

PAACO EXAMPLE

On-Farm Swine Welfare Audit



Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization

Table of Contents

PAACO EXAMPLE SWINE WELFARE.....	1
On-Farm Audit Tool & Auditor Guidance.....	1
Sample On-Farm Swine Welfare Disclaimers.....	4
Audit Objectives.....	4
Audit Scope.....	4
Conducting an Audit.....	5
Audit Procedures – Swine Biosecurity Considerations.....	8
Audit Techniques & Evidence Collection.....	9
Completing the Audit and Follow-up	11
Audit Scoring.....	13
Sample Size & Animal Selection.....	15
 RECORDS & DOCUMENTATION.....	21
Records of Production.....	21
Animal Care Agreement.....	22
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).....	25
Internal Assessments.....	26
Caretaker Training Records.....	28
Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship.....	29
Written Euthanasia Policy.....	31
Biosecurity Protocols	33
Daily Livestock Observation Records.....	34
Treatment Records.....	36
Emergency Action Plan.....	38
Emergency Contacts.....	39
Emergency Backup Equipment Testing Records.....	40
 CARETAKER COMPETENCY & TRAINING	41
Caretaker Training.....	41
Euthanasia Training.....	43
Animal Treatment Administration.....	44

ANIMAL-BASED MEASURES/OBSERVATIONS.....	46
CRITICAL CRITERIA – Willful Acts of Abuse or Neglect.....	46
CRITICAL CRITERIA – Humane Euthanasia.....	47
Animal Observations – Breeding Stock (Mature sows, gilts, boars).....	50
Animal Observations – Shoulder Sores in Breeding Stock (Mature sows, gilts, boars).....	52
Animal Observations – Suckling Pigs.....	54
Animal Observations – Non-breeding pigs (nursery, grow/finish, immature boars and gilts)...	56
HUSBANDRY & DAILY MANAGEMENT.....	59
Daily Observation of Swine.....	59
Animal Handling.....	60
Tail Docking & Castration (Piglet Processing).....	62
Weaning Age.....	64
De-tusking & Tusk Trimming.....	66
Dead Animal Removal.....	67
FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT.....	67
Thermal Comfort/Air Temperature.....	67
Air Quality.....	71
Lighting.....	72
Space Allowance – Sow Barn.....	75
Space Allowance – Growing Pigs.....	77
Environmental Enrichment.....	79
Lying Areas/Flooring.....	80
Condition of Facilities & Equipment.....	83
NUTRITION & WATER ACCESS.....	85
Access to Feed & Water.....	85

HEALTH & VETERINARY PRACTICES.....	87
Responding to Animal Health & Welfare Needs.....	87
Animal Health Product Storage.....	88
Needle Use.....	89
BIOSECURITY & PEST MANAGEMENT.....	92
General Farm Security & Visitor Entry.....	92
Rodent & Pest Control.....	93
TRANSPORTATION.....	96
Transport/Load-out.....	96
Swine Welfare Audit Form.....	100

Sample On-Farm Swine Welfare Disclaimers

This sample on-farm swine welfare audit tool and accompanying auditor guidance were developed solely for instructional use. Content has been adapted from a variety of publicly available swine welfare audit tools and guidance documents, which may be subject to copyright by their respective owners. These materials are used here for non-commercial educational purposes only, to illustrate a range of criteria and approaches used in swine welfare auditing. This sample tool does not represent a comprehensive or official standard, nor does it reflect the requirements of any particular audit or certification program. Its use does not imply endorsement by any organization or source referenced. It is not intended for use beyond the classroom setting.

Sources:

- National Pork Board Common Swine Industry Audit
- American Humane Certified® Animal Welfare Standards for Swine
- Global Animal Partnership's 5-Step® Animal Welfare Standards for Pigs v2.5
- Canadian Pork Excellence PigCARE
- NZ Pork Pig Care™ Version 2
- Red Tractor Standards for Pigs Version 5.1

Audit Objectives

This on-farm swine welfare audit tool provides a structured way to evaluate animal care in commercial pork production and to teach auditing skills. It is designed to:

- Assess welfare practices across key areas such as records, training, animal observations, husbandry, facilities, health, biosecurity, and transport;
- Help learners practice observation, interviewing, and record-review techniques used in professional auditing;
- Verify that caretakers "say what they do, do what they say, prove it, and improve it;"
- Identify strengths and opportunities for continuous improvement;
- Support consistency and transparency across supply chains.

