

PIG TALES



The BPHS Monitoring Scheme

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Larkmead is one of the practices involved in the British Pig Health Scheme (BPHS) abattoir monitoring programme. In total there are 22 veterinary surgeons across the country gathering information on over 1,000 carcasses at each abattoir visit. Fifteen abattoirs are registered as part of the scheme and between 5-7 kill days are monitored in each per calendar quarter. The carcasses are monitored for a variety of disease processes and help to provide a picture of both national disease levels in the industry and also generates individual farm information. We are not there for our own enjoyment, so want to encourage you to use the data we collect to monitor disease on your units!

All observations are scored in the same standardised way at each abattoir, by trained individuals, so trends in results should be comparable.

The following are scored:

(1) Slapmark

These are very important! They are our only means of carcass identification and need to be easy to read. Careful attention is paid to correlating the right pluck with the right carcass. If the slapmark is illegible then the pigs will not be scored.

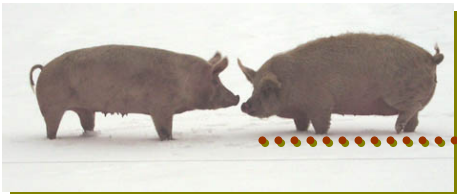
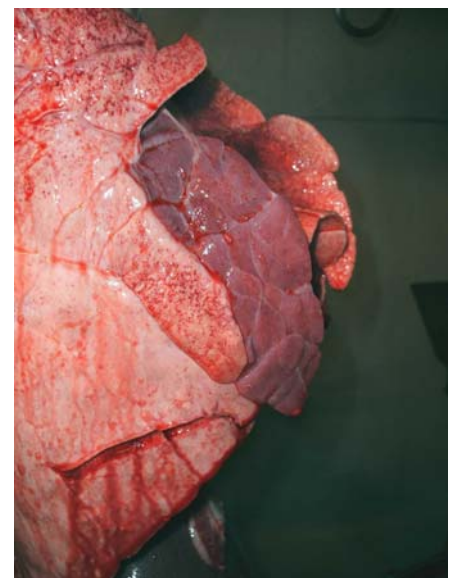
(2) Lungs

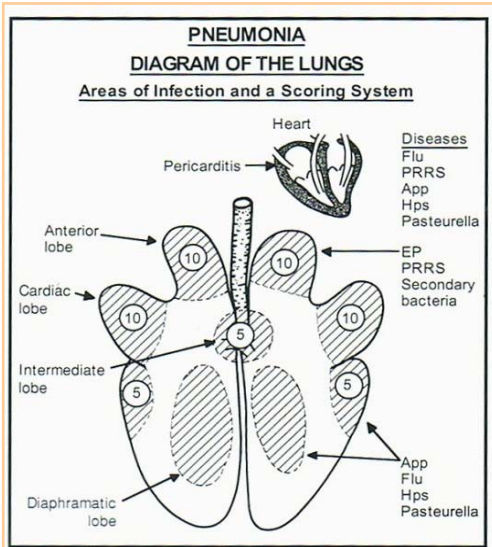
These are scored for

- (i) Presence of "EP-like" lesions
- (ii) Presence of pleuropneumonia

It is important to remember that the scoring is based entirely on lesions visible to the naked eye. Many organisms can cause lesions that are similar in appearance to those caused by *M.hyo pneumoniae* (EP) and pleuropneumonia, so it is not a diagnosis of causal agent of disease, but should act as an early indicator of a problem.

The lung lobes are scored out of 55. Any score over 10 can cause significant % loss of daily live weight gain.





(3) Pleurisy

Adhesions between the lungs (mild) or lung and thoracic wall (severe) are recorded. This can be so severe that lung tissue remains stuck to the thoracic wall in the carcass. In this case, other disease processes may be masked as the lung tissue is absent.

(4) Pericarditis

This is where the pericardial sac is stuck to the muscle of the heart. This can be a result of a number of bacterial infections e.g. Glässer's Disease or *Streptococcus suis*.

(5) Milk Spot Liver

These white spots of fibrous tissue are a result of the migration of round worms (*Ascaris suis*) through the liver tissue. The percentage of livers affected can be used to help plan worm control strategies on the unit.

(6) Papular Dermatitis

This refers to spotty lesions on the skin. The position and uniformity of the lesions indicate the likely underlying cause. Widespread lesions are often caused by fly bites and tend to be circular with well defined margins. Mange lesions tend to be distributed mainly across the hams, under the belly and over the neck. They are more irregular in size and shape.

(7) Tail bite lesions

The data is collected using a hand held PC and at the end of the abattoir visit all the data is electronically downloaded to the administration centre within 48 hours. This rapid turn-round means that the information generated is current and represents general health on your unit at the time.

This data should form part of the discussion at each of your quarterly visits as another tool to monitor health on your unit and build up a picture of health status. Any changes can then be monitored quarter by quarter and problem areas targeted.

Training Courses

The first round of medicine talks have been successful. We are taking ideas for future training days which we are organising for 2007. Please let us know the main topics that you are particularly interested in.

Here are some suggestions (or you may have some of your own):

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| (1) Managing the breeding boar | (2) Managing replacement gilts | (3) Reducing pre-weaning mortality |
| (4) Environmental factors that affect growth performance | (5) Managing the weaned pig | |
| (6) Disease control on the farm | (7) Successful management of A.I. | |

