

Lessons Learned Looking Back to 2017 PEDv Outbreak in Manitoba



Dr. Glen Duizer (L) pictured here with Dr. John Carr at the Manitoba Swine Seminar.

Early in 2017, as the swine industry in Manitoba was gearing up for another great year, a PED Virus outbreak hit the industry hard, and it took most of the year get the dreaded disease under control.

The Office of Manitoba's Chief Veterinary Officer said all but three of the 80 swine herds infected during the 2017 PEDv outbreak have now reached presumptive negative or are transitioning to presumptive negative.

The first case broke out on April 28, 2017, in southeastern Manitoba and the last case reported October 24, 2017.

Dr. Glen Duizer, an Animal Health Surveillance Veterinarian with the Office of Manitoba's Chief Veterinary Officer, said recently in a meeting all but two of the 80 cases were reported in southeastern Manitoba and included 25 sow herds, 16 nurseries, and 39 finishers.

"Our current status is that we have 67 presumptive negative premises of which 19 of the 25 infected sow herds are now presumptive negative and 48 nursery finishers that are presumptive negative," said Dr. Duizer. "We have three remaining premises that have not moved from the positive status but essentially there are no clinical or actively shedding pigs on those premises and biocontainment is in place. We have ten transitional premises, five sow herds and five nurseries or finishers. Those are premises that are working their way through to a presumptive negative status."

In April Dr. Duizer was a little bit more optimistic of this, but perhaps it will take a little longer than May to get all the way through but still targeting for the end of May to get most if not all of the remaining herds on to presumptive negative.

— continued on page 21

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— continued from page 20

He said the outbreak peaked in early July followed by a second spike in September which occurred, as many of the previously infected feeder sites began moving pigs to slaughter.

In looking back at this terrible yet controllable event, the need for stepped up biosecurity in the event of an animal disease outbreak was among the lessons learned from Manitoba's 2017 PEDv outbreak.

The industry discussed a PED Lessons Learned Project, conducted by Manitoba Pork, Manitoba Agriculture and the Canadian Animal Health Coalition on a recent PED Telephone Town Hall.

Project workers conducted sector-wide interviews with producers, feed companies, transporters, assembly yards, diagnostic labs and representatives of the Manitoba Chief Veterinary Office and Manitoba Pork followed by a discussion workshop.

Jenelle Hamblin, the Manager of Swine Health Programs with Manitoba Pork, said the report focused on what worked well, what didn't work and needed to change, and recommendations for future outbreaks.

They found the industry practiced a wide range of biosecurity across the sector. Some had very strong biosecurity in place.

"Others had no biosecurity in place, and this is where we want to strongly encourage going back to basics and talking to these producers about the difference of regular biosecurity versus wartime biosecurity," said Hamblin. "We're talking about the practices you can implement that maybe aren't sustainable for the day to day but something that you can very quickly. Especially if you get a phone call saying that there is a case nearby, that you're able to enhance your biosecurity to that upgraded status in a short period."

She said that includes implementing strict restricted access protocols, enhancing controlled access zone protocols, including limiting the number of people that are entering the farm, reducing those touches that come onto your yard, limiting visitors, dedicating the staff to certain barns and just reducing the frequency of movements.

Hamblin said operations have reduced their numbers of animal movements to minimize the risks and are now dedicating specific equipment to specific barns to avoid cross-contamination.

As is so often the case a crippling disease outbreak like the 2017 PED virus scenario brings new systems and ideas into the mix because the swine industry has other diseases to contend with.

The early sharing of swine health information is helping swine producers and veterinarians in western Canada improve their response to emerging swine disease issues.

The industry created the Canada-West Swine Health Intelligence Network, a western Canadian swine disease surveillance system to help swine veterinarians share information on clinical disease in swine herds in the four western provinces.

Dr. Jette Christensen, the new manager of the Network said CWSHIN serves swine producers and swine practitioners by helping detect emerging swine health issues as early as possible.

"It could be a health issue as a disease that is always there but suddenly it flares up and becomes more of a problem, or it could be a completely new disease that we don't know anything about," said Dr. Christensen. •

— By Harry Siemens

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