This tool establishes the minimum criteria for a credible, objective swine welfare audit while providing a foundation for auditor training.

Audit Scope

This audit tool is designed to assess swine welfare and care practices across all phases of production with pigs on-farm, including transportation. It provides a comprehensive framework for assessing animal care and teaching auditing skills applicable to a wide variety of production systems, regardless of housing design, geographic location, or operation size.

The audit focuses on nine core areas:

- **Records & Documentation** – verifying consistency between written protocols and practices.
- **Animal-Based Measures** – assessing pig health, behavior, and condition.
- **Facilities & Environment** – evaluating housing, air quality, space, and equipment.
- **Nutrition & Water** – confirming timely and hygienic access.
- **Health & Veterinary Practices** – including treatment, medicine use, and euthanasia.
- **Husbandry & Daily Management** – handling, enrichment, and care routines.
- **Biosecurity & Pest Control** – protecting herd health and preventing disease spread.
- **Caretaker Training & Competency** – evaluating knowledge and skills of those caring for pigs.
- **Transportation** – observing pig condition, handling, and load-out facilities.

This scope reflects a systems-based approach to pig care and mirrors the structure of recognized industry and certification audits, while also serving as a teaching tool for future auditors.

This audit is for teaching. Here's how it compares to a commercial audit:

Teaching Audit (This Tool)

- Designed for **learning** – helps students practice observation, record review, and interviewing.
- Covers all core welfare areas, but some criteria may be simplified for classroom use.

Allows discussion, pause, and debrief during the process.
- Focus is on **skill-building** (e.g., sampling, scoring, writing observations).
- Feedback emphasizes **learning opportunities**.
- Mirrors the structure of industry programs to prepare learners for real-world auditing.

Commercial/Certification Audit

- Designed for **compliance** – determines if farms meet certification, buyer, or regulatory standards.
- Covers all required standards in full detail; no simplification.
- Must follow strict audit timelines and protocols; no interruptions.
- Focus is on **results** (pass/fail decisions, corrective actions, certification status).
- Feedback emphasizes **required corrections** and consequences.
- Is the official instrument used for certification, supply chain approval, or regulatory verification.

Conducting an Audit

Audits should be conducted under normal operating conditions and in a manner that is respectful of both the animals and the facility's daily routine. The following guidance outlines the standard procedures for conducting a swine welfare audit.

1. Scheduling and Preparation:

Prior to the audit, the auditor should:

- Confirm the audit date and time with the facility representative.
- Request a current animal inventory, site map, and any biosecurity protocols specific to the site.
- Identify whether an interpreter is needed and confirm availability.
- Provide the auditee with a copy of the audit tool and a list of documents or records that will be reviewed.

Auditors should also review and adhere to all farm-specific biosecurity protocols. At a minimum, downtime, use of disposable PPE, and site-specific entry procedures must be followed. The auditor must not compromise farm biosecurity at any time.

2. Opening Meeting:

The audit begins with an opening meeting involving the site manager or designated representative. During this meeting, the auditor should:

- Introduce themselves and explain their role as an independent evaluator.
- Review the purpose, scope, and process of the audit.
- Outline the flow of the visit, including observations, interviews (if applicable), record reviews, and facility walk-throughs.
- Address any questions and confirm understanding before beginning.

This meeting ensures transparency and helps establish a cooperative, respectful tone for the audit.

3. Evidence Collection:

The auditor should use a multi-source approach to verify each criterion. This may include:

- Reviewing written records and protocols;
- Observing animals, facilities, and environmental conditions;

- ▶ Interviewing caretakers (as needed and when language permits).

Evidence should be collected objectively, and auditors are expected to exercise sound judgment when interpreting findings. All observations must be documented thoroughly and tied directly to the audit criteria.

Auditors must not interfere with normal operations or animal care. Any animal handling should be performed by facility staff only.

4. Employee Interviews (if applicable):

When permitted and necessary, employee interviews may be conducted to assess knowledge, implementation of protocols, or caretaker training. Interviews should:

- ▶ Use open-ended questions;
- ▶ Be conducted in a respectful, non-leading manner;
- ▶ Be voluntary and conducted in the preferred language of the employee, when possible.

