I'm sure by now you have heard about the Common Swine Industry Audit (CSIA). If not, the goal of the common audit process is to provide consumers greater assurance of the care taken by farmers and pork processors to improve animal well-being and food safety. The audit tool builds on the existing Pork Quality Assurance Plus® (PQA Plus®) program and expands it to serve as a single, common audit platform for the pork industry and to minimize duplication of individual packers having their own audits.

At the 2013 National Pork Industry Forum, a producer-directed resolution charged the National Pork Board with exploring a credible, affordable solution to assure on-farm animal well-being. As a result the Industry Audit Task Force was created consisting of producers, veterinarians, animal scientists, retail and foodservice personnel and packer representatives from the major pork processing companies.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CSIA**

The CSIA covers 27 key aspects of swine care and pre-harvest pork safety through all phases of production. The CSIA covers the full life cycle of the pig while on the farm, which includes pig handling and load-out for transportation. The CSIA is designed to be independent of housing design, size or operation or geographical location. Four primary areas will be reviewed during the audit: records, animals, facilities and caretakers.

Animal benchmarking makes up 50% of the audit. During the audit, a representative sample of pigs will be observed at the farm for the following criteria:

- Space allowance
- Body condition scores
- Severe lameness
- Scratches longer than 12 inches
- Abscesses
- Deep wounds
- Tail biting lesions
- Prolapses
- Hernias (non-breeding only)
- Shoulder sores (breeding only)
- Vulva injuries (breeding only)

The rest of the audit focuses on the areas of caretakers, facilities, records, transport, and food safety. To cover these areas during the audit, producers will need to show 10 required Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), records, and documentation as outlined in the CSIA.
10 Required SOPs

- Written euthanasia plan
- Animal handling
- Piglet processing
- Feeding and watering protocols
- Daily observation
- Caretaker training
- Treatment management
- Needle usage
- Rodent control
- Biosecurity

Records Needed

- Emergency backup equipment testing (minimum of twice a year testing)
- Daily observation records (12 months needed)
- Mortality records (12 months needed)
- Medication and treatment records, including vaccinations (12 months needed)
- VFD records according to FDA guidelines

Documentation Needed

- Willful acts of abuse – zero tolerance policy
- Abuse – reporting mechanism
- Euthanasia plan – posted
- Annual caretaker training
- PQA Plus certification – current of all employees. New employees must be certified within 90 days of employment.
- TQA certification current for most recent transporter delivering or loading pigs at site
- Valid PQA Plus site status from a PQA Plus Site Assessment (done within 6 months of operation or before animals are marketed or sold; completed every 3 years)
- Internal site assessments - facility, animals, caretakers and procedures must be conducted by production management team (supervisors, site managers, or other internal animal welfare auditors). Must be conducted at least quarterly on sow farms and semi-annually on nursery and finishing farms.
- Emergency action plan – posted
- Valid VCPR (Veterinary Client Patient Relationship) – verification must be dated within the past 12 months
- Visitor log
- Biosecurity signage or other means to restrict access

Other Items Needed

- Needles that are 16 gauge or larger size (lower number) must be highly detectable.
- Sharps container for proper disposal of sharps – must be clearly labeled as sharps and according to each state's regulations.
AUDIT PROCESS

Packers will ask for an audit to be done at a swine site. Audits will be completed either by packer auditors or third-party audit companies hired by the packer. All auditors are PAACO (Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization) trained in using the CSIA. The farm will be contacted by either the packer or third-party audit company to schedule the audit, inquire about biosecurity protocols and to get acquainted with the facility, number of animals and facility layout prior to visiting the site.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources including the complete CSIA instructions, standards, and audit tool, as well as SOPs and record templates, can be found on National Pork Board’s website (www.pork.org/commonaudit).

QUESTIONS?

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