



Establishing a pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program among interested pork producers, packers (slaughter facilities), and states



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Objectives: The primary objectives of this proposed endeavor are to develop and implement a pilot African Swine Fever (ASF) Monitored Certification Program modelled after the basic tenets of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored certification of US Commercial Poultry operations.

NPIP is an industry, state, and federal partnership that has long played a central role in bettering the health of US poultry and the competitiveness of the US poultry and egg industries. NPIP's H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored certification supports ongoing disease surveillance and the adoption of practices that mitigate disease spread into and between farms. The H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored certification held by meat-type chicken and turkey slaughter plants, commercial table egg laying operations, and states has played a primary role in helping sustain export markets and interstate commerce from unaffected regions during times of an Avian Influenza Virus (AIV) outbreak of significance affecting US Poultry.

US pork producers and packing facilities electing to enroll and meeting specified program requirements in participating states will be conferred an ASF Monitored Program certification or status. A working system of enrolled farm sites and packing facilities meeting or exceeding well-defined sanitary standards, traceability requirements, and ongoing ASF surveillance testing requirements would reasonably describe the core of the proposed pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program. Technical advisors of volunteer subject matter experts from across the US pork industry will be commissioned to draft program standards for consideration. A forum of industry stakeholders (ASF Monitored Certification Program House of Delegates) will be convened to review, amend, and determine the program's content, direction, and requirements for certification. The number of voting delegate positions representing the interests of each participating state will be proportionate to the number of commercial swine in their respective state. Each participating state's voting delegation will be inclusive of the State Animal Health Official or their designee. Participating state's will be responsible for designating an entity to administer this pilot program, verify participant status, and maintain a current list of the certified participants in their respective states. State level recognition and participation in this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program will be determined by the State Animal Health Official.

See Addendum on pages 3 to 8: *Overview of Pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program*

Benefits to US pork industry: Globalization, multi-site production, expanse of interdependent networks of pig production commonly spanning one or many state lines, 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. The emergence of ASF in commercial pig populations in Asia is expected to enhance export opportunities and significantly increase trade-impacting disease risks for the foreseeable future. The opportunities, challenges, and animal health related risks have not likely ever been greater.

While there has been tremendous advances made in US pork producers' abilities to control and eliminate a growing number of diseases of high consequence from individual breeding herds, there is limited recent history of containment or elimination of emerging or endemic viral diseases of high consequence across broad areas and regions with significant commercial finishing pig populations. Vesicular exanthema was the last emerging viral

disease of high consequence successfully contained and eliminated (~1960) from US commercial pig populations in the absence of a very lengthy (> 10 years) eradication program founded at some point on broadly applied and compulsory vaccination.

Next generation solutions are needed to safeguard, advance, and 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.

History suggests stepwise improvements in safeguarding and improving the health status of swine herds across large areas, regions, states, and country require industry leaders to set-forth simplistic, practical, strategic, and effective baseline standards of practice that can be widely adopted by commercial pork producers. Industry led leadership, collaboration, adaptability, constancy of purpose, and consistency of execution across the masses have been the hallmarks of historical successes. The next generation of practical solutions for mitigating the grand animal health challenges facing the US pork industry can only come from the expertise, leadership, and collaborative spirit that resides within the US pork industry stakeholder community.

The widespread adoption of well-defined, effective, and practical surveillance strategies, traceability requirements, and sanitary standards are each critical components necessary to mitigate disease risks and sustainably demonstrate evidence of freedom of disease across supply chains, areas, and regions. While sanitary standards that mitigate risk of entry and disease spread are the primary points of emphasis of this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program, in the event of an introduction of ASF into US Swine, this program would serve to complement response and recovery efforts by providing an already working, well-defined, and officially recognized system for mitigating disease spread, supporting continuity of business, and providing evidence of freedom of ASF outside of ASF control areas. Establishing an active ASF Monitored Certification Program presents as an opportunity for creating a platform for stepwise improvement in all three phases (prevention, response, and recovery) of ASF preparedness, as well as for reducing the impact of recurring endemic diseases of high consequence among participating producers, packing facilities, and states. This pilot program would also serve to provide US pork industry participants first-hand exposure to and experience with developing and implementing an “NPIP like” program (i.e., US Swine Health Improvement Plan or US SHIP) tailored to meet the needs of the US pork industry.

