



# On-Farm QA Programs

*APIQ and PigPass QA*

## Key Points:

On-farm quality assurance programs specify good agricultural practices in terms of food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity as well as requiring the implementation of a food safety plan.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) requires all pork exporters to verify that the pork and pork offal that they wish to export meets the food safety requirements of the importing country.

Verification requires that pigs consigned to export abattoirs are accompanied by a vendor declaration which is backed up by an appropriate on-farm QA system.

Australian Pork Industry Quality (APIQ) Program defines and requires producers to have system for:

- Property and production management
- Chemical identification, control and management
- Drug identification, including With Holding Period (WHP) and Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) control and management
- Documented Records
- Biosecurity management
- Animal Welfare management
- Food Safety management
- Annual audit

Currently, over 86% of Australian production was classified as either PigPass QA or APIQ, with accreditation numbers growing.

## *What is on-farm Quality Assurance?*

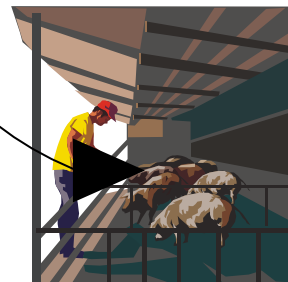
Principles agreed to by the National Livestock Identification System Pork (NLIS Pork) National Consultative Committee (NCC) for acceptability of QA programs for verification of compliance with the Australian Standard AS4696 - 2007 on The Hygienic Production and Transport of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption are that the QA programs:

- Address production food safety risks;
- Are compatible with joint industry/ government traceability systems;
- Are approved/ certified by a recognized body; and
- Are auditable and subject to regular audit through a recognized audit program.

## *Industry Quality Assurance (QA) Programs*

### **Australian Pork Industry Quality (APIQ) Program**

APIQ is a comprehensive on-farm quality assurance program that is annually audited. The APIQ standards govern physical, chemical, biological, quality, management, biosecurity and animal welfare standards for the industry.



The APIQ standards, which are regularly reviewed, are derived using scientific information together with good management practices and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) approach. The HACCP system is an internationally recognised food safety system. For each piggery a HACCP system is designed to allow implementation of the APIQ standards.

To become APIQ accredited, producers must provide a piggery QA manual containing:

- A management commitment giving an overview of the piggery, how it is managed, and what its objectives are;
- Compliance with APIQ Standards demonstrated through developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) and records reflecting compliance with APIQ; and
- A HACCP food safety plan.

### **PigPass QA**

PigPass QA is a simplified food safety program which addresses food safety. PigPass QA is the food safety program that validates the PigPass National Vendor Declaration (NVD).

PigPass QA accreditation is a first step for pig producers in having their farms fully APIQ certified. PigPass QA plays a key role in the traceability of pigs back to their place of birth in the event of a disease outbreak or food safety incident.

For PigPass QA accreditation producers must complete the PigPass QA manual. Producers will then have a documented on farm food safety program enabling eligibility for PigPass QA Certification and completion of the PigPass NVD.

## ***Industry Quality Assurance Standards***

### **APIQ Standards**

Under the APIQ program, producers need to meet the following standards:

- Physical Standards
- Chemical Standards
- Biological Standards
- Quality Standards
- Management Standards

- Biosecurity Standards
- Welfare Standards

### **With-Holding Periods (WHPs)**

A withholding period (WHP) is the number of days following treatment with a veterinary product when pigs are unsuitable for processing for domestic consumption. The WHP is set by the registration authority when the product is first registered, based on information supplied by the manufacturer plus from other sources.

It is designed to ensure that any residue remaining after treatment is below an established allowable level to ensure there is no risk to consumer health. Each product registered for use in pigs has its recommended dose and WHP stated on the product label or in the instruction sheet. Producers should ensure that all staff responsible for administering veterinary products to pigs are familiar with each product, when it is to be used, the correct dose rate and WHP.



### **Export Slaughter Intervals (ESIs)**

For some veterinary products, export markets require a longer period between last treatment and slaughter, called an Export Slaughter Interval (ESI). This occurs where importing countries have set a lower allowable limit than is used in Australia – therefore more time is needed for any residue to fall to the lower allowable limit.

ESIs must be considered for all pigs slaughtered in export abattoirs, regardless of whether the carcasses will go to a domestic buyer or to export, because their offal will likely go to an export market.

### ***For more information?***

For more information about the On-Farm QA or the APIQ program please call the PigPass Helpdesk on 1800 001 458 or view the PigPass web site at [www.pigpass.com.au](http://www.pigpass.com.au).