

# INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

## Health & Biosecurity

The New Zealand Pork industry has the best animal health status in the world. In fact our health status is one of very few competitive advantages over other exporting countries and those countries that export to New Zealand and compete in our domestic market. Our disease freedom comes from New Zealand's relative isolation, the biosecurity policies currently in place, and the relatively low density of our pig population.

New Zealand Pork's strategy for biosecurity is "prevention is better than cure" and acknowledges that once a disease enters the pig population and particularly exotic diseases that it is very difficult if not impossible to regain freedom from that disease. The New Zealand industry is unique in that over 30% of the sows are managed outdoor and up to 40% of the pigs are finished in open barns. These dynamics make it very difficult to stop disease being carried from site to site, thus the importance of robust biosecurity systems to prevent exotic diseases from entering New Zealand.

### **Farm biosecurity - NZPork recommended minimum standard**

Additional to the New Zealand pork industry's world-class health status, a number of pig farms have invested in a "de-pop / re-pop" (depopulation and re-population) process in order to further enhance the specific health status of their farm. These exercises are major investments, involving all or some of the stock on the farm being removed, an intensive cleaning process followed by a stand down period, and the restocking the farm. Costs are in the order of \$150,000 - \$300,000 for a 250 sow piggery. Such an investment is justified by the benefits gained in improved animal health, performance and farm profitability following the removal of specific disease organisms. The continued maintenance of the farm's health status is critically important.

**Effective on-farm biosecurity requires minimising contact with unnecessary persons, vehicles and other animals - as these can all represent disease vectors.**

Please refer to NZPork's [minimum farm biosecurity standard here](#). A number of farms operate to higher standards.

### **Influenza Type A H1N1**

The H1N1 virus is a new strain of the influenza A virus involving components of swine, avian and human influenza. It is a human health risk because it is being transmitted from human to human, and does not appear to involve pigs at all.

There has never been a case of swine influenza in pigs in New Zealand. NZPork, in collaboration with MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ) is taking all precautions to ensure that potential transmission pathways from humans to pigs are controlled.

## Exotic Disease Awareness

Everybody who owns a pig needs to monitor animal health closely and monitor animal health issues proactively. Secondly they need to observe for unusual symptoms and know what to do should they see something odd. This section provides background information on what the key exotic disease risks are and how you identify them. Feeding waste food to pigs poses a significant disease risk – you need to understand the risks and regulations. [More](#)

## PMWS

Post-weaning Multi-systemic Wasting Syndrome (PMWS) was first diagnosed in New Zealand in 2003. This disease though posing no risk to humans but has a significant impact on reproduction and growth in young pigs and has had significant economic consequences for the New Zealand industry. There is now an effective vaccine available but the best results in managing this disease are achieved through a combination of approaches. This section provides best practice guidelines on managing PMWS. [Download more information](#)

## PRRS

The New Zealand Pork industry does not have PRRS. Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) is described as the No1 disease world-wide and has a significant impact on pig reproduction and growth and infections can result in significant mortality. In 2006 MAF Biosecurity New Zealand proposed to reduce the border standards in place that prevent PRRS infected meat from entering New Zealand. Analysis completed by Massey University shows that if these border standards are relaxed an infection of PRRS in the New Zealand pork industry would occur. This section details NZPork's submissions to MAF BNZ during the consultation process. This process is ongoing. [See submissions and other information](#)

## Food Safety

The New Zealand pork industry's food safety record is world class. This is a result of responsible on-farm practices and processors, wholesalers and retailers adhering to rigorous food safety control programmes that sees pork products reach consumers in a safe form.

Retrieved November 23, 2011 from [www.nz.pork.co.nz/HealthBiosecurity.aspx](http://www.nz.pork.co.nz/HealthBiosecurity.aspx)