NPIP has a long and proven history of success in providing 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.

Evaluating this concept further through a pilot program that serves to address an emerging industry need among interested producers, packing facilities, and states may be a good place to start.

Upon the conclusion of this proposed pilot project (should there be interest), the experiences gained and operations established through the pilot could be transitioned into a more formal and ongoing platform (i.e., ***US Swine Health Improvement Plan or US SHIP***) for safeguarding, certifying, and bettering the health of US swine and the longer-term competitiveness of the US pork industry.

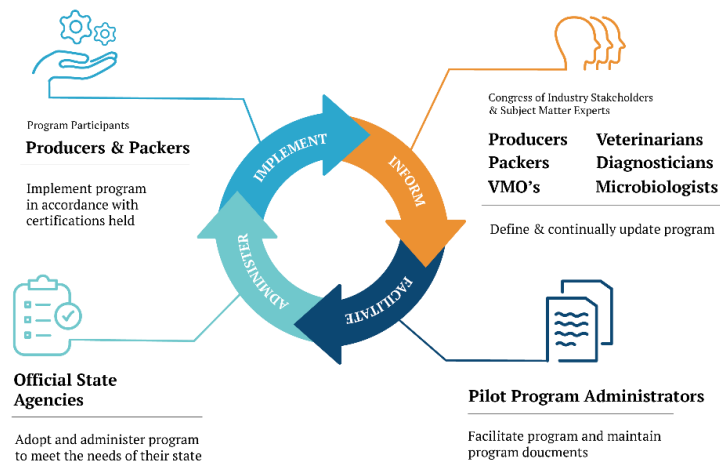


Overview of Pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program



- I. Objectives:** Develop and implement a pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program modelled after the basic tenets of the NPIP H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored certification held by US Commercial Poultry operations.
- II. Purpose:**
- Enhance all three aspects of ASF preparedness:
 - i. Prevention
 - ii. Response
 - iii. Recovery
 - Mitigate the impact of recurring endemic diseases of high consequence.
 - Provide US pork industry participants first-hand exposure to and experience with developing and implementing an “NPIP like” program tailored to meet the needs of the US pork industry (i.e., *US Swine Health Improvement Plan or US SHIP*).
 - See <https://usswinehealthimprovementplan.com> for more details on NPIP and potential applications for the US Pork Industry.
- III. Expected Outcomes:**
- Pilot program with system of governance and operations that closely resembles NPIP (i.e., Program Administrators, General Conference Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, House of Delegates, Official State Agencies, and Program Participants).

Figure 1. Pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program modelled after NPIP



- Clearly defined pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program requirements (e.g., *sanitary standards*, *traceability requirements*, and *surveillance*) derived through the work of a Technical Advisory Committee of volunteer subject matter experts and House of Delegates representing pork industry stakeholders from each participating state.
- Network of actively enrolled pork producers (farm sites) and packing (slaughter) facilities in participating states verified as meeting or exceeding the program requirements for this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program.
- Designated ASF Monitored Certification Program Official State Agencies responsible for maintaining an up to date list of participating producers (farm sites) and packing (slaughter) facilities meeting the program requirements for certification in their respective state.
- Working platform for driving sustainable, tangible, and stepwise improvement in all three phases (prevention, response, and recovery) of ASF preparedness, as well as for reducing the impact of recurring endemic diseases of high consequence among participating producers, packing facilities, and states.
- Widespread adoption of well-defined, effective and practical sanitary standards, traceability requirements, and surveillance strategies among participants.
- In the event of the introduction of ASF into US Swine, the ASF Monitored Pilot Program could complement response and recovery efforts in participating states by providing an already working, well-defined, and officially recognized system for mitigating disease spread, supporting continuity of business, and providing evidence of freedom of ASF outside of ASF control areas.
- Should there be an interest, the experience gained and operations established through this pilot project could be transitioned into a more formal and ongoing platform (i.e., US Swine Health Improvement Plan or US SHIP) for safeguarding, certifying, and bettering the health of US swine and the competitiveness of the US pork industry in the domestic and global marketplace.

