



pigbytesnewsletter

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LEGISLATIVE CHANGES WILL IMPACT ON HEALTH MANAGEMENT OF PIG FARMS

The Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (Pigs; MCOP) was revised in July 2007. A key component of this change was that the MCOP is no longer just a "guideline" – but now incorporates "standards" which have recently been incorporated into NSW legislation. On Friday 12th March, an amendment was made to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation, with the major change being that the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Commercial Pig Production (NSW Pig Code) will now be enforceable under the Regulation. The Regulation can be viewed at <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/epub> in the 2010 archives for the week of 8th – 12th March.

The Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Commercial Pig Production may be viewed at

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/animal-welfare/codes/general/commercial-pig-production>

Division 6, Requirement 22 is that: (1) a producer must have a herd health program in place to manage the risk of disease to a pig, and (2) for the purposes of this clause, herd health program means a documented management program that identifies potential health and biosecurity risks to pigs and specifies actions to prevent or minimize those risks.

To assist producers and veterinarians less familiar with pigs to meet these Regulations, the Australian Pig Veterinarians (APV), the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA), Australian Pork Ltd (APL) and Industry and Investment NSW have developed a Herd Health Program Checklist. Pig owners who do not currently have a herd health program can use the check-list to conduct a self-assessment on their herd, with face-to-face or over-the-phone support from their veterinarian. It is recommended that the completed checklist be kept on-file by both the producer and their consultant veterinarian.

The checklist can be downloaded at:

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0/008/324197/Pig-herd-health-program-checklist.pdf

Contact Trish Holyoake at

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REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND SAVE MONEY \$\$\$\$

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW (DECCW) is helping small business to lower power bills and cut carbon pollution. DECCW Senior Manager, Sustainable Business, David Trewin encourages small businesses across NSW, including those in the pig industry, to take up rebates of up to \$5,000 for making energy efficiency improvements.

"Small businesses owners can save hundreds of dollars every year by making simple changes to their energy use," Mr Trewin said. "Rebates are available through the Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program."

The Program offers a subsidised energy assessment and a tailored action plan which could cover heating, ventilation and air conditioning, hot water systems, insulation, electric motors, compressed air, boilers and commercial refrigeration as well as lighting.

"If your electricity bills are less than about \$20,000, or you have less than about 10 employees, you can take part in this Program," Mr Trewin said.

Businesses, including pig farmers, can register online for the Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program at www.savepower.nsw.gov.au/business or by calling the Environment Line on 1300 361 967.

Larger businesses are encouraged to contact DECCW to find out about other programs which can support them to become more sustainable and more energy efficient. Call DECCW Business Partnerships team on 02 8837 6000 or visit: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainbus/energysaver.htm>



Industry &
Investment

KEEPING RECORDS SAFE

Records are an important part of many everyday activities in both our personal and business lives. Records include certificates, licences and photographs as well as registrations, business contacts and financial records. Any loss of records for whatever reason usually results in a highly stressful period of searching and applying for record replacement.

The Records Management Association of Australia has developed a 2 page Continuity Plan available free from their website. This plan lists important household and personal records with suggestions for how to keep them safe -

<http://www.rmaa.com.au/docs/library/items/PersonalContinuityPlan.pdf>

What about the piggery records? Do you backup your breeding records on a regular basis to an external hard drive? Is this hard drive stored in a safe separate location until the next backup – or is it permanently attached to the computer? What information is essential for you to continue in business in the event of some disaster?

We all hope bad things won't happen to us but too often we are caught unawares. How safe are your records?

TAILBITING CAN OCCUR IN OUTDOOR HERDS TOO

Tail biting has long been a problem for the intensive industry with research indicating the cause of this vice may be many and varied. Dietary deficiencies, lack of environmental stimulation, overcrowding, gender, genetics, and length of tail to name just a few.

A study of 5 outdoor production units in Croatia has revealed that tail biting can occur in pigs run outdoors as well. The units were all in the same geographic area, had the same veterinary consulting group and had around 150 sows per farm. Paddocks were reported as being in a large circle arrangement with 200m² per group of 25-30 pigs and handling facilities in the circle centre. The pigs were in the paddocks from weaning to slaughter.

Huts were described as "high investment insulated", with solid floor covered with deep straw bedding and 20m² in area. Fresh straw 40-50 kg was added weekly. Water was provided twice daily in troughs. The same commercial meal was used on all farms and pigs were slaughtered at the same age. The study was conducted January to March 2004 – winter when the incidence of tail biting is higher.

Incidence of tail biting ranged from 14% to 20%. Barrows were 2.9 times more likely to be bitten than gilts. Scoring and treatment of bitten tails occurred weekly and the most frequently recorded score of bitten tails was TS3 which was described

as "Tail chewing with moderate wounds, moderate swelling and low grade infection and itching."

There was no definitive cause identified for the tail biting but a range of contributory factors that were suggested included genetics, respiratory problems, possible dietary inadequacies and rooting in muddy pastures. The conclusion was that raising pigs outdoors does not prevent tail-biting in pigs.

Walker PK, and Bilkie G, 2006. *Tail-biting in outdoor pig production* The Veterinary Journal 171, 367-369.

Tail-biting tells you something is not right so don't ignore it if you notice it happening in your pigs.

NSW DPI PIG INDUSTRY GROUP

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