

Pseudorabies (PRV) Questions and Answers for the 2008 Fair and Exhibition Season

1. What is Pseudorabies (PRV)?

PRV is an extremely contagious herpes virus that causes respiratory disease and reproductive problems, including abortions and stillbirths in breeding swine. Occasionally, death losses in breeding and finishing hogs occur. The virus is transmitted through nasal and oral secretions, food, water, and the environment, and can be carried on vehicle wheels, including tires or buggy wheels, boots and clothing. Additionally, adult PRV positive swine may harbor the virus without showing clear signs. The virus can live in humid air and non-chlorinated water for up to seven hours and in the soil, on clothing and feces for up to two days. Dogs, cats and raccoons can physically transmit the virus between farms, but are usually dead-end hosts (the virus kills them).

2. Why are 4-H and exhibition pigs included in the testing requirements?

Pasture-raised and 4-H/backyard swine are included in this category because they may come into contact with feral swine. Because the risk of transmission to commercial swine is high, facilities, game ranches and pasture raised swine must all be tested before they go to a fair or exhibition and co-mingle with other swine.

3. How do I know what my fair requirements are?

Families with 4-H or exhibition swine should contact their 4-H leaders for information on each fair's requirements.

4. What choice does a fair have on the testing of fair pigs?

They can choose to test all of the pigs that enter the fairgrounds or become a terminal fair.

5. Do I live in a pseudorabies Stage IV area or higher?

The entire United States is in Stage V, which is a stage associated with commercial swine and is PRV-free.

6. When I read the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) letter last week, my interpretation is that if the swine originated from a Stage IV area or area of low prevalence it did not need testing. Is that a correct interpretation?

You can move your swine from your farm without testing (as long as it's not in a quarantined area), BUT if you are going to an area where swine will co-mingle with other swine (for example at a show or exhibition) you will have to know the requirements of the exhibition. The requirements will either be terminal or test.

7. If a fair decides to test, which animals need to be tested?

All swine that enter the fairgrounds, including but not limited to:

- a. all market swine
- b. all breeding swine
- c. all swine used in exhibits, such as Miracle of Life, petting zoos, pig racing, etc.

8. If a fair is a terminal fair already, or decides to be a terminal fair this year, would swine entering the fair be required to have a test for PRV?

No. If the fair chooses to be terminal, no testing is required.

9. If a fair is a terminal fair already, or decides to be a terminal fair this year, would all swine entering the fair be required to go directly to slaughter?

Yes, this would include any pig that is unloaded at the fair.

10. What if the pig is underweight or overweight when it arrives at the terminal fair?

Once it is unloaded onto the fairgrounds, and goes on a scale, it can only go directly to market or slaughter.

11. Can we have a sow included in our Miracle of Life display if we are a terminal fair?

If you choose to have a sow in this exhibit, she and her piglets will need to be slaughtered/destroyed at the end of the fair.

12. Who is responsible/liable for making sure the overweight and underweight hogs go directly to market or slaughter without stopping home or another facility?

If the fair decides to be a terminal fair, they are responsible for making sure that any swine that are unloaded at the fair go directly to slaughter.

13. Can a slaughter house take overflow hogs to a holding facility (non-livestock farm) after the fair to be housed and fed as the hogs are gradually processed through the locker facility?

Yes, as long as they are not exposed to any other animals and are slaughtered as soon as possible.

14. If we don't have the facilities to house/quarantine sick hogs on the fairgrounds or have a holding facility (non livestock farm) available would we be forced to require PRV testing?

Yes, if the fair does not have a facility to quarantine sick swine, and will not be euthanizing and disposing of any sick swine, they will be required to have PRV testing done on all swine prior to the fair.

15. Can any licensed veterinarian test for PRV?

Yes, if they are USDA Accredited in addition to being Michigan licensed.

16. What is the definition of a Terminal Fair?

All swine removed from any exhibition facility shall be moved directly to a livestock auction or slaughter facility premises for disposition in accordance with applicable laws concerning movement of swine to slaughter.

17. We were planning to institute a mandatory direct to slaughter policy at our fair in August, just to be on the safe side. Am I correct in understanding that we must also require testing?

The Fair Board for each county must choose one or the other and participants must follow the fair rules. It is either terminal or test. If it is a testing show, and untested swine show up, they have created a risk for disease transmission for the tested swine. Remember, testing only proves the animal is free of PRV at the time of testing. If an untested hog shows up (even racing pigs and petting zoo pigs), it can be carrying the virus and expose all other swine at the fair.

18. My daughters are raising four market sale hogs for 4-H that will go to the County Fair in August. Our Extension Agent told us that the quarantine area was enlarged to some surrounding townships. Where can I find a list of included areas and is there anything we can do to protect our little pigs? We have never seen feral pigs in our area.

You will be contacted for testing if your farm is within a five-mile radius circle area. MSU Extension is assisting us with this part of the surveillance, they have a letter that includes information on who to contact. If your extension agent did not provide you with a letter, he/she may have been merely discussing the PRV situation in Michigan. Although you may not see them, there are feral swine in all counties where PRV has been detected. We are encouraging anyone in an area with feral swine to be diligent about bio-security. Do not let your pigs come into contact with wild pigs. This includes fence-line contact. MDA is not required, nor do we have the resources, to test swine outside of the five-mile circle areas. If you have concerns, you are encouraged to contact your private practice veterinarian to discuss PRV testing (at your own expense).

19. Our fair may have pigs coming that were raised on premises within one of the surveillance zones. Who is responsible for insuring the pigs from the surveillance zone have tested PRV negative and the premises has been released from quarantine?

The fair will be responsible for making sure the pigs arrive at the fair with the proper paperwork.

20. Our fair would like to choose the testing option. To save families money, and to get the testing done as quickly as possible, may our fair sponsor a testing evening 3-4 weeks prior to the fair where all pigs are brought to a central location for testing, then sent back home to await the results?

Yes, as long as the pigs are not offloaded from the trailer and the vet uses proper biosecurity in between trailers.

Ann Nieuwenhuis

MSU Extension

Emergency Planning Specialist

5833 East HJ Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49048

cell (269) 567-0983

fax (269) 349-1320

email nieuwen1@msu.edu