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Animal Care at Work



An Industry Approach to Farm Animal Care and Welfare

Animal Care Assessment (ACA)

Canadian Pork Council

September, 2007

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Starting with the basics

- **Animal care has been a top priority for livestock and poultry producers and organizations**
 - Codes of practice
 - Good animal practices
 - Transportation code
 - Provincial activities
- **Educational approaches**
- **Good care makes good sense!**

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But soon realized the basics were no longer enough

- **Educational approaches do not respond to the question – What is happening on-farm?**
 - Could not demonstrate on-farm activities
- **Auditable approaches being introduced in other areas**
 - Food safety
 - Environment
 - Traceability

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And, the global environment had changed

- **Visibility of European approaches**
 - Strong legislative actions
 - Supported by industry programs
 - Retailers/foodservice requirements
 - Producers
- **U.S. initiatives**
 - Primarily voluntary industry programs
 - Key moves by retailers/foodservice players
 - Food Marketing Institute and National Council of Chain Restaurants develop alliance on animal welfare guidelines

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Leading to pressures here at home

- **Canada**
 - Primarily voluntary industry programs
- **Consumer Attitudes Toward Pork Production**
 - Surveys conducted in 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2006 for provincial hog producer associations
 - Animal care ranked as one of the top three issues to consumers
 - (others being generally, food safety and the environment)
 - Source – Ipsos-Reid

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Knew more was needed

- **Recognized minimum standards were needed**
- **Recognized an auditable approach was required**
- **Started work in 2002**
- **Membership**
 - Producers and producer representatives
 - Researchers
 - Government



But quickly realized some key challenges

- **No “HACCP” (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) for animal care**
- **No commonly accepted rules for content**
 - What is a good measure of welfare
 - Jury still out on many measures – vocalizations, fear scores, productivity
 - What can be applied on farm settings
- **No “one size fits all” approaches**
 - Design-based, animal/outcome-based, process-based
 - Index-based with weighted questions; minimum score passes
 - Minimum requirements for set questions
 - Educational only, no passing grades
 - Self-assessments versus externally reviewed/verified/audited
- **Emotional element of animal care**



We examined what we knew was already working here

- **Animal care**
 - Codes were well respected
 - Form a good base
- **Food safety**
 - Just built an auditable on-farm food safety program (CQA®) - 1998
 - Well accepted
 - Large uptake
 - Used HACCP as a framework
 - Program requirements + educational elements (shaded and non-shaded questions)



And designed an approach based on what we had learned

- **Build on the strengths of the codes**
 - Use the codes as the base
 - The good production practices
- **Build on the strengths of the food safety program**
 - Take key issues (critical points) and use these as program requirements/audit points
 - “Additive” to CQA® (don’t duplicate)
- **Build on the various approaches**
 - Design based
 - Animal/outcome based
 - Process based



We set out the objectives and expected outcomes

- To promote sound animal care practices on Canadian hog farms
- To provide a mechanism to demonstrate that these practices are being followed
- The expected outcome: to build confidence throughout the supply chain and consumers



Along with program characteristics

- Set minimum requirements/standards
- Be repeatable, valid and reliable
- Use measurable tools (minimize subjectivity)
- Be educational and enhance awareness
- Have a validation tool that moves beyond education
- Be a blend of both evaluation of the pig and the process
- Be clear, cost effective, simple and transparent
- Build on existing food safety program, CQA®, to prevent duplication



And these elements guided the work

- **The result: Animal Care Assessment (ACA)**
 - A working document for producers
 - Builds on Codes of practice
 - Sets minimum requirements
 - Clearly identified as shaded questions
 - Follows model of food safety program
 - Uses design, animal/outcome and process based questions



And then reviewed by other groups

- **Expanded involvement to present work to broader interest groups**
 - Materials reviewed in 2004 by:
 - Canadian Meat Council
 - Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
 - Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
 - Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
- **These groups supported the implementation of the ACA**



Finally, the ACA was launched

- **Launched in July, 2005**
 - Advance copy
 - Raise awareness
 - Generate interest
 - Demonstrate action
- **Materials available in hard copy and on web-site**



With a mix of design, animal/outcome and process based questions

- **Design:**
 - Is non-slip flooring provided on loading ramps and walkways?
 - Is there space where you can isolate and treat pigs that need special attention?
- **Animal/Outcome:**
 - Do pathways and ramps have sharp edges that would cause scratches or injury?
 - Is equipment that causes scratching or wounding of pigs promptly repaired or replaced?
 - Are animals fed daily to meet their nutritional needs? (Can be evaluated using body scoring).



That cover the various aspects of production

- **Process-based:**
 - Do you have a documented standard operating procedure in place for the identification, care and humane treatment of sick or injured pigs?
 - Do you have a euthanasia plan that includes the proper methods for euthanasia of the different sizes and types of pigs on your farm?



Then turned to implementation

- **Build on existing CQA® delivery system**
 - Producers to joins ACA:
 - Must be on CQA® program
 - Must meet ACA program requirements
 - Must demonstrate requirements have been met through validation
 - Validation schedule cycle (three years)
 - Full validation initial year
 - Partial validation (record review) second and third year
 - Cycle repeats



The focus now – building enthusiasm

- **Producers already burdened**
 - No financial incentive
 - Others stressors in the industry



And maintaining awareness of the global changes

- **United States**
 - Legislative initiatives at the state level on sow stalls
 - Florida (2002), Arizona (2006), Oregon (2007)
 - Major U.S. processor announcement – Smithfield – January 2007
 - Phase out sow stalls over 10 years
 - Major foodservice announcements on sow stalls
 - Wendy's/Burger King/Wolfgang Puck
- **Australia/New Zealand**
 - New Codes with minimum standards
 - Supported by regulations
- **European Union**
 - Phase out of sow stalls by 2013
 - Next issues – castration and space allowances



While the program is still new, there are benefits.

- **Help to meet customer expectations**
 - Domestic for now
 - International – for the future
- **Help industry to tell its story**
- **Set minimum standards for animal care**
- **Part of the overall message about Canadian hog production**
 - Trusted
 - Integrity