

# PRV survey

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PRV — we want to know if the disease is in the herd."

If pseudorabies is identified in a swine herd, the herd will be placed under quarantine. The hogs will be permitted to be sold for slaughter. And in the case of feeder pigs, they can be fed to market weight at a quarantined feedlot, remarked the BAI chief.

In an effort to assuage the fears of the hog producers concerning the potential of the BAI staff bringing the disease to the farm during the survey, Van Buskirk assured them the veterinarians and livestock disease control technicians will meticulously clean their equipment and garb before stepping foot on a hog farm.

"We'll be using sterile needles, wearing fresh coveralls, and properly caring for our boots," he said. "The danger of our carrying the disease to your farm is nil."

He warned, however, if no lid is put on the disease now, through efforts such as the survey, it's only a matter of time until all the farms in the area contract the disease.

Van Buskirk requested farmers who have hog snares supply them to the survey team. However, he said, if the farm does not have this equipment available, BAI will supply it. After each farm it will be double disinfected, he reassured.

The results of the blood tests will be available, under the best cir-

cumstances, in one week, stated Van Buskirk. But, he said he could foresee samples backing up in the laboratory for several weeks due to staff limitations. In that case, the samples will be frozen.

Until the farmer gets the results back on the blood tests, the herd is, for all purposes, under quarantine and cannot be sold. If the hogs absolutely must be moved or grave economic repercussions will result to the farmer, Van Buskirk said the hogs could be marketed on a permit basis.

"If a farmer doesn't agree to let PDA test the hogs during the April survey, the farm will be posted officially quarantined," said Van Buskirk. "Our teams will literally go to every farm to see if hogs are being raised. Of course we must rely on the farmer's honesty."

He pointed out that if time does not allow the survey team to reach a farm in the area by the end of April, the farm will not be quarantined. "We want to work with the farmers," he said.

The quarantine will apply only to hogs if the other livestock appears healthy, he noted.

Blood test results, which will include a brucellosis check, will be handled out of Dr. Cable's office in Harrisburg.

For hog farmers with smaller sized herds (less than 20), the veterinarian stated, it may be possible to bleed all the hogs. This

information could be used by the farmer to help qualify and validate his herd as brucellosis and pseudorabies-free.

If a hog farmer in the designated area prefers to have his own veterinarian perform the survey, said Van Buskirk, it could be permissible. He explained BAI will pay the vet according to a predetermined fee schedule. This arrangement will have to be confirmed between the local vet and Dr. Cable prior to the testing, he pointed out.

Van Buskirk informed the hog producers the survey team will be in touch with farmers before coming in to do the testing.

"Someone will stop in ahead of time and check what is the best time for the bleeding team to come out," he said. "Of course, there will have to be some compromises in order to get the survey done as expeditiously as possible. The more help the farmer can give, the faster the bleeding will get done."

For those farmers who are located just outside the survey area who would like to have their herds tested by the BAI teams, Van Buskirk advised contacting the office in Harrisburg to work out arrangements.

If, from the survey results, the Bureau decides to recommend eradication, there will have to be more controls on importing hogs so the disease isn't brought in again, Van Buskirk observed. How this control will be accomplished, especially for the mushroom effect of feeder pigs trucked in from

several locations and sold at different auctions, Van Buskirk said he did not know.

