



US Swine Health Improvement Plan

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

US Swine Health Improvement Plan
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Frequently Asked Questions Veterinarians

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1) What is my role as an accredited veterinarian?

Response: Licensed and accredited veterinarians will play a central role in helping facilitate their producer clients' participation and certification in the US SHIP pilot program. Herd veterinarians' responsibilities in the US SHIP pilot program are anticipated to be consistent with the roles and responsibilities they are routinely playing in supporting the herd health related needs of their clientele.

Maintaining a VCPR with a herd veterinarian of record is a requirement for farm sites to participate and be certified in the US SHIP pilot program.

Herd veterinarian responsibilities in the US SHIP pilot program are anticipated to include:

- Client education concerning US SHIP and related requirements for certification
- Provision of technical support to facilitate producer participation and certification
 - Liaison between Official State Agency (OSA) and producer (animal owner) clients
 - Assisting and/or facilitating producer enrollment with OSA
 - Consultation and facilitating producer signing of Biosecurity affidavit
 - Coordinating producer compliance with sampling & testing requirements
 - Periodic assessments
 - Work with producer (animal owner) clients to ensure enrolled premises are current with requirements for US SHIP certifications held.

2) What benefits will a successful implementation of the US SHIP pilot program provide to my producer and packer/slaughter facility clients?

Response: Certified producers and packers/slaughter facilities participating in the US SHIP pilot program will benefit by being recognized for complying with the ASF-CSF Monitored 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.

While advancing practices that mitigate risks of disease introduction is a primary focus, proactively developing and implementing an industry-informed and functional system prior to an ASF-CSF incursion will also enable participants and states to readily scale up the necessary testing to demonstrate freedom of disease across specified supply chains, regions, and market segments throughout a Response and Recovery Phase.

The US SHIP ASF-CSF Monitored 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 long been a critical component of making stepwise progress over the course of large-scale disease control or eradication efforts domestically and internationally.

- 3) **What will be the requirements to fulfill the traceability elements of the US SHIP pilot program? If I already use electronic health certificates or share Swine Health Plans electronically with my state veterinarian, will my producer clients be able to use those?**

Response: It is anticipated that participants will be expected to keep the premises level demographic information for each participating premises complete, accurate, current, and on-file with the US SHIP Official State Agency (OSA) in which the premises is located. Participants will also be expected to maintain records of the intrastate and interstate movements of live swine into and out of each participating premises. Finally, it is also anticipated that participants will be required to demonstrate 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.

Thus, producers currently participating in a Swine Production Health Plan or utilizing electronic health certificates to support interstate movement of swine for further growing, breeding, or exhibition will already be well prepared.

All draft requirements will be reviewed by the delegates selected for the inaugural House of Delegates (HOD) and brought to vote for approval. Specific requirements will be available following the HOD meeting.

- 4) **What level of sampling and testing will be required for the US SHIP pilot program?**

Response: Program standards for sampling and testing are expected to vary substantially by farm type and the ASF-CSF status of the US, state, and region in which the farm site is located. It is anticipated that the sampling and testing at an individual site level will be very minimal (e.g., 1 targeted pooled sample/site/year from commercial scale farms) as long as the US is free of ASF or CSF. Frequency and volume of sampling and testing will increase significantly if there is an incursion of either ASF or CSF into the US. Specific requirements for the sampling and testing strategy will be available following approval at the inaugural House of Delegates.

- 5) **Who will be qualified to collect the samples and which labs will be cooperating with the testing?**

Response: Samples are to be collected and submitted to the testing laboratory under the guidance and direction of the herd veterinarian (i.e., officially licensed and accredited veterinarian). Testing for ASF-CSF Monitored Certification can only be performed in participating USDA NAHLN laboratories certified by the USDA to conduct ASF-CSF testing.

- 6) **I have completed the Secure Pork Supply (SPS) plan with many of my producer clients, will the SPS plan or elements of it be useful for the US SHIP pilot program biosecurity requirements?**

Response: Yes, the SPS plan is being considered in the biosecurity standards which will be brought forth for approval at the inaugural House of Delegates. It is anticipated that the initial biosecurity requirements for the US SHIP pilot program will be general in nature and not specify or prescribe a specific program. That said, it is anticipated that producers currently complying with SPS will meet the US SHIP pilot program requirements for certification.

- 7) **Will my veterinary services for compliance with the US SHIP pilot program be paid by the government or will my producer client be expected to pay for my services to comply with the program?**

Response: As mentioned above, herd veterinarians' responsibilities in the US SHIP pilot program are anticipated to be consistent with the roles and responsibilities they are routinely playing in supporting the herd health related needs of their clientele. Producer and packer/slaughter facility participants will be responsible for the costs incurred associated with participating and maintaining certification in this voluntary animal health assurance program.