

Editor's view: Questions as PEDv travels on

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The world of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (PEDv) is much larger than only North America, I realised last week. Outside the US and Canada, the spread of the disease has its own dynamics.

The situation in Colombia hit the news this week. Three days ago, Carlos Alberto Maya Calle, CEO of the Colombian Association of Pork Producers, [was interviewed about the disease](#). He said that the diagnostics of the Colombian Institute for Agriculture (ICA) confirm recent outbreaks in the departments of Huila (south west) and Cundiamarca (centre) are '*diarrea epidemia porcina*' – or PEDv.

Also the centrally located Meta department has already reported outbreaks with PEDv-like symptoms.

The ICA therefore said [a sanitary emergency state](#) was declared to manage and control the outbreak. Pig farmers have been urged to carry out strict biosecurity to control the spread of the PED virus. Checkpoints have been set up, surveillance visits set up and events suspended.

Promising

These seem promising steps – and together with a favourable climate, this may help containing the country's pig sector. After all, the virus appears to thrive on cold weather, which partly explains its spread in the USA. Since Colombia is on the equator, this may help in containing the virus.

Reports from on the ground appear to confirm this. Luis Humberto Martínez Lacouture, manager of the ICA, wrote: "Technicians have visited the farms located in the treatment areas, the surveillance was conducted and the health status of the animals was observed, which has allowed us to demonstrate that the disease has not spread to the treatment area elsewhere. So far we have not detected new outbreaks of the disease."

More ways

Carlos Alberto Maya Calle, however, revealed one more way the disease can spread. He said: "Smuggling, despite an improvement in controls and noticed a decrease in the number of animals and pig carcasses smuggled by the Venezuelan border, is an evil that affects producers in the entire border region and risking the health status of the country. We have the misfortune of having a neighbour like Venezuela where there is no organised disease control and there is no culture of reporting these diseases."

And there's always the question where Colombia's PEDv came from. Colombia imports from the USA, Canada and Chile.

Or could it be neighbouring countries? Maya Calle mentioned [Peru](#), where the National Service for Agricultural Health (Senasa) confirmed the disease as early as October last year – although [more information is very scarce](#).

And what about Venezuela as a source? In the words of Carlos Alberto Maya Calle: "*No sabemos*. We don't know."

Japan

Smuggling does not provide the total answer either. In Japan, consisting of many islands, reports about PEDv have been around since October last year. The disease killed already [over 38,000 piglets](#), according to the latest figures of the country's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. And, oh yes, it occurred throughout the country.

**Thank you to Mr Yoshiyuko Iwamoto, of the swine magazine *Yoton Joho*, for providing the data on PED virus in Japan.

- [PED outbreak in Japan](#)

by [Vincent ter Beek](#) Mar 21, 2014

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