



National Identification and Traceability System – Spring 2005

Traceability and Our Industry

The Canadian Pork Council and the provincial pork organizations have been very proactive in the development of an identification (ID) and traceability system for the Canadian hog industry. As the possibility of foreign animal disease (FAD) increases due to farm animal movement, intensified livestock production and potential risks from bio-terrorism, our industry is developing a plan of action in order to prepare for the challenges of a foreign animal disease outbreak or a food safety crisis.

The goals of the national traceability system are to:

- Help minimize the impacts of a foreign animal disease outbreak
- Help mitigate the risks of a food safety crisis
- Reinforce our domestic and export market access
- Improve the competitiveness of our industry.

Our swine traceability system will support the three components, or “pillars”, of traceability:

- Identification of farms
- Identification of animals
- Tracking movement of animals

It will allow us to localize and provide information on all swine premises, and to trace forwards and backwards all live animal movements on a real-time basis through the following tools:

- National livestock premises registry
- National hog tattoo registry for hogs going to slaughter
- Regional slaughter and marketing databases
- National hog identification and movement reporting system

Critical components of the Canadian swine traceability system will be compatible with ones developed by other livestock sectors. This will be achieved through the collaboration between the Canadian Livestock Identification Agency (CLIA) and industry partners.

Impact on Producers & Industry – Why is this important?

An outbreak of a foreign animal disease would have a resounding long-term effect on the industry. It is estimated that an outbreak in Canada of a swine-related disease, such as Foot-and-Mouth disease, would cost an estimated \$13 to 45 billion. Trade, welfare and processing implications would be enormous; border dependant industries would suffer staggering losses.

If the border was closed to hog and pork exports, the production base would immediately shrink by 50 per cent. In a best-case scenario, the border would close for a minimum of 90 days. This would be devastating for both producers and their livelihoods.

A national swine traceability system could potentially save the industry billions of dollars.

It is crucial that industry lead this initiative, as it is producers who will be most directly impacted by an animal health or food safety crisis. An industry-driven program will also ensure that our system will be practical and cost effective.

What is industry doing about it?

The hog industry already has several measures in place to facilitate the tracing of animals. Currently, in Canada, all hogs are identified prior to going to slaughter. The shoulder slap tattoo is the means of identification for producer payment. This

tattoo also facilitates a level of traceability. Slaughter data is already being collected in some areas in Canada, which can be used as “trace-backs” for hogs. Plans are underway to look at collecting this data in other jurisdictions.

Industry is currently building upon these existing measures to mitigate the potential risks. The Canadian Pork Council is involved with the Canadian Livestock Identification Agency to develop traceability policies and tools to monitor all Canadian livestock. This will put the livestock sector in a position to identify all premises in Canada where hogs are raised, quarantined, auctioned and slaughtered. The Canadian Pork Council and the provincial pork organizations are exploring further options to trace live animal movements.

Implementation

Industry, government and other stakeholders have put together a series of recommendations for the implementation of the National Swine Identification and Traceability System. These groups will continue to collaborate to adjust the recommendations as the systems develops throughout the year. Future consultation will further contribute to this process.

Who is expected to do what?

Running a national traceability program involves time, energy and funds. Stakeholders such as producers, truckers, provincial pork organizations, and traceability database managers will all play a role in its effectiveness. It is important that swine traceability information be:

- Accurate and available quickly following an animal disease outbreak or a food safety crisis for an effective emergency response;
- Available to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and other appropriate agencies in case of an animal health or food safety crisis;
- Compatible with traceability standards from other Canadian livestock sectors, processors and abattoirs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Canadian Pork Council (CPC) will:

- Coordinate with the pork industry in the development of a national strategy and action plan towards ensuring FAD mitigation,
- Work with other industry organizations to support zoning initiatives;
- Coordinate a national tattoo numbering scheme.

Provincial Pork Organizations will:

- Assure that all producers are registered and tattoo numbers are properly allocated within their province;
- Collect, provincially or regionally, traceability data for pigs raised;
- Verify traceability data provided by producers.

Canadian Livestock Identification Agency (CLIA) will:

- Foster relationships with organizations already providing animal ID and traceability services;
- Provide guidelines and recommendations for premises repositories, the transfer of premises information, animal identification and traceability systems;
- Establish standards and national performance targets for livestock identification systems;
- Utilize and strengthen program support among industry groups and government;
- Empower and enable livestock organizations to participate in the delivery of national identification and traceability systems.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will:

- Work with industry to develop strategies to ensure producers can effectively participate in traceability programs.

Timeline

The target date to fully implement this system is summer 2008.