

Board Highlights: September 18-19, 2018

Canadian Pork Excellence: Producer Information Meetings

Staff briefed the Board on the outcome of four information sessions held for all Ontario's pork producers on September 11, 12, 13 and 14, 2018 in Brantford, Orangeville, London and Kingston. Over 150 pork producers attended the sessions across the province. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the Canadian Pork Excellence program and access to antibiotics for livestock operations. Board Chair, Eric Schwindt, provided a brief update on the current market conditions and Ontario Pork's advocacy efforts. Agenda topics included an overview of the CPE consultation process, the value of the national quality assurance program; producers' input into the development of the program, major modifications, cost of validation, value of employee training, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and next steps. Producers were also informed about changes to prescription status of antibiotics, coming into effect on December 1, 2018 as well as best practices that producers can employ to ease the transition and manage costs. All presentations generated a variety of questions from the audience, including: options to complete a partial validation, the program roll-out, costs, SOPs and staff training. Producers indicated that they understand the value of the national on-farm quality assurance program and its role in the market place. The Board discussed producers' feedback and approved the "soft" roll-out of the CPE program in January 2019.

Program Development Advisory Group

Oliver Haan, Chair of the Program Development Advisory Group provided a report from a meeting on August 29, 2018. The advisory group members reviewed the draft human resource manual that was created by a working group consisting of Ontario Pork's and Ontario Pork Industry Council (OPIC)'s staff. The purpose of the project was to assist Ontario pork farm owners and managers in understanding their legal obligations as employers. The manual provides a concise information on human resource regulations and standards as they apply to livestock agriculture. The manual includes a brief outline of applicable acts and web links to more information. Once finalized, the manual will be available electronically on [Ontario Pork's website \(the producer-only section\)](#). Producers can also order a hard copy of the manual, using an online form.

Research Update

Arno Schober, Chair of the Research Committee reported on the recent committee meeting on August 20, 2018. The Board approved the committee's recommendation to hold one annual call (instead of two) for research proposals with completion by the end of February. The call for proposals will align with the overarching research objective: "Test potential improvements to swine industry practices".

Advocacy Efforts

Eric Schwindt, Board Chair and John de Bruyn, Vice-Chair, updated the Board on meetings with the government and MPPs at the recent International Plowing Match in Chatham-Kent. The Agriculture Stakeholder Roundtable discussion with Premier Doug Ford and Minister Hardeman included such topics as impact of current trade uncertainties and tariffs on Ontario's pork producers.

African Swine Fever

Staff briefed the Board on Ontario Pork's efforts to collect information from its national and provincial partners on African Swine Fever (ASF) to develop an appropriate strategy. At the recent producer information meetings, Ontario Pork's staff gave a brief update on the ASF and encouraged producers to routinely evaluate biosecurity protocols with farm staff and visitors.