IV. Participation: Voluntary

V. Participants: US pork producers, packing (slaughter) facilities, and states

VI. Certificate Holders: US pork producers and packing (slaughter) facilities

VII. Requirements for Certification:

- Enrolled and meeting defined program requirements for certification.
- Valid Veterinary Client-Patient Relationship with a licensed and accredited veterinarian
- Achieving program sanitary standards addressing each of the following areas:
 - Feed supply
 - On-farm practices
 - Live haul
 - Movement to slaughter
- Attaining program traceability standards.
 - Premises level (PIN and current farm or slaughter facility demographic information in ASF Monitored Certification Program database)
 - Swine movements (available in electronic format for upload as needed)
- Remain current on program specific ASF surveillance testing requirements that utilize state of the sampling strategies and diagnostic testing methods to demonstrate evidence of freedom of disease among participating pork producer farm sites, supply chains to packing (slaughter) facilities, and states.
 - Ongoing and well-defined ASF surveillance testing requirements will vary by farm type and the ASF status of the US.
 - ASF testing can only be conducted at participating USDA NAHLN laboratories certified to conduct ASF testing for the USDA.
 - All ASF test results would be accessible (reported) to the appropriate State Animal Health Official (SAHO) and USDA officials.
 - Any non-negative ASF test results that arise through this ongoing surveillance and testing outside of ASF control areas would go through conventional USDA ASF confirmatory testing and reporting procedures.
 - ASF Monitored Certification Program surveillance testing is intended to complement ongoing systems of FAD surveillance across the US and specifically support the following efforts:
 - ASF preparedness and surveillance efforts on an ongoing basis.
 - Continuity of business and demonstrating evidence of freedom of ASF outside of ASF control areas.

VIII. Pilot ASF Monitored Certificate Program System of Governance:

- **Administration** – Facilitated by the Principle and Co-Investigators of this pilot program.
- **General Conference Committee** – Small group of US Pork Industry stakeholders (Producers, Packers, & Veterinarians) including representation from the various industry sectors and geographical regions participating in this pilot to serve in an advisory capacity to the pilot program Administration. Due to the pilot nature of this program, and uncertainty as to the number of states and regions participating, volunteers will be sought out by this pilot program’s Administration to serve in this capacity. Future members of the General Conference Committee would be envisioned to be elected positions by the House of Delegates.
- **Technical Advisory Committee** – Volunteers of Subject Matter Experts appointed by the ASF Monitored Certification Program Administration that will serve to draft program standards and requirements of certification for consideration by an ASF Monitored Certification Program House of Delegates.
 - Focus areas of Technical Advisory Committee:
 - Sanitary Standards
 - Feed Supply
 - On-Farm
 - Live haul
 - Movement to slaughter
 - Surveillance & Diagnostics
 - Traceability
 - Glossary of ASF Monitored Certification Program terminology
- **House of Delegates** - Decision making body that determines program content, direction, and requirements for certification by majority vote.
 - The number of voting delegate positions for each participating state will be proportionate to the number of commercial swine in their respective state (i.e., equivalent to the number of eligible voting delegates at the National Pork Industry Forum).
 - Voting delegates representing each participating state will be appointed by each participating state’s pork producer association. If a participating state does not have an active pork producer association, delegate selection will be deferred to the respective state’s Department of Agriculture.
 - Each participating state’s voting delegation will be inclusive of the State Animal Health Official or their designee.
 - State level participation in this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program will be determined by the State Animal Health Official.

