

Increasing number of *E. coli* Diagnoses

It has been noted at the APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency, formally known at the AHVLA) that there has been an increasing number of submissions diagnosed with *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) since 2012.

Infection with the bacteria *E. coli* can result in different clinical diseases being seen on farm depending on the type that is involved. The APHA have observed that there has been an increase in diagnoses of both the enteric (intestinal) form of the disease and also oedema disease, but the number of diagnoses made where infection with *E. coli* has resulted in a septicaemia (a bacterial infection in the blood) have remained constant.

The enteric form of the disease causes clinical signs that include diarrhoea due to the damage and inflammation of inner lining of the intestines. Water absorption from the intestines is reduced and so the pigs become dehydrated. In cases where this disease is suspected, samples may be submitted to a laboratory so that investigation into whether other potential pathogens, such as salmonella or rotavirus, are involved. Submissions to the APHA from diarrhoeic pigs are also routinely tested for PEDv (porcine epidemic diarrhoea virus) for additional surveillance of the disease.

Certain *E. coli* bacteria are able to produce a toxin called a shiga toxin, resulting in oedema disease. This is a very potent toxin that causes damage to the small blood vessels, the capillaries, resulting in fluid accumulation. The fluid particularly accumulates in the intestines, brain and under the skin. Clinical signs can include nervous signs that vary between the pigs being mildly unsteady and increasingly lying down, to signs similar to bacterial meningitis where the pigs are on their side and paddle their legs. Fluid accumulation under the skin is most easily observed in the ears and around the eyes. The pigs can also show signs of an increased respiratory effort and abnormal vocalisation.

Diagnosis of this disease involves fresh samples from untreated pigs being sent to the laboratory for the organism to be cultured and also serotyped.



Picture courtesy of www.shigatoxin.com

Oedema disease tends to affect rapidly growing pigs. Feed factors such as feed intake and nutrient quality can be involved, as can sudden changes in diets – blending of rations over several days between diet changes therefore, is very important.

PEDv now a notifiable disease in Scotland

PEDv (Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea virus) became a notifiable disease in Scotland on the **2nd March 2016**. As in England, where PEDv became a notifiable disease on the 18th December 2015, making this disease notifiable has been an industry-led initiative. This means that there are some important differences between how this disease is managed compared to other listed diseases.

Both producers and vets must report suspected, and confirmed cases, of PEDv in pigs kept in Scotland to Quality Meat Scotland via the Scottish Pig Disease Control Centre (SPDCC). This is where there is *an outbreak of unusual or rapidly spreading diarrhoea in pigs of any age*.

The SPDCC will then provide advice to producers on how to contain and manage the disease. There is no legislative requirement for official culling or movement controls – control will be industry-led.

Please [click here](#) to see our January 2016 newsletter for further details on PEDv becoming a notifiable disease in England.

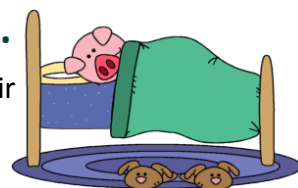
Red Tractor and RSPCA Freedom Foods required publications

As many of you are already aware, both Red Tractor and RSPCA Freedom Food assurance schemes require farms to have access to a number of required publications and that staff on farm have an understanding of the information contained in each publication. There is also a list of recommended documents to have on farm.

To help keep our clients up to date, we have links to these publications from our website and regularly check to keep this updated. If needed, please [click here](#) to access this section of our website.

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

Many of our clients have been reporting good conception rates overall on their farms recently. We are however seeing an increased number of irregular returns affecting a number of units.



These have generally been related to flare ups in clinical disease on farms that already have circulating PRRS virus and/or the Swine Influenza ('flu) virus. Some farms that have been previously naïve to both of these viruses have also been affected over the recent winter months.

Please speak to your vet about any questions 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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