

Position Statement: Every sow farm needs an isolation unit.

Rationale: The introduction of PRRSv and other infectious agents into herds occurs through a number of routes including infected pigs, semen, and non-porcine vectors such as people, aerosols, transport, feed, equipment and insects. For example, if incoming replacement animals are PRRSv positive, virus transmission will occur without isolation. The use of an isolation facility is an essential part of biosecurity and reduces the risk of herd infection due to the presence of disease in replacement animals entering the herd.

Isolation can be defined as: “To set apart from others; to place alone. To place (a patient with a contagious disease) apart from others to prevent the spread of infection.” The goal of an isolation unit is to separate incoming animals of unknown disease status from the breeding herd to prevent entry of PRRS virus or other infectious agents into the sow herd.

An isolation unit must have airspace and manure storage that is completely separated from the existing breeding herd. The facility should be designed with a separate entrance with a minimum of a Danish Entry and have a separate loading chute. Biosecurity programs should meet or exceed those in place for the existing breeding herd.

Isolation Timing Requirements

In the case of PRRSv, most large suppliers monitor source barns once a month for PRRS virus. Isolation allows for adequate laboratory testing time and reporting from supplier to gilt buyer as well as testing after transportation to assure animals have not become infected. Negative replacement animals require a minimum of 2 weeks from delivery before blood sampling to account for any potential exposure to PRRS virus during transport. Appropriate samples must be taken from replacement animals to identify possible PRRS virus infection, with release from isolation only after a negative result has been received. Sampling procedures should be established by your consulting veterinarian. If no testing for PRRS virus is conducted, suggested isolation time period is dependent on the testing schedule of the supplier. Isolation procedures for control of different infectious agents should be reviewed by your herd veterinarian.

References

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