


ACA | FOR CANADIAN HOG PRODUCERS

*Animal Care at Work*



**An Industry Approach to Farm Animal Care and Welfare**


**Animal Care Assessment (ACA)**

**Canadian Pork Council**

**September, 2007**

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**Starting with the basics**

- **Animal care has been a top priority for livestock and poultry producers and organizations**
  - Codes of practice
    - Good animal practices
  - Transportation code
  - Provincial activities
- **Educational approaches**
- **Good care makes good sense!**

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**But soon realized the basics were no longer enough**

- **Educational approaches do not respond to the question – What is happening on-farm?**
  - Could not demonstrate on-farm activities
- **Auditable approaches being introduced in other areas**
  - Food safety
  - Environment
  - Traceability

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**And, the global environment had changed**

- **Visibility of European approaches**
  - Strong legislative actions
  - Supported by industry programs
    - Retailers/foodservice requirements
    - Producers
- **U.S. initiatives**
  - Primarily voluntary industry programs
  - Key moves by retailers/foodservice players
    - Food Marketing Institute and National Council of Chain Restaurants develop alliance on animal welfare guidelines

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**Leading to pressures here at home**

- **Canada**
  - Primarily voluntary industry programs
- **Consumer Attitudes Toward Pork Production**
  - Surveys conducted in 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2006 for provincial hog producer associations
  - Animal care ranked as one of the top three issues to consumers
    - (others being generally, food safety and the environment)
    - Source – Ipsos-Reid

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**Knew more was needed**

- **Recognized minimum standards were needed**
- **Recognized an auditable approach was required**
- **Started work in 2002**
- **Membership**
  - Producers and producer representatives
  - Researchers
  - Government



### But quickly realized some key challenges

- **No “HACCP” (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) for animal care**
- **No commonly accepted rules for content**
  - What is a good measure of welfare
  - Jury still out on many measures – vocalizations, fear scores, productivity
  - What can be applied on farm settings
- **No “one size fits all” approaches**
  - Design-based, animal/outcome-based, process-based
  - Index-based with weighted questions; minimum score passes
  - Minimum requirements for set questions
  - Educational only, no passing grades
  - Self-assessments versus externally reviewed/verified/audited
- **Emotional element of animal care**



### We examined what we knew was already working here

- **Animal care**
  - Codes were well respected
  - Form a good base
- **Food safety**
  - Just built an auditable on-farm food safety program (CQA®) - 1998
  - Well accepted
  - Large uptake
  - Used HACCP as a framework
  - Program requirements + educational elements (shaded and non-shaded questions)



### And designed an approach based on what we had learned

- **Build on the strengths of the codes**
  - Use the codes as the base
  - The good production practices
- **Build on the strengths of the food safety program**
  - Take key issues (critical points) and use these as program requirements/audit points
  - “Additive” to CQA® (don’t duplicate)
- **Build on the various approaches**
  - Design based
  - Animal/outcome based
  - Process based



### We set out the objectives and expected outcomes

- To promote sound animal care practices on Canadian hog farms
- To provide a mechanism to demonstrate that these practices are being followed
- The expected outcome: to build confidence throughout the supply chain and consumers



### Along with program characteristics

- Set minimum requirements/standards
- Be repeatable, valid and reliable
- Use measurable tools (minimize subjectivity)
- Be educational and enhance awareness
- Have a validation tool that moves beyond education
- Be a blend of both evaluation of the pig and the process
- Be clear, cost effective, simple and transparent
- Build on existing food safety program, CQA®, to prevent duplication



### And these elements guided the work

- **The result: Animal Care Assessment (ACA)**
  - A working document for producers
  - Builds on Codes of practice
  - Sets minimum requirements
    - Clearly identified as shaded questions
    - Follows model of food safety program
  - Uses design, animal/outcome and process based questions



### And then reviewed by other groups

- **Expanded involvement to present work to broader interest groups**
  - Materials reviewed in 2004 by:
    - Canadian Meat Council
    - Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
    - Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
    - Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
- **These groups supported the implementation of the ACA**



### Finally, the ACA was launched

- **Launched in July, 2005**
  - Advance copy
  - Raise awareness
  - Generate interest
  - Demonstrate action
- **Materials available in hard copy and on web-site**



### With a mix of design, animal/outcome and process based questions

- **Design:**
  - Is non-slip flooring provided on loading ramps and walkways?
  - Is there space where you can isolate and treat pigs that need special attention?
- **Animal/Outcome:**
  - Do pathways and ramps have sharp edges that would cause scratches or injury?
  - Is equipment that causes scratching or wounding of pigs promptly repaired or replaced?
  - Are animals fed daily to meet their nutritional needs? (Can be evaluated using body scoring).



### That cover the various aspects of production

- **Process-based:**
  - Do you have a documented standard operating procedure in place for the identification, care and humane treatment of sick or injured pigs?
  - Do you have a euthanasia plan that includes the proper methods for euthanasia of the different sizes and types of pigs on your farm?



### Then turned to implementation

- **Build on existing CQA® delivery system**
  - Producers to joins ACA:
    - Must be on CQA® program
    - Must meet ACA program requirements
    - Must demonstrate requirements have been met through validation
  - Validation schedule cycle (three years)
    - Full validation initial year
    - Partial validation (record review) second and third year
    - Cycle repeats



### The focus now – building enthusiasm

- **Producers already burdened**
  - No financial incentive
  - Others stressors in the industry



### And maintaining awareness of the global changes

- **United States**
  - Legislative initiatives at the state level on sow stalls
    - Florida (2002), Arizona (2006), Oregon (2007)
  - Major U.S. processor announcement – Smithfield – January 2007
    - Phase out sow stalls over 10 years
  - Major foodservice announcements on sow stalls
    - Wendy's/Burger King/Wolfgang Puck
- **Australia/New Zealand**
  - New Codes with minimum standards
  - Supported by regulations
- **European Union**
  - Phase out of sow stalls by 2013
  - Next issues – castration and space allowances



### While the program is still new, there are benefits.

- **Help to meet customer expectations**
  - Domestic for now
  - International – for the future
- **Help industry to tell its story**
- **Set minimum standards for animal care**
- **Part of the overall message about Canadian hog production**
  - Trusted
  - Integrity