



# US Swine Health Improvement Plan

*Piloting a proven platform for safeguarding, certifying, and bettering animal health*

US Swine Health Improvement Plan  
2630 Veterinary Medicine  
1800 Christensen Drive  
Ames, IA 50011

## Frequently Asked Questions Packers / Slaughter Facilities

April 2021

### 1) What is my role, commitment, or responsibility as a packer/slaughter facility to participate in the US SHIP pilot program?

**Response:** Your commitment to the US SHIP pilot program is outlined below:

- a. The first responsibility is to complete the 5-question interest [survey](#) which will allow the US SHIP pilot program staff to know you are interested in having your state represented in the program.
- b. Your second responsibility is to communicate your interest to the State Animal Health Officials and State Pork Producers Association in which you have slaughter facilities and/or source pigs so they know there is interest in their state to participate in the US SHIP pilot program.
- c. Once you and your state have confirmed interest in the US SHIP pilot program, your state will confirm it's participating in the inaugural House of Delegates (HOD) to discuss, vote upon, and approve the technical requirements for the program in collaboration with other industry stakeholders, state, and USDA officials.
- d. Finally, once the initial ASF-CSF certification requirements for biosecurity, traceability, and sampling/testing are approved at the HOD (August 23-24, 2021), you can then choose to enroll some or all of your packing/slaughter facilities to participate in the US SHIP pilot program.

### 2) Once this program starts, what specifically will my slaughter facility(s) need to do to participate?

**Response:** Participants will need to enroll their slaughter facility(s) with the US SHIP Official State Agency (OSA) in which the slaughter facility is located, meet or exceed the requirements for certification, and be able to verify compliance with the program standards on an as-needed basis.

It is anticipated that participating slaughter facilities will be expected to demonstrate their competency in providing at least 30 days of movement information electronically in a common format (e.g., a prescribed CSV file) to the US SHIP OSA in a timely manner. Premises level traceability for swine movement information is planned to be built around the use of the (USDA – nationally unique) Premises Identification Numbers of the premises of origin and destination.

Participating packers/slaughter facilities will also be expected to be able to provide their respective OSA the percentage of the animals being harvested at their facility that are being sourced from US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites.

### 3) Does the entirety of my supply-chain need to be derived for US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites to participate in the pilot project?

**Response:** Due to the start-up nature of this endeavor, slaughter facilities will not be required to ensure 100% of their supply chain originating from ASF-CSF Monitored Certified farm sites to participate in this US SHIP ASF-CSF Certification Program. Participating packer/slaughter facilities will be responsible for communicating any interests they may have in sourcing pigs from US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites to their respective suppliers.

**4) How much will it cost a slaughter facility to participate?**

**Response:** Participating slaughter facilities will be responsible for the costs incurred associated with meeting or exceeding the requirements for certification. The primary costs are anticipated to be those associated with administering the program for a given facility and being able to verify compliance with the program standards on an as needed basis.

**5) How will participation and becoming certified benefit an individual slaughter facility?**

**Response:** Certified farm sites and slaughter facilities participating in the US SHIP pilot program will benefit by being recognized for complying with the ASF-CSF Monitored Certification Program standards for biosecurity, traceability, and disease surveillance. These standards will leverage existing programs and processes (i.e. Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) and Secure Pork Supply (SPS)) and establish precedent for their use across all participating states and regions of the US.

The US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored Certification Program aims to play a primary role in helping support the responsible movement of swine and continuity of business and trade outside of ASF/CSF control areas. Implementing uniform and effective systems for early detection and demonstrating evidence of freedom of disease are foundational elements needed to support ongoing interstate and international commerce over the course of a response and recovery period.

There is precedent for willing trading partners to recognize specific areas (regionalization) as being free of specified diseases within an affected country. Recognizing the health status of commercial livestock by region (counties, states, or provinces) has been a critical component of making stepwise progress over the course of large-scale disease control or eradication efforts domestically and internationally.

**6) Will certificates be issued to program participants during the US SHIP pilot program?**

**Response:** Yes, US SHIP pilot program participants meeting or exceeding the requirements for certification will be issued a certificate.

