

Revised Red Tractor Standards

As many of you will already be aware, following a consultation process, the revised Red Tractor standards will come into force next month on the 1st October. Clients who are Red Tractor members should have received a hard copy of the new assurance requirements already. If you would like to access an electronic copy, please [click here](#).

A summary of some of the changes are mentioned below, however we would recommend that all of our clients who will be affected go through the full Red Tractor information to ensure that all new requirements are met.

- **Identification** – pigs can be identified by use of an ear tag or tattooing, or placement of a single ear notch. Multiple ear notching will no longer be allowed, unless pig colouring in pedigree breeding prevents the use of ear tattooing. In this circumstance vet advice and justification must be detailed in your farm's VHP (Vet Health Plan)
- **Water** – drinkers within a wet and dry feeding system no longer count as a separate water source – drinkers away from the feeding system must be provided. Please ensure that there is adequate access to water, including the space requirements for water troughs. Non-mains water needs to be tested independently on an annual basis
- **Rearing Accommodation** – any supplementary rearing accommodation on farm must be emptied, cleaned, disinfected and dried prior to the next batch of pigs coming in. This management practice must be confirmed by your vet at each of your quarterly visits.
- **Total Antibiotic Usage** – By the 11th November, 6 weeks into the new standards being in place, total antibiotic usage records from the 1st April 2017 to the 30th September must be uploaded onto the electronic medicines book (eMB). This is to include injectable, water and in-feed antibiotic usage. From then onwards this needs to be updated quarterly. The total antibiotic usage must be entered onto the eMB within 6 weeks of the last quarter. The use of class 3 antibiotics, as classified by the Pig Veterinary Society (please [click here](#) to read our Aug 2016 newsletter on the classification system) must be justified in the VHP by your vet each time these medicines are prescribed.
- **AI Packs** – these must be disposed of as pharmacy waste, not in general waste.
- **Outdoor Pigs** – any injurious weeds, such as ragwort, that the pigs can have access to must be controlled.

Please speak to your vet about any questions that you may have regarding these new standards.

Flu Vaccinations – Annual Reminder

Swine Influenza, also known as ‘Pig Flu’, is caused by infection with the influenza A virus resulting in respiratory signs and weight loss. Individually affected pigs usually recover within two weeks but the ‘flu virus lowers resistance of stock to other infections so that secondary complications can occur. This means clinical signs can vary between farms depending on what other infectious agents are present, and that recovery can take longer following secondary bacterial involvement.



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There are 3 main influenza virus strains that affect pigs in the UK, but the virus mutates meaning previously affected herds can be re-infected with different strains. The virus is spread between pigs through the air and nose-to-nose contact. A pig can be infected for 1-2 days before showing clinical signs but, as it can still shed the virus during this time, disease can spread rapidly. Clinical disease is common throughout the UK, particularly during the winter months as the virus survives best in cold weather.

This disease can have a major impact on productivity in both breeding and finishing herds. So to help decrease the level of circulating ‘flu virus on your farm, in both the pigs and the stockmen, it is recommended that anyone working with pigs has an appointment with their doctor or pharmacist to have a flu vaccination themselves.

Please [click here](#) to read our full article on ‘flu.

Current Clinical Trends – What are we seeing out there?...

Over the last month we have been seeing an increased amount of looseness affecting both rearing and finishing herds. This is likely to be dietary in cause as the new grain comes through the mills into the feeds, although appearing to last longer this year. Blending of rations as much as possible on farm is important to reduce sudden diet changes, which pigs do find stressful and can cause lower feed intakes and disease flare ups.



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Please can we also take this opportunity to remind our clients that as daylight hours start to decrease, this can lead to a decrease in fertility on farm. Minimising the effect of this on your production can be achieved through maintaining 16 hours light duration per day in the service area and early pregnancy. Remember that 8 hours of darkness is also important. Service target numbers can also be increased to help compensate.

Please speak to your vet about any concerns that you may have.

Feedback

Please let us know if there is anything that you would like including, or more information on, in a future newsletter.

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