

**REVIEW OF SUBMISSIONS ON:**

**DRAFT IMPORT HEALTH STANDARD FOR PIG MEAT AND PIG MEAT  
PRODUCTS FROM FINLAND OR SWEDEN**

Biosecurity New Zealand  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry  
Wellington  
New Zealand

**23 December 2009**

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**REVIEW OF SUBMISSIONS ON:**

**DRAFT IMPORT HEALTH STANDARD FOR PIG MEAT AND PIG MEAT  
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23 December 2009

Approved for general release

Matthew Stone  
Animal Export/ Import Group Manager  
MAF Biosecurity New Zealand

## INTRODUCTION

The draft import health standard for pig meat and pig meat products from Finland or Sweden was notified for consultation on 28 September 2009. The consultation period closed 9 November 2009.

MAF received submissions from the following:

Graham Elwell	29 September 2009
New Zealand Pork Industry Board	9 November 2009

This document summarises the issues raised in the submissions, and presents the MAF response to each. As a result of the consultation, a note has been added to the model zoosanitary certification and veterinary certificate stating that pig meat and pig meat products from Sweden derived from pigs slaughtered prior to 16 March 2009 are not eligible for import under this import health standard.

## **SUBMISSIONS (See Appendix 1 for full copies of submissions)**

### **GRAHAM ELWELL**

MAF Response: Comments noted.

### **NEW ZEALAND PORK INDUSTRY BOARD**

**2.1 We have been advised that MAFBNZ has sought and obtained the assurance from Sweden's veterinary authority that it would directly and without delay notify New Zealand in the event of a change in Sweden's PRRS status in the future.**

MAF response: On 16 March 2009 the Deputy Director General of MAFBNZ, Dr Barry O'Neil, replied to the Swedish Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr Lena Björnerot, indicating New Zealand's official recognition of Sweden case. MAFBNZ requested, and subsequently received, a commitment for direct notification without delay if this status changed.

All consignments imported under this standard must be accompanied by official government veterinary certification which includes a declaration of freedom from PRRS. If a country's disease status changes, the import health standard can be revoked immediately (IHS section 1.3).

**2.2 However there were other issues that NZPork raised in its review that were listed in the conclusion as further qualifications on Sweden's PRRS freedom case, where further information is required. ... As recorded in the meeting notes we believe that New Zealand is entitled to expect response to these issues from Sweden, given their impact on Sweden's ability to control re-infection with PRRS.**

MAF Response: It was agreed that recognition of Sweden's freedom from PRRS was not dependent on this additional information. However, it was also agreed that further information would be requested, and a response was received on 23 November 2009. This information was forwarded to the New Zealand Pork Industry Board.

**2.5 We request that any import health standard that recognises Sweden as free from PRRS contains measures that avoid importation of any pork harvested during the period when PRRS is present.**

MAF Response: A note has been added to the model zoosanitary certification and veterinary certificate stating that pig meat and pig meat products from Sweden derived from pigs slaughtered prior to 16 March 2009 are not eligible for import under this import health standard.

## APPENDIX ONE: COPIES OF SUBMISSIONS

**GRAHAM ELWELL**

**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 September 2009 4:43 p.m.

**To:** Animal Imports

**Subject:** [Requires Classification] Pig meat imports //////////////////////////////////

Dear B. N.Z . M. A .F. Re / Pig Imports from Sweden E.U. etc ? As the old saying goes . The road to Hell is paved with good intentions !!! we are that close to getting a real bad disease into to N.Z.? that our luck is sure to run out before long ,make no mistake it has got out of hand because we are going overboard! last April we imported the most overseas Pork ever . Now I know we have a shortfall in local N.Z. pig meat production ? this is due to some barking mad District Councils who will not take Pig Farmers in consideration ( they must all be muslim or Greenies) . Any shortfall can be pulled in from Australia ,untill we manage our Councils better ? we all live in hope that one day soon they will wake up , . Sorry to be blunt this is bloody serious !! Regards from Graham Elwell , Marlborough .

## NEW ZEALAND PORK INDUSTRY BOARD

9 November 2009

MAF Animal Imports  
MAF Biosecurity New Zealand  
PO Box 2526  
Wellington 6140  
Via email: [animalimports@maf.govt.nz](mailto:animalimports@maf.govt.nz)

Dear Sirs

### **Draft Import Health Standard for Pig Meat and Pig Meat Products for Human Consumption from Finland or Sweden**

The New Zealand Pork Industry Board (known as NZPork) is the statutory body established under the Pork Industry Board Act 1997, with the Object: *to help in the attainment, in the interests of pig farmers, of the best possible net ongoing returns for New Zealand pigs, pork products and co-products; and in pursuing this object, to have regard to the desirability of the pork industry's making the best possible net ongoing contribution to the New Zealand economy.*

NZPork has reviewed the proposed reinstatement of Sweden within the above Import Health Standard (IHS) together with the covering explanation from MAFBNZ.

MAFBNZ sought NZPork's technical input into its review of material provided by Sweden to support its case for freedom, following the 2007 incursion of PRRS in Sweden, and Sweden's subsequent eradication exercise.

