

Canadian pig industry learns of country's first PEDV case

Banff Pork Seminar panel addresses concerns of deadly pig virus on day news broke of its spread to Canada

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Dr. Doug MacDougald addresses porcine epidemic diarrhea virus while speaking at the Banff Pork Seminar.

Just before the [Banff Pork Seminar](#)'s boar pit session kicked off on January 23 in Banff, Ontario, a bombshell had dropped - the first case of deadly [porcine epidemic diarrhea virus](#) (PEDV) had been confirmed in Canada. This topic understandably dominated the session, which is designed as an open-format, no-holds-barred, frank and interactive discussion of the hot issues in pork production. Leading the session were three panelists: producer Claude Vielfaure, Dr. Doug MacDougald of SouthWest Ontario Veterinary Services, and economist Steve Meyer of Paragon Economics. Shannon Meyers of Fast Genetics served as the moderator.

Managing a potential crisis

PEDV has recently become a major problem for the U.S. pork industry. MacDougald has been at the forefront of Canada's effort to understand and rally support for precautions to limit PEDV risk. He provided an update based on the day's news.

"There's a 500 sow farrow-to-finish operation confirmed positive as of today," said MacDougald. "It's a closed herd. At this point there is no short-list of probable introductions of the virus. The direction today is containment. The direction is also to follow contacts on where people, supplies and equipment have gone. As of today and tomorrow, the focus is marshalling resources and doing extensive investigating. We will know 30 hours from now on at least the initial contacts to this farm if it has spread by those means or not."

There is no need to raise panic, he said. "There are a lot of misconceptions on the manner and speed of how this has spread in U.S. It may be acting like a supervirus, but folks, it's not. It's a coronavirus, there's good history and knowledge, and we know if it's handled right in most situations, the track record is sow herds can eliminate this in 90 to 100 days."

"The most important thing in a case like we've found today is put your arms around and contain it. That's what's happening now." More cases are likely and the industry is expected to enter a lock-down mentality to limit spread. Several participants noted the risk has been very high given the close interaction between the Canadian and U.S. industries, so while the news is not welcome, it is also not surprising.

The tone in the room reflected a resolve to make good decisions and work diligently to turn a challenging situation into a speed bump that will not derail a Canadian pork sector that has been looking very strong.