Interview content should be used solely to verify practices relevant to the audit criteria.

5. Closing Meeting:

Upon completion of the audit, a closing meeting must be conducted with the site manager or designated representative. During this meeting, the auditor should:

- ▶ Summarize the audit findings;
- ▶ Identify any Non-conformances or areas requiring corrective action;
- ▶ Clarify any remaining questions;
- ▶ Reiterate that no consultation or operational advice will be provided.

A verbal report is provided at this time, and a written summary or full audit report may be shared in accordance with program protocol.

The auditor must not provide advice or guidance on how to resolve non-conformances (consulting). Clarifications on findings are appropriate, but recommendations or solutions are not within the auditor's role.

Audit Procedures – Swine Biosecurity Considerations

Many swine production sites operate under strict biosecurity protocols to prevent the introduction and spread of disease. Auditors must respect and uphold these protocols at all times while conducting an audit. Maintaining biosecurity is essential to protect animal health, ensure operational continuity, and preserve the integrity of the audit process.

1. Auditor Responsibilities

Auditors are responsible for understanding and adhering to both general and site-specific biosecurity measures. These may include:

- **Downtime Requirements:** Observing appropriate downtime between visits to swine facilities, livestock events, or international travel involving livestock contact.
- **Personal Hygiene:** Showering and changing clothes before visiting a new site. Auditors must be symptom-free of any contagious illness for at least 24 hours prior to a farm visit.
- **Use of PPE:** Wearing disposable or site-specific protective outerwear (e.g., coveralls, boots, gloves, masks, hairnets) and following entry/exit procedures as instructed by the farm.

2. Site Access and Entry

Before arriving:

- Confirm the site's biosecurity protocol and any required downtime periods.
- Discuss with the site representative what PPE and equipment may or may not be brought onto the site.
- Ensure you have necessary items such as disposable coveralls, boots, gloves, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and a waste disposal bag.

Upon arrival:

- Park in designated areas away from animal housing and avoid driving through muddy or high-traffic zones.
- Don protective outerwear before entering the perimeter of the facility or as directed by the farm's entry protocol.
- Respect shower-in/shower-out requirements where applicable.

3. Equipment Protocols

Audit tools and equipment brought onto the farm must be easy to clean and disinfect. Follow these guidelines:

- Use plastic or wipeable clipboards and disposable pens where possible.
- Disinfect all tools and surfaces after use and before storing them in the clean area of your vehicle.
- Keep clean and dirty zones in your vehicle clearly separated to prevent cross-contamination.

4. During the Audit

- Follow all movement and zone restrictions as described by farm personnel.
- Do not handle pigs or enter pens without prior approval and assistance from farm staff.
- Minimize contact with surfaces and equipment unless necessary for the audit.
- Complete outdoor or non-barn portions of the audit either before or after entering pig barns to avoid re-entry where showering would be required.

5. After the Audit

- Dispose of used PPE according to farm instructions or place in sealed bags for appropriate disposal off-site.
- Disinfect all reusable equipment and materials before re-entry into clean vehicle zones.
- Sanitize hands and avoid contact with other animals or farms until appropriate downtime has passed.

Audit Techniques & Evidence Collection

This section outlines best practices for how auditors should collect evidence and interact with animals, facilities, and caretakers during the audit process. The goal is to ensure accurate, consistent, and professional assessments based on direct observation and verifiable information.

Observation and Evaluation

Auditors must assess animal welfare conditions using a combination of methods, including:

- Record review – to evaluate consistency between documentation and on-farm practices.
- Animal observation – to assess body condition, behavior, injuries, and other welfare indicators.
- Facility evaluation – including penning, flooring, feeders, waterers, ventilation, lighting, and alleyways used for pig movement.
- Caretaker interaction – to assess knowledge and implementation of protocols.

Auditors may enter pens if necessary to evaluate certain items (e.g., waterers, feeders, or animal behavior) but should minimize disruption and always prioritize animal safety. If animals need to be moved to complete an observation, this should be done by farm personnel at the auditor's request. Sows that are actively farrowing or nursing piglets should not be disturbed or made to stand.

