

061268653333

MIDWEST PIGGERY
"CAWDOR"
PARKES NSW 2870

11th February, 2004

The Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport Committee
SG 62
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ACT

ATTENTION: GEOFF DAWSON

Dear Sir,

I write to you as a pig producer in New South Wales, concerning a proposed Senate Enquiry into BioSecurity Australia's IRA for Pig meat.

There are currently two major pig diseases that Australia does not have; PMWS and PRRS.

Yet Australia seems oblivious to the risks it is taking by exposing the industry in Australia to these diseases by allowing the importation of uncooked pig meat from countries with these diseases.

I am familiar with the results of these devastating diseases in the U.K. pig herd where 60% of pig farmers that I know personally, have left the industry in the last five years because of these diseases. I also enclose a letter from one surviving pig farmer in the U.K. plus two articles from the United Kingdom Farmers Weekly on the effects of PMWS in the U.K.

Despite the fact that PMWS is now endemic in nearly every country (including recently New Zealand) there is still no known cure and no preventative vaccine available. If allowed to enter Australia by Sloppy Biosecurity then the Australian Pig Industry will be similarly devastated and lose our own marketing advantage of a "clean green" image forever.

I simply beg your support to ensure that those representing Australia do all in their power to prevent these diseases being allowed in through negligent biosecurity.

Yours faithfully,



Neil Unger
MID WEST PIGGERY

061268653333

Page 1 of 1

Neil Unger

From: "nickharding" <nickharding@totalserve.co.uk>
To: "NEIL UNGER" <nunger@westserv.net.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 4 February 2004 2:27 AM
Subject: PWMS/PDNS- THE PIG WASTING DISEASES

Hi Neil

You asked me to write a short paper re our experiences with the above, and am pleased to do so, if only to underline the devastating effect that this condition has had on the farm and the national pig herd.

This condition is caused by the circovirus 2 strain, and appears to be transmitted by almost any route, and sits in the breeding female and male(semen), and is transmitted to the offspring accordingly. Affected pigs do not respond to medication- indeed there are instances of this exacerbating the condition, so the only defence is good management.

The affected pig literally wastes away(similar to Aids in humans)and in most cases will die or requires euthenasing. The immune system on the pig is so severely challenged that it is unlikely to recover, but there is some evidence to suggest that gut stimulants, such as straw, do appear to be beneficial in aiding recovery.

The financial implications of this condition are critical, post weaning mortality increases to between 20-40% and this is obviously terminal unless action is taken as soon as the condition is diagnosed.

By far the cheapest remedy is to prevent it reaching ones unit, and biosecurity (both locally and nationally) is paramount.

Bear in mind that this can travel in the wind,in semen,in stock,in manure amongst others and you will realise that it appears to be worse in pig dense areas and indoor units, so the density factor may be to your benefit.

Our mortality rose to 15% and is currently running at 4%, we are outdoors and on straw, which i know helps, but it is a condition that can flare up at any time, so one must remain vigilant

I wish you well and hope this may be of some use.

NICK

Two articles on PMWS as taken from Farmers Weekly UK.

Oct. 10th 2003. By Richard Allison.

While a new survey suggests that measures used to control PMWS have little impact on mortality rates, some vets are achieving significant reductions.

PMWS is having a devastating effect on UK herds, says Andrew Gresham, formerly of the Vet Lab agency. To establish the real impact of wasting disease, we carried out a survey of 172 specialist pig vet practices in 2001.

MORTALITY RATES. Survey results as reported in "Vet Record" revealed that mortality rates averaged 3.9% before an outbreak, with an average peak of 19% after an outbreak. After outbreaks, mortality rates remained higher at 9.8%.

More worrying is that respondents felt control measures had little benefit on mortality. These include implementing an all in / all out system, and improved hygiene. It also highlights the lack of solid scientific data showing the benefit of control measures.

The only measure that helped reduce mortality and shorten outbreaks was therapeutic treatment. This isn't surprising as treatments will reduce the incidence of secondary disease, such as "pasturella", says Mr Gresham.

However Neville Kingston of Garth Vet Group in Yorks, warns that although some clients have seen the disease settle somewhat, it is always there. Any let up in measures minimising stress rapidly leads to mortality. Stress from high temperatures this summer led to several breakdowns.

Jan 5th By David Neal 2004.

The full impact of PMWS is unravelling at Eastern Lodge Piggery. We first discovered the symptoms on Sept. 26th and was subsequently confirmed by the Veterinary laboratory Agency on Oct. 17th.

As many UK pig farmers who have experienced the disease on their farms know only too well, the consequences for production and staff morale are devastating.

For the past quarter the our rearing herd mortality figures have risen from 3.3% to 9.4%. Growth rate has fallen to 326 grams from 369 grams, and the average weight of pigs out stands at 41 kg compared with 44.7 kg.

Mortality in the feeding herd now stands at 11.4% compared with 4.6% and growth rate has dropped from 705 gms to 576 gms. resulting in a reduction in the weight of pigs sold. That now stands at 92.3 kg compared with 97.8 kg