**7) What if I have participating facilities (packers/slaughter facilities or farm sites) in multiple states?**

**Response:** Participation in the US SHIP pilot program is on an individual premises (site) basis for packers/slaughter facilities and farm sites. Participating packers/slaughter facilities and farm sites are to be enrolled with the Official State Agency (OSA) in the states in which they are geographically located. Thus, if entities have operations in multiple states, they would work directly with the OSA in each of the states in which they have slaughter facilities or farm sites.

Each OSA will be responsible for conferring certifications and maintaining an up-to-date list of the US SHIP ASF-CSF participating packers/slaughter facilities and farm sites in their respective state.

**8) How will packers/slaughter facilities know if their supply chain of live hogs being procured are coming from US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites?**

**Response:** The US SHIP Official State Agencies (OSA) will be responsible for conferring and maintaining an up-to-date list of US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites in their respective states.

(continued on page 3)

While the details are to be worked out over the course of the pilot, the verification of certification of a packer/slaughter facility's supply chain is expected to be a simple process. It is anticipated that this cross-reference will function in a manner somewhat similar to PQA verification. The slaughter facilities will know the PINs of the farm sites from which they receive pigs, and the US SHIP OSAs will know the PINs of US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored farm sites. Thus, some type of periodic spot check (low-tech), where the plant provides a list of PINs to the OSA, and the OSA returns a "Yes" or "No"; or via the use of a more automated (Application Programming Interface (API)) application that returns the same "Certified or Not" answer to the packer/slaughter facility.

## 9) How will the participant information be kept confidential?

**Response:** Each US SHIP Official State Agency (OSA) will be responsible for housing and managing the information needed to maintain the participant status for the program participants within their respective state.

Records anticipated to be housed or maintained by the OSA include:

- Premise level information (Contact information, Premises Type, PIN, Location)
- Primary herd veterinarian (clinic) of record
- An affidavit of compliance with biosecurity requirements

Program participant capabilities needing to be verified by the OSA include:

- The ability to readily generate the past 30 days of swine or swine germplasm movement into or out of participating premises in a prescribed electronic format (CSV file) as needed.

While the entity responsible for housing the OSA is expected to vary by state, the State Animal Health Official/Department of Agriculture/Board of Animal Health related agencies are the entities that are most generally responsible for maintaining the livestock premises level information within their respective state.

Participation in US SHIP pilot program is voluntary which is a foundational element aiding in the OSA's ability to secure any program specific information deemed to be confidential or sensitive in nature.

## 10) Will there be ASF/CSF testing of clinical specimens collected at packers/slaughter facilities with this US SHIP pilot program?

**Response:** No, similar to the approach taken with NPIP's H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored Certification held by US Meat-Type chicken and turkey slaughter facilities, it is envisioned that diagnostic samples will be collected on farm.

The US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored Program plans to center disease surveillance efforts upstream on the supply chains to participating slaughter facilities as means for early detection and providing evidence of freedom of disease across participating farm sites (supply chains), states, and regions.

## 11) What is the purpose of the sampling and testing requirements associated with this US SHIP pilot program?

**Response:** The sampling and testing requirements associated with this US SHIP pilot program aim to complement the existing and ongoing systems of ASF/CSF surveillance in the US.

The US SHIP pilot program will offer a well-defined, active, practical, and effective system of disease surveillance that serves to provide participating farm sites, packers/slaughter facilities, states, and regions a means to aid in early detection efforts and for demonstrating evidence of freedom of ASF/CSF *outside* of ASF/CSF control areas.

**12) Will a specific software be required to participate in the US SHIP pilot program?**

**Response:** No unique or specialized software will be needed by program participants. All premises-level identification information will be centered on use of the Premises Identification Numbers (PINs), a nationally unique and permanent code assigned by the USDA.

**13) What happens if a program participant's site is confirmed as testing positive for ASF or CSF?**

**Response:** The State Animal Health and USDA Veterinary Services officials will determine the appropriate responses to premises confirmed to have ASF or CSF positive animals. Sites with ASF or CSF confirmed positive animals and the sites inside the related control zone are *outside* the scope the US SHIP pilot program.

The scope of the US SHIP pilot program serves to support disease prevention, surveillance, and continuity of business *outside* of ASF-CSF control areas.