

Highlights of Small Enterprise Swine 2007 Study

In 2007, the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) conducted a study of swine operations with fewer than 100 pigs. Previous swine studies in 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2006 examined a wide variety of husbandry practices and biosecurity measures common to swine operations throughout the country. However, these studies focused primarily on swine operations with 100 or more pigs and in States with a significant proportion of the U.S. swine population. The objective of the Small Enterprise Swine 2007 study was to describe the health and management practices of operations with fewer than 100 pigs. The study covered States that participated in previous national swine studies plus those States considered at risk for exposure to feral swine and transmission of classical swine fever (CSF) and pseudorabies (PRV).

Thirty-one States participated in the study. These States accounted for 88.3 percent of swine and 84.4 percent of operations with fewer than 100 pigs nationally. The study was conducted from August 2 to September 18, 2007. The following are highlights excerpted from the Small Enterprise Swine 2007 study.

Operation demographics

- Nearly three-fourths of operations (74.0 percent) had fewer than 25 pigs.
- Overall, one-third of operations (38.9 percent) had sows or gilts for breeding. Only 28.6 percent of small operations (1 to 24 pigs) had sows or gilts for breeding on July 1, 2007, compared with at least two-thirds of medium (25-49 pigs) and large (50-99 pigs) operations (66.6 and 70.4 percent, respectively).

* Regions

Northeast: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin

Central: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota

West: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, Washington

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas

- Less than one-half (45.1 percent) of operations in the South region had market hogs, while 60 to 70 percent of operations in other regions had market hogs.
- Nearly one-third (30.2 percent) of operations had boars or young males for breeding. About one-fifth of all operations (21.3 percent, or more than two-thirds of the 30.2 percent of operations with boars) had only one boar or young male for breeding.
- Operations in the South and Central regions were more likely to have boars than the West region.
- Overall, almost one-half (49.0 percent) of operations had at least one pig in all 12 months. More than three-fourths of medium and large operations (76.9 and 78.8 percent, respectively) had pigs present for all 12 months during the previous year.

General management

- Two-thirds of operations (66.0 percent) had no farrowings and one-fourth (24.7 percent) had one to nine farrowings. Therefore, less than 10 percent of operations had 10 or more farrowings in a year.
- Overall, litters produced from July 2006 through June 2007 contained an average of 8.8 piglets, of which 8.0 were born alive and 7.3 were weaned.
- More than one-third of operations (34.7 percent) were 5 miles or more from another swine site, compared to less than 10 percent of operations (9.3 percent) in the NAHMS 2006 study, which studied operations with 100 or more hogs and pigs.
- About one-fourth of operations (25.9 percent) were within 1 mile of another swine site, compared to over one-half of operations (52.8 percent) in the NAHMS 2006 study.

- Source of income was a less important reason for raising pigs for small farms compared to large farms.
- Twenty-nine percent of operations had a local veterinarian visit at least once during the year. This did not vary by size.
- One-half of all operations (48.1 percent) used a purchased commercial diet.
- A higher percentage of operations in the West and South regions (65.5 and 61.8 percent, respectively) used a purchased commercial diet as a feed source than in the Northeast or Central regions (36.1 and 33.0 percent, respectively).
- Almost one-fourth of small operations (23.4 percent) fed table waste to pigs, compared with 15.1 percent of medium and 13.8 percent of large operations.
- Overall, 6.6 percent of operations let pigs out on harvested fields to glean crops.

Feral swine

- Overall, 23.9 percent of operations indicated the presence of feral swine in their counties. One-half of operations in the South region (50.0 percent) indicated the presence of feral swine in their county, a much higher percentage than in any other region.
- For operations with feral swine present in the county, less than 40 percent of operators had some, much, or extreme concern regarding diseases transmitted by feral swine, either to their pigs (37.3 percent of operations) or to people (24.1 percent).
- For operations that had feral swine present in the county, 29.1 percent of operations had seen feral swine on the operation.
- For operations that had feral swine present in the county, feral swine were seen on more than one-third of operations in the South region (35.0 percent) and on 6.3 to 11.5 percent of operations in other regions.
- For operations on which feral swine were seen on the operation during the previous 12 months, feral swine were seen three or more times on more than one-half of operations (58.6 percent).

Swine movement

- Overall, more than two-thirds of operations (69.5 percent) brought pigs onto the operation, either temporarily or permanently, during the previous 12 months. A higher percentage of

- operations in the South region than in other regions brought **no** pigs onto the operation during the previous 12 months (41.5 percent compared with a range of 21.3 to 30.7 percent).
- Nearly 9 of 10 pigs (89.1 percent) brought onto the operations during the previous 12 months were weaned or feeder pigs.
- A higher percentage of large and medium operations moved pigs directly to commercial slaughter (42.0 and 34.1 percent, respectively) or sold pigs via auction or dealer (42.8 and 34.2 percent, respectively) than small operations (20.6 and 10.4 percent, respectively).

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