IX. Certifying Agency: ASF Monitored Certification Program Official State Agency

- Each participating state will be responsible for designating an entity to administer this pilot program, verify participant status, and maintain a current list of the certified participants in their respective states.

- Pilot program Administrators at the Iowa State University Department of Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine (VDPAM) will be responsible for the following:
 - Keeping ASF Monitored Certification Program standards and certification requirement documents up to date.
 - Providing participating ASF Monitored Certification Program Official State Agencies access to a software platform for maintaining pilot program participant information and status.
 - Aggregating participant information from ASF Monitored Certification Program Official State Agencies for summary level (pilot program-wide) reporting.

X. Costs: Program administration, surveillance testing, and the other participant costs of achieving and maintaining requirements for certification.

XI. Funding sources: Multiple sources (program participants, and potentially industry organization or USDA grants/cooperative agreements, and states)

XII. Pilot Program Timeline and Duration: 3 years, January 2020 – December 2022

- At the conclusion of this pilot program, systems ongoing could cease, be continued temporarily, or be rolled into a more formal and ongoing platform for safeguarding, certifying, and bettering the health of US swine and the competitiveness of the US pork industry in the domestic and global marketplace.

Timeline of Key Milestones:

- **Q1 - Q2 2020:**
 - Share proposal with and obtain feedback from a sampling US swine veterinarians and State Animal Health Officials.
 - Solicit and appoint volunteers to serve on the General Conference Committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the pilot program Administration.
 - Solicit US pork industry participants to determine interest level and specifically to identify entities (producers, packers, and states) interested in moving forward to participate in the process of formulating the pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program Standards through the aforementioned pilot program system of governance.
 - Establish a user-friendly online sign-up for those producers, packers (slaughter facilities), and states to indicate their interest in participating in the process of formulating this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program Standards through the aforementioned pilot program system of governance.
 - On-board an ASF Pilot Certification Program Project Coordinator
 - Solicit and appoint volunteers to specified Technical Advisory Committees that will be charged with drafting the initial ASF Monitored Certification Program.
 - Sanitary Standards
 - Feed Supply
 - On-Farm

- Live haul
 - Movement to slaughter
 - Surveillance & Diagnostics
 - Traceability
 - Glossary of ASF Monitored Certification Program terminology
- **Q2 - Q3 2020:**
 - Technical Advisory Committees to draft the initial ASF Monitored Pilot Program Standards documents.
 - Sanitary Standards
 - Feed Supply
 - On-Farm
 - Live haul
 - Movement to slaughter
 - Surveillance & Diagnostics
 - Traceability
 - Glossary of ASF Monitored Certification Program terminology
 - States electing to participate determine the voting delegates to represent their state at the House of Delegates.
 - Distribute draft ASF Monitored Pilot Program Standards documents.
- **Q4 2020:**
 - Convene this pilot program's House of Delegates to determine program content, direction, and requirements for certification by majority vote.
 - Initial sign-up offering for producers, packers (slaughter facilities) and states that elect to participate in this pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program.
 - Establish operational structure for Official State Agencies within each of the states electing to participate in the pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program.
- **Q1 2021:**
 - Initiate pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program operations among participating producers, slaughter facilities, & states.
- **Q1 2022:**
 - Convene this pilot program's House of Delegates to determine any proposed updates program content, direction, and requirements for certification by majority vote.
- **Q4 2022:**
 - Conduct survey of the pilot ASF Monitored Certification Program participants to assess the level of interest to either conclude the pilot project at the end of 2022, or to proceed with efforts to move towards the establishment of a more formal and ongoing organization (e.g., US Swine Health Improvement Plan) in 2023.