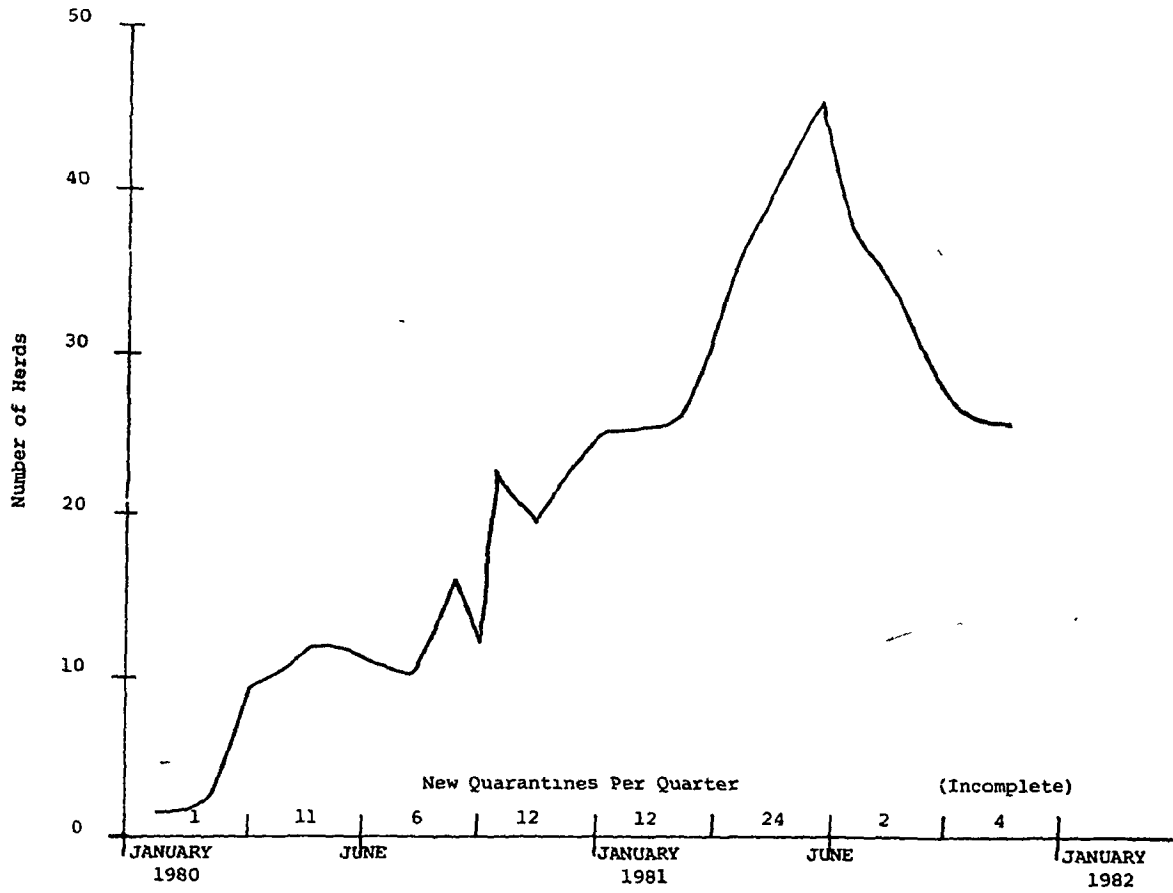


PENNSYLVANIA PSEUDORABIES

Number of Quarantines in Force Each Month



What You Should Know About Swine Health
by Glenn Shirk
Lancaster Extension Agent

(Editor's Note - This is the fourth article in a series on swine health.)

A Review of PA Pseudorabies

Concern about the pseudorabies situation is one of the things that prompted this series of articles on swine health.

While pseudorabies is a concern of the swine industry, it is not—and should not be—the only health concern. Other diseases are just as costly, or even more costly, than pseudorabies.

This article, however, will focus on PRV. What is our present status? What are the trends, locally? Are we making any headway on the problem?

The following information, prepared by the public information office of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Industry answers some of these questions. The "Guidelines for Preventing Pseudorabies" is also a good guideline for preventing other swine health problems as well—a very valid concern for this time of the year.

Last winter, eastern Lancaster County experienced an outbreak of pseudorabies.

In a five-mile area, farmers experienced high losses in newborn pigs and the occurrence of downed steers and dairy cattle

with severe itching symptoms. Veterinarians tentatively diagnosed this illness as pseudorabies. This diagnosis was then confirmed by tests at the Pa. Dept. of Agriculture's Summerdale Laboratory.

