



Tavistock Veterinarians PORCINE POST

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Holiday Schedule

Tavistock Veterinarians wished you, your family and your staff a happy Thanksgiving. Both the Tavistock and the Hickson Clinics will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday on Monday October 10th. Either Andrew or myself will be available for emergencies on Saturday October 08 and Andrew will be available for emergencies on Monday October 10th. If you are going to submit lab samples on Thursday October 05 or Friday October 06, remember the samples will not be sent until Tuesday October 11th.

Pharmacy Corner

Just a reminder that the price of BAM's 9.5kg Pot-Pen is \$501.75, this is equivalent to 30 jars which would retail for \$615.00.

National Farm Biosecurity Program

We introduced the National Biosecurity Program in previous newsletters. The goal of the program was to have 500 sites through the program, across the country, by the end of this year. The program is on track to reaching this goal. One of the concerns is that producers will have taken the training but will not have the farm visit completed by the end of this year. One concern of the CHSB is that if the training is not completed this year then access to funding next year may be limited. So if you are considering doing training plan this year on having the farm visit done within 30-60 days of the training. There will still be in-class training offered in November-December but there will be less sessions.

To date, we have not had enough producers interested in training to hold a session. Please let us know soon if you want to take the training this year.

One of the questions I am asked was why was this training program developed? With the outbreak of circovirus, the continuing problems with PRRS and influenza, and concerns over foreign animal diseases the industry felt there was a need to improve biosecurity. Also, some sample biosecurity audits identified common biosecurity gaps. Another reason is that some countries, such as Denmark, which we compete with for market share, have developed a national biosecurity program and are using it to try to add value to their product.

US and Mexico Resolve Truck Dispute

In previous newsletters we have written about the dispute between the US and Mexico over trucking. Mexico believes that under the 1994 NAFTA agreement its trucks should be allowed to haul good into the US. To put pressure on the US, Mexico placed tariffs on a number of goods, including US pork. Early this summer both countries came to an agreement and Mexico reduced the tariff on US pork by half. The 2.5 percent tariff will be suspended when the first Mexican carriers enter the US. So far seven Mexican trucking companies have applied to operate in the US under the pilot program.

Mexico is the second largest market for US pork. In 2010 the US exported \$986 million worth of pork to Mexico and since 1993, US pork exports to Mexico have increased by 780 percent. In 2011, US pork exports to Mexico were down 10% while Canadian exports of pork to Mexico grew by 64 percent.

If at any time the US Congress denies funding to the cross-border trucking program, Mexico reserves the right to reinstate the tariffs and possibly increasing the tariffs and adding tariffs onto new goods.

Antibiotic-free DDGS

A US company has developed a process that will provide antibiotic-free dried distillers grains with soluble (DDGS). The company is called POET and is based in South Dakota. POET is the largest ethanol producer in the world, producing more than 1.7 billion gals of ethanol and 10 billion lbs of DDGS.

An antibiotic, virginiamycin is used to control bacterial contamination in ethanol production. In the US, the FDA considered the DDGS to be adulterated by the virginiamycin. Virginiamycin is approved in Canada as a growth promotant for pigs with zero meat withdrawal.

New Research on PCV₂

I recently attended a meeting where new research was presented on PCV₂/PCVAD. Most producers know that a new strain of PCV₂, called PCV₂b emerged in Canada in 2005 and caused PCVAD. Prior to 2005, there was a PCV₂a, that occasionally caused PMWS. In Europe, PCV₂ was mostly a disease of young pigs. The Europeans found PCV₂b in both normal and diseased pigs, so they believed genotype was not important. John Harding from the University of Saskatchewan found that the PCV₂b caused disease in finisher pigs, with an average age of onset of 11 weeks, a range of 5 – 17 weeks. Harding believes genotype was important.

In 2006, NAHMS conducted a survey of 187 finishing herds in the US. This was prior to the PCVAD outbreaks. They found that 99% of the herds were infected with PCV₂ and on average 80% of the pigs in the finisher were viremic with PCV₂. Of the pigs that were infected, almost half were infected with PCV₂a, half with PCV₂b, and 10% infected with both PCV₂a and PCV₂b.

The study concluded that PCV₂ was everywhere; both PCV₂a and b were widely distributed. Also, antibodies don't clear the virus. One follow-up to the study was that if most finishers are viremic wouldn't most gilts be viremic? If most gilts are viremic wouldn't their piglets be viremic? However, when they tested for PCV₂ in the nursery, the nursery was not infected.

A more recent study from Iowa State has found interesting results. In this study most sows were found to be viremic with no difference in parity, over 40% of sows feces contained PCV₂ and PCV₂ could be found in sows milk and oral fluids. The sows were viremic but had high levels of antibiotics and most colostrum had high antibody levels against PCV₂. Also, almost all the PCV₂ isolated was PCV₂b.

The study also found that some sows that were not viremic, still gave birth to viremic piglets. In two farms in the study, 100% of the stillborns were viremic with PCV₂b. The researchers found high levels of PCV₂ in the farrowing environment.

The study came to the conclusion that most sows are viremic with PCV₂b. Most piglets are infected with PCV₂ at birth or become infected shortly after birth. Although most pigs are infected prior to being weaned the PCV₂ cannot be detected in the nursery; is the PCV₂ remaining in lymphoid tissue? Some questions are: why does the vaccine work so well, when the pigs are already infected at the time of vaccination? Why does the vaccine work well when natural immunity doesn't? Why can't the sows or piglets clear this virus? If the pigs are infected at weaning, why can't we find it in the nursery? Is the virus in the finishing barn the same virus the pigs were exposed to in-utero or in the farrowing area?

PRRS Update

In the last month our clinic has had a number of producers break with PRRS. The outbreaks have been mild (no clinical signs, found on blood testing) to moderate, with no severe outbreaks. The moderate outbreaks usually have some reproductive signs such as: premature farrowings increase in stillbirths. Often sows are fevered and off-feed. Mortality in nursing pigs increases most often because the sows aren't milking. Nursery mortality increases 2-4% because of secondary infections such as Strep suis or Glassers. Some of the herds were PRRS negative, others were PRRS positive. In most cases we do not know the source of the PRRS. In one herd, we suspect incoming gilts were infected in transit because the supplier was negative and the gilts were found positive shortly after arrival.

One comment that is often made is that this is not when we normally have new PRRS breaks, it is more a winter disease. It is true that PRRS survives well in freezing conditions. However, if you look at some of the research that was done, the highest incidence of breaks was in the shoulder seasons of fall and spring. One theory is that with cooler nights the PRRS can survive better in the air. As the day time temperature increases the ventilation systems pull more air from outside into the barn. Scott Dee's work on aerosolization of PRRS found that the best climatic conditions were: cooler temperatures, overcast, high humidity, with a steady wind with occasional gusts.

If your herd does break please participate in the OSHAB PRRS Surveillance project and help build-up the PRRS Databank.