



Red Tractor Assurance

Red Tractor changes

Following on from suggestions within the media and from activist groups that Red Tractor farms are not inspected often enough or as unannounced visits, Red Tractor have introduced a new scheme increasing the number of unannounced inspections on farms. This aims to increase consumer confidence in the scheme and also help to ensure that there is 365-day compliance with the scheme.

This means that the way inspections are planned is changing. The new system is risk-based. High-risk members are those that have received non-conformances. Non-conformances have also been assessed and weighted depending on their risk to Red Tractor's reputation. However Red Tractor have stressed that all standards are important and must be complied with.

Most people will notice no changes to their routine inspections. Should a Red Tractor member be classified as high risk, they are more likely to be receive an additional unannounced inspection at the farmer's cost.

You will be notified that you are likely to receive an unannounced inspection but you will not know when this is. In order to ensure you and pigs are present on the farm, a questionnaire will be issued asking you for information on when you will not be present or will be busy (e.g. weaning days) or when the farm will be destocked if applicable. Telephone numbers will also be requested so that you can be contacted should no-one be present on the farm.

If improvement is demonstrated at the unannounced inspection, then members will

no longer be classed as high risk and you will be informed of this and normal inspection frequency will continue though likely to be at shorter notice.

If no improvement has been made then membership will be suspended and no pigs can be marketed as assured until all non-conformances are corrected. A further unannounced inspection will then be carried out.

Should there be no improvement after this inspection then membership will be withdrawn and a minimum time period issued before an application can be made to re-join.

Please do not hesitate to speak to your unit vet, the practice, or your certification body, should you have any questions about these inspections. This scheme is being rolled out across all livestock species over the next year to help to give consumers complete trust in the Red Tractor logo and its high standards that help to ensure that the excellent welfare standards that the UK is known for continue to be upheld.

Regumate and Apple Juice

Synthetic progestogens such as Regumate and Altresyn have widespread use in pigs to synchronise gilts for service. It is common practice to 'train' gilts to accept dosing gun delivery with, for example, cheap apple juice, prior to starting the actual treatment.



It is recommended guns used for apple juice and Regumate are kept separate as it is possible for juice to interact with the Regumate in the gun and interfere with optimum response.

Current funded testing for post-weaning diarrhoea available through the Garth includes:

From Elanco, post-weaning *E.coli* PCR on 5 swabs from individual affected pigs (up to 3 weeks post-weaning) is available. F4 and F18 ETEC *E.coli* are amongst the most common causes of post-weaning diarrhoea in pigs and have effects including reduced growth performance and increased susceptibility to other disease.

From IDT, post-weaning STEC check on swabs or pieces of intestine (from post-mortem) is available. This test also differentiates *E.coli* and particularly checks for the presence of shigatoxin, also known as oedema disease factor, which causes the lesions associated with oedema disease in pigs.

From Hipra, Enterocheck is available to diagnose *E.coli* by PCR using faecal samples from pigs with signs of diarrhoea. This test, in particular, diagnoses verotoxigenic *E. coli* associated with postweaning diarrhoea, sudden death and oedema disease.

If you have concerns regarding post-weaning diarrhoea on your farm, these tests may provide a diagnosis which opens up the avenue of vaccination to your unit, or which may change the current practices on your farm. Please call the practice or your unit vet if you would like any further information.

Aggression

Many vets and farmers feel pigs have become more aggressive over the years. Now there is a chance to make your feelings known by participating in a survey (anonymous if you wish).

This is research being carried out by Simon Turner at SRUC. Survey can be accessed via <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/77LNFKN>

Acidified Feed as a Salmonella Control Strategy

We have been asked to highlight the following request from APHA



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

We at the APHA are looking to recruit suitable pig farms for important research into Salmonella control strategies.

This study builds on our work trying to provide evidence for the most cost-effective Salmonella interventions. The study aims to investigate the use of an organic acid feed treatment given for a few weeks prior to slaughter on the shedding of Salmonella on farm as well as in the gut and on carcasses at slaughter.

Recent research suggests certain acid feed treatments used prior to slaughter can reduce Salmonella shedding and thus contamination at the farm and slaughterhouse. The trial will also investigate factors during lairage and transport that influence Salmonella presence.

We are looking for farms that can provide different feeds to two separate groups of similarly aged and housed finisher pigs, for approximately four weeks before slaughter. One group will be fed an organic acid blend in feed (supplied for free), while the second will be fed their normal diet. We will sample faeces from the pigs on two occasions at the farm and also take samples at the abattoir.

All sampling costs will be covered. Information from your farm will be anonymized and we will provide you with the results of the sampling on your farm as well as a summary of the overall research results on completion of the study.

If you are interested in participating in either study or would just like to know more, please get in touch!

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