

HIGH HEALTH STATUS

SAPPO prioritised the preservation of its excellent national pig herd health status. The organisation's Portfolio Committee for Pig Health manages all health needs and the committee's decisions, programmes and projects are implemented by SAPPO's veterinary liaison officer, Dr Peter Evans.

Although producers have always realised the value of high animal health standards to their businesses, the value of a constant focus on the health of the national herd was placed under the spotlight when two serious pig diseases were identified in the country the past years.

The outbreaks of PRRS in 2004 and Classical Swine Fever (CSF) in 2005 underlined the importance of a high health status on farms. Fast and timely reaction to the outbreaks by members of SAPPO, with the support of the national veterinary authorities and private pig practitioners, enabled South Africa to successfully eradicate both these diseases.

Serological tests

SAPPO, through its veterinary liaison officer Dr Peter Evans, has an excellent working relationship with the national veterinary authorities and cooperates with them to conduct regular national serological surveys to prove the absence of many viral diseases found in pigs in other countries. Copies of the annual survey reports can be obtained from SAPPO at tel no (012) 361 3920 or info@sapork.com.

The recent survey was conducted in 2013. The final report indicates that both PRRS and CSF, diseases that were present in South African herds in 2004 and 2005 respectively, were successfully eradicated.

Pig compartmentalisation system

SAPPO's pig compartmentalisation system is aimed at controlling exotic animal diseases such as PRRS, Classical Swine Fever and Ausjeskis, as well

as endemic diseases such as African Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease.

The system aims to keep these highly infectious diseases from South African pig herds and is conducted in cooperation with the national animal health authorities.

The compartments is a disease control mechanism and will ensure that in the unlikely event of an exotic disease outbreak in the country the risk of the disease spreading among South African herds, is limited. The national veterinary authorities will then also be able to certify that the compartments are disease free. This may ensure the continuation of exports of among others, genetic material, from such compartments.

SAPPO believes that the compartmentalisation system is the only insurance producers can take to ensure a successful future. The crux of the system is that producers must adhere to certain minimum biosecurity requirements. These are not difficult to achieve and many producers already comply with these standards.

As soon as producers believe that their farms fulfill all the compartment requirements, they must apply to be audited via their local state veterinarians. The state veterinarian will supply the necessary documents to the national veterinary authorities. The compartment will then be approved if all criteria are met.

A producers' consulting veterinarian must visit an approved producer at least every second month. The consulting veterinarian will be responsible to ensure that a piggery keeps complying with the compartment's requirements.

The requirements for the compartments differ from these of SAPPO's quality assurance scheme, Pork 360. The requirements to qualify for the latter are stricter than those for the compartments as the aims of the two systems differ.

Pork 360 wants to guarantee a safe and healthy product to the consumer.

Farming practices must therefore take consumer preferences into account with regard to, among others, animal welfare.

SAPPO's minimum biosecurity measures for producers

1. Fence the piggery effectively to prevent access by people and animals.
If possible, prevent animals from being able to dig under the fence.
2. Don't allow other types of animals or pets into the piggery.
3. Don't allow visitors into the piggery if they have been in contact with other pigs in the past two days.
4. Provide all visitors with overalls and boots before they enter the farm.
They must leave these overalls and boots on the farm when they leave.
5. Don't allow people to eat within the piggery and especially not to bring pork or pork products into the piggery.
6. Make sure that vehicles and goods brought into the piggery are not a risk. Always disinfect vehicles and goods before they enter the piggery.
7. Only bring pigs in from another piggery, which has a known disease status. That piggery's health status should be the same or better than your piggery's status. Never bring pigs from auction facilities into the piggery.
8. Do not feed swill such as dead poultry, poultry offal and animal offal to pigs. The use of vegetables is not a risk, but feeding meat products to pigs is risky.
9. Dead pigs must be disposed of in such a manner that they do not pose a possible source of disease.
10. Do not allow anything that could be a possible disease risk on your farm.