NZPork raised a number of issues, supported by MAFBNZ, and these issues have been noted as qualifications on Sweden's PRRS freedom case within the conclusions of the discussion in regard to the eradication programme for PRRS in Sweden (2nd item under discussion in Notes of Meeting of 16 Feb 2009, entitled *Considering the Swedish case for PRRS freedom*, dated 25 Feb 2009) (See attached).

One of our qualifications related to the timeliness of initial reports to OIE (3 Aug 07) relative to the start of outbreak (reported in the media as 6 July 2007). In addition, it was NZPork who notified MAFBNZ (13 July 2007) of Sweden's PRRS identification. We have been advised that MAFBNZ has sought and obtained the assurance from Sweden's veterinary authority that it would directly and without delay notify New Zealand in the event of a change in Sweden's PRRS status in the future.

However there were other issues that NZPork raised in its review that were listed in the conclusion as further qualifications on Sweden's PRRS freedom case, where further information is required. These are:

- *What population of pigs are missing from the sampling frame? i.e. if the Swedish Animal Health Service covers 90% of the pig population, have the remaining 10% been subjected to the same levels of control and surveillance during the eradication*

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*programme and subsequent surveillance?*

*- Noting the international contacts that are discussed in relation to infection pathways that may be relevant to the source of the PRRS outbreak, do these pathways still exist and, if so, what additional risk management has been put in place? In particular:*

*Danish growers transiting to slaughter and/or being finished and/or processed in Sweden*

*Delivery of cull sows and return of these stock trucks from Germany*

*- Further information following up the 8 infected places, in particular the programme of cleaning and disinfection, effluent disposal, re-stocking and surveillance during this process, would have been very useful. It is reasonable to expect to see this information in any outbreak report that is used as evidence for the success of eradication and a case for freedom. Have the IPs been re-tested (since their clean-up) at a more intense level than other herds that have been screened? What was the follow-up on these IPs?*

We have been advised that no response has been received by MAFBNZ to these questions, despite being raised twice by MAFBNZ (16 March 2009 and 25 August 2009) to the Swedish veterinary authority.

We are disappointed not to have received a response from Sweden in regard to the second point in particular, as this relates to a key risk pathway that still exists (transport of Danish pigs through Skane in Sweden). Such information is even more important given that Sweden has advised that the primary source of infection is not known.

Sweden was very concerned about the disease risk to its health status when the Swedish livestock transport ban which precluded transport of Danish stock through Sweden was overturned in 2003. Of particular note, it was very soon after this change, when Danish stock was being transported through Sweden (across the Copenhagen to Malmo bridge in the province of Skane in the south of Sweden) that PMWS was identified in Sweden, firstly in the south (December 2003). More recently, Sweden was very concerned about the PRRS risk when Danish pigs destined for Russia and the Baltics were being transported through Sweden. Notably PRRS was identified in the province of Skane, in the south of Sweden.

As recorded in the meeting notes we believe that New Zealand is entitled to expect response to these issues from Sweden, given their impact on Sweden's ability to control re-infection with PRRS.

We recognise that Sweden has been a model of effective PRRS surveillance, in that it operated a continuous surveillance system for PRRS (which detected the disease, probably within a month of the incursion) and it conducted a well-designed and executed eradication programme and post-eradication surveillance programme. We have no objection to the re-instatement of Sweden within this import health standard. But as covered above, our main residual concern is that pig disease outbreaks in Sweden have occurred in the southern part of the country, on the road routes used by Danish trucks crossing the bridge to Malmo and continuing on, many to destinations outside Sweden. With viruses such as PRRS which can be transmitted by the airborne route, Sweden will inescapably face the prospect of further outbreaks of serious

diseases, even though the pigs which cause them may not be imported into Sweden, but simply pass through.

For this reason, as is documented in the meeting notes, we request that any import health standard that recognises Sweden as free from PRRS contains measures that avoid importation of any pork harvested during the period when PRRS is present.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit.

Kind regards

Frances Clement  
Policy and Issues Manager

**Attachment to NZPIB Submission**

## NOTES OF MEETING

### **BNZ & Pork Industry Board**

#### **Considering the Swedish case for PRRS freedom**

<b>Meeting purpose</b>	To evaluate the documents outlining Sweden's case for freedom from PRRS in relation to import health standards for pork
<b>Participants</b>	<b>BNZ</b> Mat Stone <b>PIB</b> Frances Clement, Eric Neumann (EpiCentre, PIB Technical Adviser)
<b>Date</b>	16 Feb 2009
<b>Venue</b>	PIB Wellington (Eric joined by telephone)
<b>Items under discussion</b>	1. Competence of the Swedish Veterinary Authorities 2. Eradication programme for PRRS in Sweden 3. Post-eradication surveillance for PRRS in Sweden

Prior to the meeting the following documents were circulated:

- Letter from Lena Bjornerot, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, to the Director General of the OIE and the European Commission, dated 17 April 2008, and subject heading "Regaining freedom from PRRS in Sweden"
- Appended report "Probability of freedom from PRRS in Sweden", Agren et al, unpublished.
- SVA (National Veterinary Institute of Sweden) report "Surveillance and control programmes: Domestic and wild animals in Sweden 2007.
- Unpublished manuscript "Emergence of Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome in Sweden: detection, response and eradication". Carlsson, Wallgren et al, National Veterinary Institute, SVA, Sweden.