Caretaker Interviews

Some audit criteria may require the auditor to speak directly with caretakers to verify understanding of protocols and implementation. Interviews should:

- Use open-ended questions (e.g., "How do you perform this task?" or "What training did you receive?");
- Avoid leading questions that suggest a specific answer;
- Be conducted respectfully and in the employee's preferred language, when possible.

These conversations should be informal and conversational in tone, but clearly focused on verifying compliance.

Opportunistic Observation of Euthanasia

Auditors are not required to observe euthanasia during an audit, nor should animals be euthanized for demonstration purposes. However, if a euthanasia event is already occurring or if an animal is present that appears to require euthanasia, the auditor may:

- Observe the event to assess compliance with accepted methods and timeliness.
- Document whether the procedure was performed competently, humanely, and according to protocol.
- Use the observation to validate the site's training, protocols, and implementation, if applicable.

If euthanasia is not observed during the audit, verification may be achieved through record review and caretaker interviews.

Handling Willful Acts of Abuse

- If a willful act of abuse is observed during the audit, the auditor must:
- Intervene immediately to stop the act, if it is safe and reasonable to do so;
- Report the incident to the site representative, farm owner, and manager;
- Record the observation in the audit tool, noting that such incidents result in automatic audit failure;
- At their discretion, complete the remainder of the audit to document the site's other conditions.

Documentation and Evidence

Auditors must provide written comments for any audit question marked as unacceptable or requiring corrective action. Notes should:

- Clearly describe the observed issue or evidence;
- Explain how it contributed to the evaluation;
- Support any scoring decisions or follow-up requirements.

All evidence must be collected objectively and recorded in a clear, factual, and non-judgmental manner.

Completing the Audit and Follow-up

Once all observations have been made and audit data has been recorded, the auditor must conclude the process with clear communication and professional documentation.

Exit Meeting

The audit must conclude with an exit meeting conducted the same day, if possible. During this meeting, the auditor should:

- Recap the scope and purpose of the audit;
- Summarize key findings and any areas of concern;
- Highlight any positive practices observed during the visit;
- Allow the site representative to ask questions and seek clarification.

Auditors are not permitted to provide recommendations or guidance on how to resolve non-conformances. Doing so may be considered consulting, which is outside the scope of an auditor's role.

Report Distribution

The auditor must:

- Confirm the name and contact information of the individual(s) who should receive the final audit report;
- Submit the completed report to those individuals, as well as the party that commissioned the audit (e.g., buyer or certification body).

Corrective action timelines:

Corrective action requirements vary by the severity of the finding:

- Critical Issues (Automatic Failure) – Must be addressed immediately, with written corrective action submitted within 5 calendar days of receiving the report.
- Major Non-Conformances – Must be corrected and documented within 10 calendar days.
- Minor Non-Conformances – Should be corrected within 60 calendar days; trends in repeated minor issues may elevate to major findings.
- Points-Based Items – Corrections are expected within 30 days when 0 points are awarded.

The responsible buyer, certifier, or auditing body will review corrective actions to determine:

- If the corrective action is acceptable;
- If a follow-up audit is necessary;
- Whether certification or supplier status can be maintained.

Finding Type	Timeline	Notes
• Critical Issue (Automatic Failure)	• Within 05 days	• Must be addressed immediately; written corrective action submitted within 5 calendar days.
• Major Non-Conformance	• Within 10 days	• Corrections documented and verified within 10 days.
• Minor Non-Conformance	• Within 60 days	• Should be corrected within 60 days; repeat issues may be elevated.
• Points-Based Item (0 points awarded)	• Within 30 days	• Corrections expected within 30 days when 0 points are awarded.

This audit tool is designed for instructional purposes and intentionally includes a variety of scoring methods to help learners understand how different types of audit criteria may be structured and evaluated in real-world programs. Not all audit questions are scored the same way, and not all carry the same weight in determining audit outcomes. This section outlines the general scoring framework used throughout the tool.

Scoring Methods

Audit questions may use one of several scoring formats, including:

- **Point-Based Items**

Certain questions are assigned a numeric point value. These are scored on an all-or-nothing basis – full points are awarded if the minimum standard is met, and no points are awarded if it is not. No partial points are permitted.

- **Pass/Fail**

Some criteria are evaluated with a simple pass or fail designation, often for items that are non-negotiable or binary in nature (e.g., presence of an emergency plan).

