

Biosecurity in the slaughterhouse yard—progress, and moving forward

Biosecurity procedures reduce the risk of introducing diseases into hog populations, and are aligned with security measures and with HACCP product safety protocols. These procedures can reduce the transmission of endemic diseases, or prevent the dissemination and propagation of pathogens to other animal populations.

Why a biosecurity program?

The Quebec hog industry biosecurity and health and safety stabilization program was established to fight disease in hog populations and to ensure the profitability and stability of the pork industry. This pamphlet offers slaughterhouses a practical approach to the development, completion or verification of their own slaughterhouse yard biosecurity protocols. Some sections are aimed specifically at transporters, and at producers who handle their own animal transportation to the slaughterhouse.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE CHECKS

1. Restricted and Controlled Access Zones

- The area is secured to prevent the entrance of unauthorized persons or of animals (e.g. locked fence, locked entrances/exits)
- The controlled access zone is under permanent, constant surveillance
- Exterior lighting allows monitoring of slaughterhouse premises during the night and early morning
- Emergency exits are equipped with automatic closing mechanisms
- Notices of the controlled access zones are clear and visible
- Access to the premises is controlled or guarded
- Exterior doors, windows, roof openings, air intakes and vehicles are secured with locks, seals or sensors during unmonitored periods (after working hours or during weekends)
- Employee and authorized-visitor parking areas and passages are clearly marked

2. Unloading Zone

- Controlled access to the unloading area prevents unverified or unauthorized deliveries
- Advance notice is required for all deliveries
- Unscheduled deliveries are held beyond the boundaries of the controlled access zone during verification
- All animal deliveries are recorded to ensure easy monitoring or follow-up in the event of a health and safety incident
- A CFIA veterinarian is notified immediately when animals demonstrate unusual behaviours or symptoms
- Provisions exist to accommodate producers wishing to make Sunday-night or Monday-morning deliveries (to minimize the contamination of vehicles, assuming pens and docks are cleaned over the weekend)
- A clearly identified waiting area is available, in the yard or outside, removed from the established route, when several vehicles are waiting to be unloaded
- There is an exclusively live-hog access on the premises
- Routes used by animal transports are not used by other vehicles
- The route is one-way, with a separate entrance and exit, or a specifically established route; that is, vehicles may not return the way they entered
- The unloading area is covered with concrete and/or asphalt and/or allows quick cleaning without water accumulation
- The dry cleaning mechanism, if any (wood-chip cleaning) is covered, used only for that purpose and conveniently located in the yard's circuit
- Unloading-area and vehicle wash water is collected and treated before being discharged into the rain sewer
- The unloading area is regularly cleared of accumulated feces and wood chips
- There is a vehicle wash and disinfection station before exiting towards a new loading site, ideally near the slaughterhouse, beyond site limits
- Accumulated snow is stored within the security perimeter
- Loading docks are carefully managed to avoid significant accumulations of feces

- The dock walls and floors (interior and exterior) are easily washable
- Slaughterhouse cleaning materials are not used in vehicles to remove sawdust and accumulated feces from ramps
- A protocol is in place to avoid the accumulation of feces and wood chips that fall from vehicles onto the ground near the unloading dock
- A boot and hand-washing station for transporters is available and in good working order
- Clear and visible signage in the unloading dock indicates transporters' authorized limits
- The unloading dock is subject to a regular sanitation maintenance protocol
- The program includes washing/disinfection as well as other protocols such as regular scrubbing, rinsing, etc
- Specialized products are used for cleaning and disinfection

3. The Human Factor

- Visitors have direct access to the building without having to pass through the yard (i.e. the structure is part of the security perimeter)
- Individuals must be identified at all times when on the premises
- A visitors' log is maintained
- Visitors are restricted from production areas unless accompanied
- All visitors accessing production areas are furnished with boots and clothing
- A restricted period is required for international visitors or returning nationals from specified countries to reduce the risk of exotic-disease propagation
- Employees who work or live on a farm have been informed of and understand the health and safety risks to operations from pathogens found in slaughterhouses, and vice versa
- Employees are forbidden from bringing home clothing or other slaughterhouse supplies

Slaughterhouse Yard Biosecurity Guide



4. Water

- Water is supplied from aqueducts
- In cases where the water is not supplied from aqueducts, regular water analyses take place and/or a prevention program exists
- The water tank is covered

5. Dead Stock and Offal

- Containers are sealed when not in use
- Containers used to gather offal and inedible materials are washed between each use
- Vehicles used to transport these materials have a specific and designated route
- Unused containers are located in the building or, when outdoors, are covered

6. Pests and Birds

- A pest-control program is in place and is monitored
- There is no sign of rodents
- Birds cannot enter the interior unloading dock
- There are no predation issues with inedible offal and carcasses (birds or mammals)

7. Aerosols

- There are no hog raising facilities within a radius of 3 km
- Other than hog operations, there are no animal production facilities within a radius of 3 km

8. Meat Products

- Control procedures are in place regarding meat products introduced from outside the slaughterhouse

- Client returns are examined and recorded in a separate designated slaughterhouse area
- For exports, the slaughterhouse ensures compliance with section 11.5 (“Meat products exported and returned”) of the Meat Hygiene Manual of Procedures

WHAT TRANSPORTERS CAN DO

9. Unloading Areas – Vehicle

- Means of access to the docks are known and strictly observed
- Boot- and hand-washing stations are located near the unloading dock access doors
- Transporters make use of the boot- and hand-washing station
- Transporters identify and respect posted access limits
- Transporters do not have access to the indoor unloading dock nor to the waiting pens
- A sanitation improvement protocol is implemented for vehicles leaving the slaughterhouse
- The sanitation practices of the *Bonne Pratique de Transport des Porcs du Québec* are applied

10. Animal Handling

- Transporters put on boots immediately upon exiting the vehicle
- Transporters put on coveralls immediately upon exiting the vehicle
- Transporters wear disposable gloves for animal handling
- Transporters possess their own tools and refrain from using slaughterhouse materials (panels, sticks, prods, whips, etc.) to handle animals
- Slaughterhouse employees do not enter the interior of the vehicle to help transporters (for instance, to help them transport non-mobile animals)



Canadian Swine Health Board
Conseil canadien de la santé porcine

The Quebec Hog Industry Biosecurity and Health Stabilization Program is a Canadian pilot initiative. Financing is made possible by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

www.swinehealth.ca

CHAIRE DE RECHERCHE EN SALUBRITÉ DES VIANDES



Université de Montréal