PRV almost was unheard of in Pennsylvania prior to 1980. However, in January 1980, a central Pennsylvania veterinarian made a tentative diagnosis confirmed by the Summerdale Lab, that a group of feeder pigs had PRV.

An investigation of the source of this outbreak identified three PRV infected herds. These herds were located in the area between Ephrata and New Holland.

The next case of PRV was diagnosed in a Lancaster County herd that had severe losses of newborn pigs, dogs and cats. By April 1980, nine herds were known to be infected with PRV.

During this time, a farmer in Lebanon County lost eight heifers that had mingled with his swine. Traceback from this farm resulted in the disease being diagnosed in three more herds.

October showed another increase in PRV. Pseudorabies surveillance of swine throughout Pennsylvania was done by testing blood collected from breeding animals at time of slaughter. The surveillance program identified five additional herds, two in Lancaster County, and one herd each in Lebanon, Berks and Schuylkill counties.

To identify the area affected by

pseudorabies, the Department of Agriculture tested 207 herds in a 50-square mile area between Ephrata and New Holland, Lancaster County in April and May, 1981.

Results of the survey were not surprising. Twenty-two infected herds, mostly neighbors of known infected herds, were discovered.

Pseudorabies surveillance through blood testing from culled breeder swine at slaughter has been continued. Only one new infected herd has been found by the surveillance program in 1981. This herd is in the same area of Lancaster County.

Since January 1980, 70 Pennsylvania swine herds have been infected with pseudorabies. A total of 24 farms including 15 breeding herds and 9 feedlots are still under quarantine.

Winter stresses, associated with many livestock diseases appear to be related to increased incidents of PRV. Often a single normal appearing hog may be a carrier of the disease and shed the virus after being affected by stress such as weather, moving or farrowing. Susceptible animals become infected, becoming severely ill and die. Co-mingling of swine and cattle is of real concern to many. Walking from hog pens to barns where dairy or beef animals are kept can also be hazardous.

The Lancaster County PRV task force has been working to stop the spread of the disease. You can help by managing your herd according to the following recommendations: Contact veterinarians, Extension agencies or the Bureau of Animal Industries offices for more information about pseudorabies.

Prevent Pseudorabies

Guidelines for Pork Producers

A. ALL HERDS

1. SEPARATE hogs from all other livestock.
2. NO UNAUTHORIZED PEOPLE allowed in any hog house or on any livestock truck; authorized people should use DISINFECTANT and FOOT BATH, shower facilities or disposable clothing, etc. Post a sign, use locks, and heed quarantines.
3. STRAY ANIMALS should be controlled—cats, dogs, rodents, wildlife, etc.
4. PRE-SORT HOGS for shipment; prevent hogs from entering truck, and then returning to pen.
5. HAUL feeder pigs and breeding stock in CLEANED and DISINFECTED vehicles only.
6. EQUIPMENT SHARED with other farmers should be cleaned and disinfected especially if it contacted hogs and hog manure.
7. CLEAN AND DISINFECT trucks and boots after visiting or hauling stock to any auction or buying station.
8. DISPOSE OF DEAD animals promptly. Bury under one foot of cover, incinerate, or seal in plastic bag and give to a scavenger, etc., beware of leaky scavenger trucks.
9. AT FAIRS separate hogs from other livestock. Fair rules should recommend hogs be negative to a test conducted within 30 days of show, or come from qualified pseudorabies free herds. Isolate and re-test breeding stock returned to farm.
10. CALL VETERINARIAN if questionable health problems exist.
11. ERADICATE pseudorabies infections promptly. Ask your veterinarian, regulatory personnel or Extension personnel for assistance.
12. ENCOURAGE EVERYONE to follow these guidelines - farmers plus sales and service personnel.

B. BREEDER HERDS:

1. TEST ALL newly-acquired breeding stock. Be sure they are negative BEFORE they come onto your farm.
2. ISOLATE ALL newly-acquired breeding stock for 30-45 days.
3. RE-TEST ALL newly-acquired breeding stock 30-45 days after arrival—before adding them to the breeding herd.
4. HEALTH CERTIFICATES should accompany ALL out-of-state hogs. Hogs should be individually identified.
5. FEEDING STOCK should NEVER be purchased and brought onto a farm that has breeding stock.
6. SEED STOCK PRODUCERS should strive for a QUALIFIED PSEUDORABIES FREE herd.

C. FEEDER HERDS:

1. HEALTH CERTIFICATES should accompany ALL out-of-state hogs. Hogs should be individually identified.
2. TEST 5-15 percent of ALL out-of-state auction pigs.

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