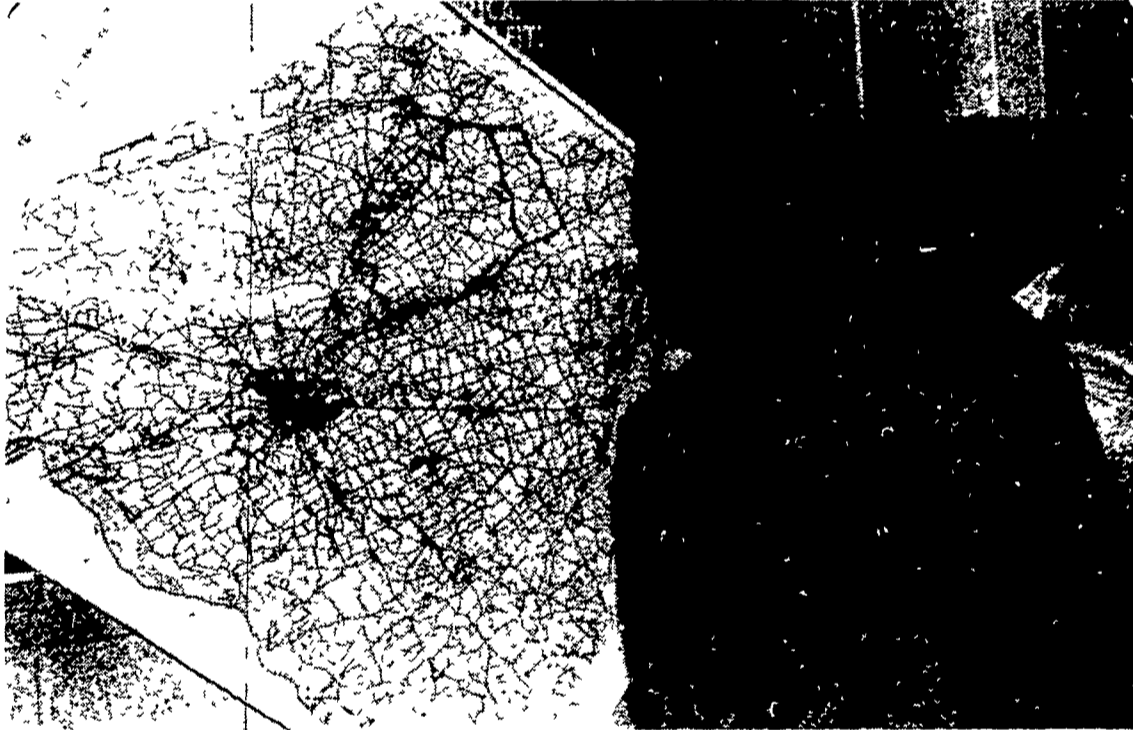
Representative Noah Wenger, who attended the session, remarked it would not be easy getting funds to reimburse hog farmers for breeding herds that may have to be depopulated.

"It's more difficult to get indemnity funds when the disease is not a hazard to human health," he said. "We'll have to wait for the survey to identify the extent of the problem and then go with BAI's

recommendations."

Van Buskirk added, "The eradication program will cost farmers money, but our responsibility is to help farmers get rid of the disease."

Wenger concluded the session by stating, "Your alternatives are not all that attractive. I'm not sure which way a producer will lose the most. With your slim profit margin — if there is any profit in the hog industry today — can you afford to live with a disease that cuts into your reproductive efficiency?"



Farmers attending Thursday's question/answer meeting on the April pseudorabies survey study the map outlining 50 square miles of Lancaster County slated for bleeding. Basically the outside boundaries follow Route 23 from Goodville to Leola, north on 772 and 272 to Ephrata, continuing north

to Schoeneck, then east to Bowmanville. For more information on the exact parameters of the survey area, contact Dr. John Cable, BAI veterinarian, at 717/783-5301, or write Bureau of Animal Industries, 2301 Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120.




Representative Noah Wenger, right, joined the group of farmers, teachers, veterinarians, and Extension staff to discuss the need to get the facts on pseudorabies in Lancaster County and the chances of cleaning up the disease. Sharing ideas with Wenger are, from left, Lancaster County Extension agent Glenn Shirk, Eastern Lancaster Co. School's vo-ag teacher Bob Anderson; and BAI chief veterinarian Dr. Max Van Buskirk.

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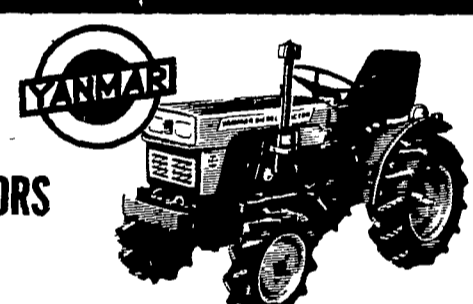
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