## 1. Competence of the Swedish Veterinary Authorities

### Discussions covered:

- a) SVA annual report pulls together a lot of good information of general interest; some specific information on PRRS response included, but adds little to information reported in the other two papers in more detail; structures and populations of the commercial pig population appear well understood; no real feel for backyard pig populations achieved from any reports.
- b) Sweden authorities and experts have solid international reputation.

### Conclusion:

- No concerns with the competence of the Swedish Veterinary Authorities.

## 2. Eradication programme for PRRS in Sweden

### Discussions covered:

- a) Concerns with respect to the timeliness of initial reports to OIE (3 Aug 07) relative to the start of outbreak (reported as early June 07). Also, MAFBNZ appears to have learnt of the outbreak from indirect sources. PIB believes MAFBNZ should make explicit to Sweden an expectation of direct and early notification of any future PRRS outbreaks.
- b) What population of pigs are missing from the sampling frame? i.e. if the Swedish Animal Health Service covers 90% of the pig population, have the remaining 10% been subjected to the same levels of control and surveillance during the eradication programme and subsequent surveillance?
- c) Noting the genetic exchange that reportedly occurs between pig industries in Norway, Finland and Sweden, what PRRS surveillance occurs in these countries and has the surveillance strategy been changed or intensified since the Swedish outbreak occurred?
- d) Noting the international contacts that are discussed in relation to infection pathways that may be relevant to the source of the PRRS outbreak, do these pathways still exist and, if so, what additional risk management has been put in place? In particular:
  - Danish growers transiting to slaughter and/or being finished and/or processed in Sweden
  - Delivery of cull sows and return of these stock trucks from Germany
- e) The papers provide a good description of the infection networks and relationships between infected places. PIB note that the epidemiology of the outbreak is incompletely understood, in that:
  - the source was never definitively established
  - links between cluster 1 and 2 never established
- f) Further information following up the 8 infected places, in particular the programme of cleaning and disinfection, effluent disposal, re-stocking and surveillance during this process, would have been very useful. It is reasonable to expect to see this information in any outbreak report that is used as evidence for the success of eradication and a case for freedom. Have the IPs been re-tested (since their clean-up) at a more intense level

than other herds that have been screened? What was the follow-up on these IPs?

- g) Has tracing of all pork products from the period when PRRS was identified been completed? How much product that was exported during period has not been accounted for?

#### Conclusions:

- The investigation, response and surveillance indicate an impressive mobilisation of resources. Restricting the outbreak to less than 10 properties suggests a very short silent spread period. Limiting the size of an outbreak of PRRS in a previously free country represents good luck and/or good management.
- PIB considers point a) above should be made explicit to Sweden within any formal acceptance of their freedom case.
- PIB considers points b), d), and f) above should be noted, with a request for further follow-up information, within any formal acceptance of the Swedish PRRS-freedom case.

### 3. Post-eradication surveillance for PRRS in Sweden

#### Discussions covered:

- a) The probability tree methods are a good approach, and their application to PRRS surveillance in Sweden provides a good concrete example of these novel techniques, after much theoretical discussion internationally. PIB note a paper at the forthcoming Society of Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health conference with a very similar title, which will provide a good forum for further critique.
- b) The issues with respect to missing pigs/farms in the sampling frame noted above are equally relevant.
- c) The probabilities associated with clinical surveillance are influential to the model, as identified by sensitivity analysis. It is difficult to evaluate the validity of the input values here, which are based on expert opinion.
- d) The model input values for probability of detection on breeding herds are very low (which strengthens the case for proof-of-freedom). This seems to reflect the Swedish experience of a relatively avirulent viral strain (causing low level clinical signs). No information on practices relating to production records that might assist scanning surveillance in this context is presented.
- e) The between herd design prevalence for active surveys is very low, and would have significant implications for active serological surveillance in NZ if generalised. Again, the expectation is that the Swedish experience with a viral strain that did not seem to be as highly infectious and prone to rapid silent spread seems to have influenced choices here.
- f) Has the PRRS surveillance scheme put in place prior to this outbreak been altered to reflect the lessons learned? For example, has surveillance or quality-assurance planning been increased around those activities thought to be most likely related to the cause of the outbreak (increased level of surveillance on herds with proximity close to the border, improved processes/monitoring around cull sow movements or non-Swedish growing pig movements transiting through the country, etc).

Conclusions:

- The post-eradication surveillance undertaken is sufficiently robust that if PRRS were still present in Sweden, it would have been detected.

Other issues:

- PIB is concerned that any import health standard that recognises Sweden as free from PRRS contains measures that avoid importation of pork during the period when PRRS was present, without appropriate measures for PRRS.

Matthew Stone  
25 February 2009

*These notes represent a summary of discussions at the meeting and are not formal Minutes. Any changes or questions regarding interpretation/ decisions/ actions should be sent to Matthew Stone.*