecurity
- Rodent/Pest control
- Nutrition/feed management
- Treatment procedures/Animals in treatment areas
- Euthanasia
- Animal handling
- Transport
- Daily observation
- Caretaker training
- Broken needle procedure
- Emergency action plan
- Facilities repair and maintenance
- Pig processing

In Protein Sources Managed farms, we have worked hard to make sure sow farms and nurseries are meeting the standards required by the packers so shareholders can continue to market their pigs without issue. We started last fall by getting farms in line with PQA Plus and Tyson standards. Now we are in the process of implementing the standards for the Hormel program.

We frequently remind people that record-keeping requirements are not likely to get easier. If you have been struggling to start with your records, www.pork.org or your PQA advisor are great places to start to get the forms you need for PQA. If you market to Tyson or Hormel you should have received information from them and further questions about their specific programs should be directed to your buyer.

If you have questions about how Protein Sources has addressed these programs with managed farms, please contact Dr. Lori Feldmann in the Protein Sources Management Office at 507-524-4511.