

Case Study: Is it Time for an NPIP like Program for the US Pork Industry?

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Industry Summary (Synopsis):

A study was commissioned in 2018 with the aim of seeking a more in-depth understanding of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) and assessing the potential for an NPIP like program to support the US pork industry. NPIP is a unique industry, state, and federal partnership that has long served to safeguard, improve, and assure the health of US poultry and enhance the competitiveness of the US poultry and egg industries in the domestic and global marketplace. Participation in NPIP is voluntary and almost universal among commercial poultry and egg operations throughout the US. Participants utilize NPIP to certify the health status of US poultry and egg flocks, hatcheries, slaughter plants, products, and states in accordance with NPIP's officially recognized standards and definitions. NPIP's health status certifications are used to demonstrate evidence of freedom of both trade and non-trade impacting diseases of poultry. NPIP is a working and active system of animal health control whose programs content and direction are informed and updated every two years by a formal congress of industry stakeholders and subject matter experts. NPIP's program definitions, standards, and health status classifications are broadly recognized across all 50 states and by international trading partners. While participation in NPIP is voluntary, specified NPIP health status certifications are commonly required at points of sale, exhibition, and for interstate and international commerce. NPIP's Avian Influenza Virus (AIV) surveillance programs and health status certifications held by meat-type chicken and turkey slaughter plants, commercial table egg laying operations, and states have played a primary role in helping sustain export markets and interstate commerce from unaffected regions during times of an AIV outbreak of significance affecting US commercial poultry operations.

Globalization, multi-site production, and a marked dependence on export markets have changed the landscape of swine health and the impact of disease incursion on the US pork industry. In particular, trade impacting disease risks and recurring endemic diseases of high consequence are substantial challenges. Scalable solutions to these major and well-recognized challenges are largely beyond the immediate control or influence of any individual producer, packer, state, or existing entity. Next generation animal health assurance and area regional disease control solutions are needed to secure the future of the highly mobile and export-centric US pork industry. Experience affirms that solutions offered by government or industry, each acting independently, will not be timely, capable, or robust enough to keep pace with industry needs. State and federal animal health agencies lack the resources, capacity, and industry-specific know-how, while industry only solutions lack the coordination and authority to establish official standards and health status certifications across legally recognized areas, states, regions, or by well-defined segments of the commercial pork industry. NPIP's unique industry, state, and federal partnership provides a platform wherein industry stakeholders play a direct and on-going role in establishing poultry health standards, definitions, and policies across the US poultry and egg industries. The basic tenets and approach used by the NPIP could serve as a road map for pork producers and packers (slaughter facilities) interested in more directly and systematically addressing the major swine health issues of high consequence and better positioning the future of the US pork industry in the domestic and global marketplace.

Key Words: NPIP, Poultry, Swine, Health, Improvement, Certification, Classification, Standards.