- **Data Collection Only**

Some questions are included solely for the purpose of collecting information. These may track management practices, performance data, or conditions observed during the audit. These questions do not affect the audit score directly.

- **Calculated Results**

A subset of questions require the auditor to collect data and calculate a percentage or measurement (e.g., prevalence of poor body condition, air quality values). The calculated result determines whether the criterion is met.

- **Tiered Criteria**

Certain questions may offer multiple levels of compliance (e.g., basic, enhanced, or exemplary practice). These may be included to demonstrate how certification programs differentiate between baseline and higher-welfare outcomes.

Non-Conformances

Non-conformances are categorized to reflect the severity and risk of the issue observed:

- **Critical Non-Conformance (Automatic Failure)**

These are severe violations of animal welfare or program integrity, such as willful acts of abuse or neglect and failure to euthanize animals in a timely manner. If a critical non-conformance is observed, the site **automatically fails the audit**. The remainder of the audit may be completed at the auditor's discretion to gather additional site data.

- **Major Non-Conformance**

A serious deviation from a standard that presents moderate to high risk to animal welfare, food safety, or compliance expectations. Multiple major non-conformances may result in audit failure depending on program thresholds.

- **Minor Non-Conformance**

A deviation from best practices or documentation standards that is lower in severity but still requires correction. Accumulation of multiple minor non-conformances may impact audit outcomes.

Use of "Not Applicable"

Some audit questions may not apply to all sites (e.g., questions related to lactating sows when no sows are present). When a criterion is marked "Not Applicable," its point value must be excluded from the section and overall score calculations.

Scoring in a Teaching Audit

In real-world audits, programs often set a minimum passing score and may require both section and overall thresholds to be met. For this teaching audit, we do not require you to calculate a final passing score. Instead, the scoring is here to help you practice:

- **Section Scores** – show performance within each area (e.g., records, animal observations, facilities, transport).

- Overall Score – combines all sections, but in this tool it is optional to calculate.
- Non-Conformance Summary – identifies issues, their severity, and timelines for correction.

Key Learning Point

Always check the audit instructions. If a program uses scoring, it will tell you:

- Whether there is a passing score,
- How to calculate section and overall scores, and
- What thresholds trigger corrective action or audit failure.

Why This Matters for Learning

Our focus here is on understanding how scoring systems work, not on passing or failing the audit. The practice will prepare you to:

- Recognize how different programs weigh criteria,
- See how non-conformances influence outcomes, and
- Be ready to calculate scores when using a real certification audit.

Teaching Reminder

In this teaching audit, the goal is learning – not passing. Focus on how scores are structured and how non-conformances affect results, rather than on reaching a final number.

Sample Size & Animal Selection

This sample audit uses the PigCARE Canada animal sampling method to determine which pigs are observed during the audit process. This approach enables a statistically valid and representative sample of animals to be evaluated across all phases of production and housing types present on the site. It emphasizes random selection and minimizing bias, ensuring that animal observations are both meaningful and efficient. For instructional purposes, this method helps learners practice calculating representative samples and applying them appropriately across various barn layouts and production groups.

The sampling approach is designed to:

- Ensure observations represent all relevant phases of production (breeding and non-breeding);
- Include animals from all rooms and barns on the site; and
- Maintain objectivity by pre-determining pens or stalls to be observed before entering the barn.

Steps for Sample Selection (Adapted from Canadian Pork Excellence – PigCARE Fact Sheet 11)

SELECTING THE SAMPLE FOR ANIMAL BASED MEASURES(ABM)

STEP #1: Calculate the total number of breeding stock and non-breeding pigs present on the site.

Breeding stock ¹	Number present on the site
a. Mature gilts and sows in group pens	
b. Mature gilts and sows in individual stalls	
c. Mature gilt and sows in farrowing crates	
d. Mature boars	
e. Total number of breeding stock (a + b + c + d)	

¹ Include mature pigs in sow barns and in quarantine and acclimatization barns.

Non Breeding stock ²	Number present on the site
a. Nursery pigs	
b. Grow/finish pigs	
e. Total number of non-breeding pigs (f + g)	

² Include immature pigs in gilt and boar development units, and newly weaned piglets held in pens for more than 24 hours at farrowing sites.

