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New Research Project to Investigate Feed Mill Decontamination in the Event of an ASF Outbreak

ARLINGTON, Va. – Jan. 25, 2022 – The Institute for Feed Education and Research (IFEEDER), Animal Nutrition Association of Canada (ANAC) and United Soybean Board (USB) have joined with the Swine Health Information Center (SHIC) to launch a research project that will evaluate several methods for cleaning and disinfecting feed mills following a potential African swine fever (ASF) outbreak. The information gained from the study’s results will inform North American feed industries’ ASF preparedness plans as well as feed mill biosecurity plans to minimize supply chain and trade disruptions in the event of an outbreak.

“SHIC continues to look into all routes of entry and dissemination of emerging diseases, not just to identify these pathways, but to do something about them with research of this kind,” said SHIC Executive Director Paul Sundberg, D.V.M., Ph.D., DACVPM. “With partnership across the allied feed-related groups to benefit the U.S. swine herd, SHIC is encouraged to see this project move forward. We have learned that once ASF virus is in a feed mill, it will remain in that environment for a long time. This work is essential to address this risk to the U.S. swine herd.”

The 12–18-month project will examine the optimal methods for disinfecting feed mills, paying particularly close attention to feed manufacturing equipment that is not designed for disinfection. Researchers will test several disinfection and flushing procedures using three viruses known to be most stable in feed and endemic in the United States – Seneca Virus A (SVA), porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) and porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus (PRRSV). The project will also determine the infectivity of feed and environmental samples after completely flushing and decontaminating equipment.

The feed inoculation and manufacturing will occur in Kansas State University’s Cargill Feed Safety Research Center, which includes a pilot-scale feed mill with pelleting capabilities and is approved for handling biosafety level 2 pathogens. Samples tested for infectivity will occur at Iowa State University.

“Over the past few years, the U.S. feed industry has taken steps to improve its biosecurity procedures to reduce the risk of ASF introduction and transmission at feed mills, such as voluntarily holding ingredients for extended periods and reducing foot-traffic onsite,” said Lara Moody, IFEEDER executive director. “Now, we are looking at filling knowledge gaps within the milling process – should an outbreak occur. There are currently no recommendations for best practices to clean and disinfect a feed manufacturing facility experiencing ASF contamination. With the support of American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) members, we are backing this research to provide guidance to companies to quickly and safely get their operations back up

and running, minimizing any long-term shutdowns, which could have detrimental food supply chain and economic consequences.”

“The Canadian feed industry recognizes the devastating impact the introduction of ASF in North America would have on the swine industry,” said Melissa Dumont, ANAC’s executive director. “A strong biosecurity and supplier approval program is key to keeping animal diseases out of feed mills and these programs continue to evolve as the science evolves. However, if ASF were to be introduced in North America and enter feed mills, facilities are lacking the crucial information on how to decontaminate a feed mill. ANAC is excited to support this research project, which will provide critically important knowledge so we can adequately be prepared in the event of an outbreak and continue to provide all livestock with safe feed.”

ASF poses no health concerns to humans but is a highly contagious and deadly viral disease affecting pigs and it has devastated swine industries across Africa, Europe and Asia. In the summer of 2021, it was detected in the Caribbean, the closest it has ever been to the U.S. mainland. [Recent estimates show](#) that an outbreak of ASF in the U.S. could cost upwards of \$50 billion to the U.S. economy.

“The United Soybean Board has partnered with the swine and feed industries since 2015 to ensure a long-term, sustainable and biosecure swine supply chain—including investment in development of a risk-free ASFv surrogate, the investigation of feed mitigants, virus survival in transportation and virus survival during the feed milling process,” said Philip Good, USB’s Demand Action Team chair and a Mississippi farmer. “Our collaborative investments help ensure that the U.S. swine supply chain is prepared and able to minimize risk from foreign animal diseases.”

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About ANAC

The [Animal Nutrition Association of Canada \(ANAC\)](#) is the national trade association of the Canadian livestock feed industry. Originally formed in 1929 under the name Canadian Feed Manufacturers’ Association, ANAC has been representing the Canadian feed industry for nearly 100 years. ANAC advocates on behalf of the feed industry with government regulators and policymakers to foster a favourable business environment for its members. As an international partner in sustainable animal nutrition, the association promotes and enables the highest standards of feed and food safety in Canada. Our members include feed and ingredient manufacturers and distributors, as well as suppliers of a wide range of goods and services to the feed industry. Taken together, ANAC’s membership represents 90 percent of commercial feed manufactured in Canada.

About IFEEDER

Founded in 2009 by the [American Feed Industry Association \(AFIA\)](#), the [Institute for Feed Education and Research](#) is a 501 (c)(3) public charity and is a critical link in the ever-evolving food supply chain. Serving as a champion for the animal food industry, IFEEDER supports critical education and research initiatives that ensure consumers have access to a safe, healthy and sustainable food supply. IFEEDER focuses its work in two primary areas: funding critical animal feed and pet food research to support AFIA’s legislative and regulatory positions, and developing appropriate messaging for policymakers, consumer influencers and stakeholders which highlights the industry’s positive contributions to the availability of safe, wholesome and affordable food, and the preservation of our natural resources.

About SHIC

The [Swine Health Information Center \(SHIC\)](#), launched by the National Pork Board in 2015 solely with Pork Checkoff funding, continues to focus efforts on prevention, preparedness, and response to novel and emerging swine disease for the benefit of U.S. swine health. As a conduit of information and research, SHIC encourages sharing of

its publications and research. Forward, reprint, and quote SHIC material freely. SHIC is funded by America's pork producers to fulfill its mission to protect and enhance the health of the U.S. swine herd. For more information, visit swinehealth.org or contact Dr. Sundberg at psundberg@swinehealth.org.

About USB

United Soybean Board's 78 volunteer farmer-leaders work on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers to achieve maximum value for their soy checkoff investments. These volunteers create value by investing in research, education and promotion with the vision to deliver sustainable soy solutions to every life, every day across the three priority areas of Infrastructure & Connectivity, Health & Nutrition, and Innovation & Technology. As stipulated in the federal Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soy checkoff. For more information on the United Soybean Board, visit unitedsoybean.org.

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