

Raising a Champion

Preventing and treating disease is critical when raising a champion, according to Pfizer Animal Health.



Raising a champion show pig takes good genetics, lots of care, an excellent feeding program, a clean pen and many other special plans and actions. You may raise a whole group of pigs, but treat each one as an individual just to be sure every pig lives up to its genetic potential.

However, one disease outbreak can stop your whole show program in its tracks, according to Dale A. Hendrickson, DVM, Stoney Creek Veterinary Services Inc., Farmland, Indiana, USA. "That's why it's important to have a solid health program, including vaccinations, to help prevent disease and effective treatments that act fast to fight diseases when they occur," he explains.

What Causes Disease?

There are three types of disease-causing agents: viruses, bacteria and parasites. Viruses infect cells and do not respond to treatment with antibiotics. Some viral diseases can be prevented by vaccinating pigs before an outbreak occurs. Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) virus, porcine circovirus type 2 (PCV2) and swine influenza virus (SIV) are examples of a swine virus.



**"One disease outbreak can
stop your whole show
program in its tracks"
Dale A. Hendrickson, DVM**

Bacteria are single-celled organisms that cause disease. Most bacterial pathogens respond to treatment with antibiotics and examples include: *Streptococcus suis*, *Haemophilus*

parasuis, *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae*, *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* or *Lawsonia intracellularis* (causing porcine proliferative enteropathy or ileitis).

Stop Disease in Its Tracks

There are two important arms of defense in keeping pigs healthy, Mr Hendrickson says. "First, use vaccines to help prevent disease," he adds. "Vaccines need time to work inside the pig's body to create immunity, so they need to be administered before animals are exposed to the disease you are vaccinating for." Work with your veterinarian to determine the vaccines that might be needed to help protect your pigs from disease.

Even though you might implement a great vaccination program, animals can still get sick. If that happens, work with your veterinarian to determine the cause. Most bacterial infections respond quickly to antibiotics. Be careful to read and follow all label directions and observe drug withdrawal requirements for slaughter.

"Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial disease," Mr Hendrickson says. "They kill or inhibit growth of the bacteria that might be making your pigs sick." Not all antibiotics are effective against all bacteria, so read the label and work with your veterinarian to choose a product that will be the most effective in treating the specific disease that your pigs are fighting.

Common Diseases to Watch For

Complex Swine Respiratory Disease - Infections including PRRS virus, PCV2, SIV, *M. hyopneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae* and *H. parasuis* make up the disease complex. If your pigs have this complex, they might be coughing, have nasal discharge and have tear stains under their eyes. They might also be lethargic and off-feed, show elevated rectal temperatures and have labored or heavy breathing. If you have an outbreak, a long-acting, one-shot, full-course treatment like DRAXXIN® (tulathromycin) Injectable Solution is a good choice to treat respiratory disease. A pig treated with DRAXXIN should not go to slaughter for five days after a single treatment. For full prescribing information, go to the [DRAXXIN web site](#).

Erysipelas is a highly contagious disease caused by the bacterium *E. rhusiopathiae*. Severe cases of this disease are rather easy to diagnose because pigs will have diamond-shaped lesions on their skin, fever and arthritis. Erysipelas can lead to lameness and death. It spreads easily from pig to pig, so it is best to have your pigs vaccinated for erysipelas with a product like ER Bac Plus®.

Streptococcus suis causes a bacterial infection often associated with outbreaks of respiratory disease. It attacks pigs when they might already be sick with something else. Signs include depression, tremors, uncoordinated behavior, blindness, paralysis and convulsions or paddling of the legs. Treat *S. suis* (many times called "strep") infections associated with swine respiratory disease complex with EXCEDE® for Swine (ceftiofur crystalline free acid) Sterile Suspension. A pig treated with EXCEDE should not go to

slaughter for 14 days after a single treatment.

Haemophilus parasuis is a bacterium that sometimes causes pigs to suddenly die. While pigs are sick, they might have a fever, arthritis and loss of appetite. Treat *H. parasuis* with DRAXXIN.

Ileitis affects the pig's small intestine and thus its digestion. Pigs that have ileitis often have chronic watery diarrhea and gradually waste away. This disease can also cause bloody scours and anemia, which may result in death. The use of LINCOMIX® (lincomycin hydrochloride) Feed Medication is one of the best options to treat this disease. There is no pre-slaughter withdrawal time when you use LINCOMIX.

Round Worms - Internal parasites are common in swine. Pigs with worms might have diarrhea, grow slowly, cough, have blood in their feces, breathe heavily and have pale skin. Use DECTOMAX® (doramectin) Injectable for the treatment and control of most internal and external parasites. A pig treated with DECTOMAX should not be slaughtered for 24 days after treatment.

Mange is caused by a mite that burrows under the pig's skin. These mites cause considerable irritation and a common sign is pigs shaking their ears and rubbing their skin. Use DECTOMAX to treat and control mange.

Work with your veterinarian to set up a program for eliminating parasites. Your pigs will require worming several times during their growth period to perform to their potential.

Throughout your show season, work closely with your veterinarian to design a health program that most closely fits your needs.

Medication Notes

DRAXXIN should not be used in animals known to be hypersensitive to the product. The pre-slaughter withdrawal time for DRAXXIN in swine is five days.

EXCEDE for swine should not be used in pigs that are hypersensitive to the product and there is a small chance of trim loss. Always follow the pre-slaughter withdrawal time.

August 2008