STEP #2: Determine the minimum number of breeding stock and non-breeding pigs that need to be observed, respectively, for ABM using Table 1 below.

Table 1: Minimum sample size for ABM observations of breeding stock and non-breeding pigs

Total pigs per category (breeding/ non- breeding) ³	Minimum number required for observation ⁴
1 to 50	All pigs
51 to 100	50
101 to 200	80
201 to 500	120
501 to 1,000	200
1,001 to 3,000	250
3,001 to 8,000	300
>8,000	400

³ Use the respective numbers calculated in Step #1.

⁴ Minimum sample size for breeding stock is determined separately from minimum sample size for non breeding pigs.

Breeding/Non Breeding pigs ABM samples	Minimum number to observe
I.Minimum number of breeding stock to observe	
J.Minimum number of non-breeding pigs to observe	

STEP #3: Calculate the representative sample of pigs from each housing area on the site using the formulas in the table below.

Representative sample of pigs from each section of the site.	Formula (using results calculated in Steps# 1 and 2)	Minimum number to observe
Category 1: Breeding stock		
Minimum number of mature gilts and sows to observe in group pens	=ix (a.;- e)	
Minimum number of mature gilts and sows to observe in individual stalls	=ix (b .;- e)	
Minimum number of mature gilts and sows to observe in farrowing crates	=ix (c .;- e)	
Minimum number of mature boars to observe ⁵	= d (up to a maximum of 10)	
Category 2: Litters of suckling pigs		
Minimum number of litters to observe (= k above) ⁶	=k	
Category 3: Non-breeding pigs		
Minimum number of nursery pigs to observe	= j X (f .;- h)	
Minimum number of nursery pigs to observe	= j X (f .;- h)	

⁵ All boars must be observed unless there are more than 10; in that case, only 10 need to be observed.

⁶ Only the litters that are present with the gilts and sows in farrowing crates that were selected as part of the ABM sample need to be observed.

STEP #4: Develop a plan for conducting the ABM sample on the site.

Whenever possible, randomly select the sample of pigs to be observed. To reduce bias, determine in advance which rooms, pens and pigs will be observed. Not all animals need to be sampled, but those chosen must be representative of the entire site.

Use farm blueprints and layout information to help formulate the sampling plan.

DO NOT include pigs that:

- are being housed in a dedicated sick pen.

DO include (provided they were selected as part of the ABM sample):

- pigs in individual stalls, crates or pens that are being treated for a condition.
- pigs that have not been segregated from regular (healthy) group pens.

Category 1: Breeding Stock

- Mature gilts and sows in group pens

Determine the number of pens that need to be included to achieve at least the minimum sample and then randomly select pen(s) throughout the barn(s) until at least the minimum number of pigs to be observed in this sub-category has been reached. Randomize the pens or stalls to be observed. For example, if sampling one pen per room, vary the location of the sample pens so that the same pen in each room is not the only pen observed. If it only takes half of one randomly selected pen to achieve the entire minimum number needed for the ABM sample, half of the pen can be blocked off and only half of the pigs in the pen need to be observed.

- **Mature gilts and sows in group pens**

Walk past all individual stalls containing mature gilts and sows and collect ABM on every nth pig until at least the minimum sample size is observed. For example, if 30 pigs must be observed out of 75 individual stalls ($75 \div 30 = 2.5$, round down to every 2nd stall), collect ABM on every second pig until at least the minimum sample size has been reached. If a stall is empty, proceed to the adjacent one.

- **Mature gilts and sows in farrowing crates**

Walk through all farrowing rooms and past all farrowing crates containing mature gilts and sows and collect ABM on every nth pig until at least the minimum sample size is observed. If a crate is empty or should not be included in the ABM sample (see exclusions below), proceed to the adjacent sow.

Note: Mature gilts and sows in farrowing crates do not need to be encouraged to stand to collect the ABM sample.

DO NOT include:

- sows that are currently farrowing.
- nurse sows.
- sows that have assembled litters of starve-out piglets.
- sows that are in dedicated recovery crates.
- sows whose litters are being treated for health issues.

- **Mature boars**

All boars (up to a maximum of 10) must be observed. If there are more than 10 boars, every nth boar should be observed until the maximum of 10 has been reached.

