



## **U.S. Pork Industry Organizations Provide “Options” for Handling Imported Feed Ingredients**

The National Pork Board, National Pork Producers Council, Swine Health Information Center and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians released [additional information to pork producers](#) today on the risks of African Swine Fever and other foreign animal diseases from being transmitted via feed or feed ingredients. While the organizations are careful to state that this is meant to serve as an educational tool and not a recommended course of action, it provides the organizations’ current thinking on the handling of imported feed ingredients and background on the development of these options.

This new resource comes out of discussions the pork industry held on the current state of ASF research during the Allen D. Leman Conference on Sept. 18. As you might recall, the American Feed Industry Association [expressed caution](#) regarding the implementation of measures that are neither proven scientifically or approved by federal, state or foreign regulators. However, given preliminary research has shown the virus can survive a simulated transboundary shipment in inoculated feed and feed ingredients, many in the pork industry are still calling for, or are moving forward with, measures which some believe will mitigate the risks of transmission via imported feed ingredients.

The document describes considerations that should be given for imported feed and feed ingredients based on manufacturing conditions and how it is handled and transported when sourced from countries that have foreign animal diseases. Products are categorized in two ways: ingredients in sealed or secure containers (e.g., vitamins, amino acids); or bulk ingredients in non-sealed or non-secure containers or totes (e.g., soybean meal, distillers dried grains). For each category, the organizations provide options based upon whether the products are produced under biosecure conditions or non-biosecure/unknown conditions in the foreign country.

As the pork organizations do not provide a definition for “biosecure,” AFIA has developed a tentative working definition after consultation with AFIA members and pork industry representatives. This tentative working definition is provided for the animal food industry’s consideration as firms work with their suppliers on biosecurity, verification activities and to communicate such practices to customers.

*A “biosecure facility” is a facility that has adopted procedures to reduce the risk of pathogenic microbes being transmitted into or contaminating the final animal food product. These procedures may vary depending on the animal food product produced, the disease status of the country or region where the facility is located, and where the facility’s ingredients are sourced. A facility should consider appropriate procedures as part of its biosecurity plan, including:*



- *Mechanisms for evaluating suppliers for quality, safety and biosecurity, including verification that such programs are followed;*
- *Designing and maintaining facilities to reduce and/or prevent the introduction of pathogenic microbes;*
- *Adequate, routine housekeeping procedures to reduce and/or prevent the introduction of pathogenic microbes;*
- *Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for biosecurity considerations in ingredient sourcing, receiving and storage;*
- *Protocols for visitors, employees and drivers to control access to the facility, including maintaining proper hygiene;*
- *Manufacturing practices that are effective/adequate in maintaining the facility's biosecurity objectives; and*
- *Secure transportation of finished goods, including disinfection as appropriate, and the use of sealed containers.*

While the pork organizations' document represents their current thinking on minimum ingredient holding times, it should be noted that it is based on current, but limited, research. The pork organizations calculate a minimum holding time for holding the product from non-biosecure facilities that is bagged or sealed for 78 days after a "born on date" (i.e., date of packaging or sealing) and 286 days for bulk ingredients from non-biosecure facilities. It also provides background information on how those dates are derived with the current, but limited research.

**AFIA stands firm in its opinion that additional research in this area is necessary.** As part of its crisis management team, AFIA has been working with its public charity, the Institute for Feed Education and Research, to look for opportunities to fund additional research.

It should also be noted that the pork organizations' outline when mitigants should be applied "preshipping" from foreign countries. AFIA cautions on the application and use of mitigants in imported feed or feed ingredients, as there are currently no approved mitigants for virus reduction. The effectiveness of mitigants are still unknown over the suggested duration of use or holding times, as well as the impact on product degradation.

In the document's introduction, the pork organizations write: "The information below is for general informational and educational purposes only and is not to be construed as recommending or advocating any specific course of action." AFIA agrees.

AFIA's tentative working definition of a "biosecure facility" discussed above should also be viewed in the same way. **Specifically, there is no assurance that following the approaches set forth in the pork organizations' document or in this article are adequate to ensure that**



**African Swine Fever and other foreign animal diseases cannot be transmitted by way of feed ingredients.**

AFIA continues to work on several action items related to ASF on behalf of the industry. For questions on this advisory or any other AFIA activity on ASF, please contact [Leah Wilkinson](#), AFIA's vice president of public policy and education, or [Paul Davis, Ph.D.](#), AFIA's director of quality, animal food safety and education. For more information on ASF, see AFIA's [members-only website](#)