

PED: Watch That Biosecurity!

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ANALYSIS - During a Town Hall Meeting teleconference, organised by Alberta Pork, the emphasis was clearly on biosecurity writes Chris Wright, Senior Editor for ThePigSite.

Mark Fynn, Animal Care Specialist for Manitoba Pork, was keenly aware that the pork producers listening wanted to know about the three new Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) outbreaks in Manitoba in the last two weeks. While he mentioned that gaps in biosecurity have been evident in Canada, in the farms affected there were no obvious lapses in biosecurity, and those farms weren't doing anything different than any other pork farm.

Mr Fynn highlighted two particular biosecurity issues. One was that producers also need to insist that service people visiting the farm need to be treated like any other "possible disease vector"

Therefore, farms must ensure that service people do the following:

- Contact the farm before arriving and inform them of where they were previously.
- Only enter the yard if absolutely necessary.
- Ensure their vehicle has been washed before visiting the site, if they have to enter the yard.
- Use disposable boot covers when outside of their vehicles at the site.
- Proceed directly to the area they are servicing after notifying staff by phone and leave the site directly.

In addition, service people should preferably plan their schedule to move from high-health sites to low-health sites with as much downtime as possible between sites. The other biosecurity issue involved the washing, disinfecting and drying of trucks and trailers.

For one thing, producers need to be wearing disposable boot covers whenever they are outside of their vehicle at high-risk sites and need to get a complete and thorough wash done of their truck and trailer immediately after leaving these sites. Properly cleaning vehicles is a critical process, Mr Fynn said and to do the whole process correctly – washing, disinfecting and drying – takes two people about two hours. If it is done quickly or improperly, that vehicle still presents a risk.

Previous research with the PRRS virus was cited regarding the efficacy of the "washing – disinfecting - drying" process. In a nutshell, if the entire process isn't followed completely, then the chances are high that virus will remain on the vehicle. Vehicle washing must be done with hot water and include a detergent, not just water, it was pointed out.

Research done in Minnesota demonstrated that without adequate drying time, 40 per cent of the vehicles were still infected. But when the disinfectant was allowed to dry properly, it was 100 per cent PRRS virus-free. The research also found that just washing, without disinfection, did not remove any virus at all.