Category 2: Litters of Suckling Pigs

The litters of suckling pigs to be sampled are the ones that are with the mature gilts and sows in farrowing crates selected as part of the ABM sample. Refer to the section immediately above for instructions on how to collect this ABM sample.

Category 3: Non-breeding Pigs

All barns must be visited on the site. Make sure that you select a representative sample of both nursery pigs and grow/finish pigs on the site; maximizing the number of rooms observed in each barn increases the representativeness of the sample. If sampling only one pen per room, vary the location of the sample pens so that the same pen is not observed in each room.

•► **Nursery pigs**

Determine the number of pens that need to be observed to achieve at least the minimum sample, then randomly select the room(s) and pen(s) throughout the barn(s) until at least the minimum number of pigs to be observed in this sub-category has been reached. If it only takes half of one randomly selected pen to achieve the entire minimum number needed for the ABM sample, half of the pen can be blocked off and only half of the pigs in the pen need to be observed.

•► **Grow/finish pigs**

Determine the number of pens that need to be observed to achieve at least the minimum sample, then randomly select the room(s) and pen(s) throughout the barn(s) until at least the minimum number of pigs to be observed in this sub-category has been reached. If it only takes half of one randomly selected pen to achieve the entire minimum number needed for the ABM sample, half of the pen can be blocked off and only half of the pigs in the pen need to be observed.

Records of Production

Key Considerations

- Comprehensive production records must be maintained and accessible for at least 2 years.
- Records may be in electronic, graphic, or tabular form, but must clearly cover each age/type of pig.
 - a. At a minimum, records should include:
 - b. Animal movement logs (incoming and outgoing stock).
 - c. Mortalities by number and age category (piglet, gilt, sow, etc.), with reason if known.
 - d. Cull animals by number and age category, with reason if known.
 - e. Injured or ill animals.
 - f. Euthanized animals.

Audit Questions

1. Does the site have production records?
2. Are the production records retained for at least 2 years?

Auditing Compliance

Request to review the site's production records.

- Document the format (electronic, graphic, or tabular) and type of records kept.
- Select a random date between the audit date and two years prior; verify that records are available for that date.
- Confirm that all required record categories are consistently maintained.

Evaluation

Question 1 – Existence of Records

- Yes = Award 2 points
- No = Award 0 points

Question 2 – Record Retention

- Yes, records are complete and retained for \geq 2 years = Award 2 points
- No, records not retained for \geq 2 years OR records missing without justification = Award 0 points

Animal Care Agreement

Key Considerations

- An Animal Care Agreement must be available to all personnel in their native language.
- Agreements must include, at a minimum:
 - a. A statement of the site's commitment to providing an environment that promotes high standards of animal welfare.
 - b. A zero-tolerance policy stating that willful acts of animal abuse will not be tolerated (examples should be listed).
 - c. A reporting mechanism allowing caretakers to report suspected abuse.
- All employees with animal care responsibilities (family and non-family) must sign and
- date the agreement, acknowledging receipt and understanding of their responsibilities.
- One family member may sign on behalf of all family members.
- Non-family members must have their own individually signed agreements.
- Agreements may be signed during the audit if missing, but this must still be recorded as incomplete on the audit report.

Audit Questions

1. Does the site have an Animal care Agreement?
2. Does the Animal Care Agreement include a zero-tolerance policy for willful acts of animal abuse?
3. Does the Animal Care Agreement include a reporting mechanism for caretakers to report abuse?
4. Have all employees with animal care responsibilities (family and non-family) signed an Animal Care Agreement within the past year?

Auditing Compliance

Ask to review the site's Animal Care Agreement or other written policies and training documents.

- If no formal "Animal Care Agreement" exists, evaluate whether the required elements are in place through other documents, training records, or practices.
- Verify the following individually:
 - a. A written commitment to high standards of animal welfare exists.
 - b. A zero-tolerance policy for willful acts of abuse is documented and communicated.
 - c. A reporting mechanism is in place and accessible to caretakers.
 - d. All family and non-family employees with animal care responsibilities have signed an acknowledgment (or equivalent) within the past 12 months.
- If any element is missing, mark that specific audit question as No.
- Document in auditor notes where each element is located (e.g., employee handbook, posted policy, signed job descriptions) so that compliance can be verified even without a single consolidated agreement.

Evaluation

Q1 – Written Expectations Provided

- Yes = Written animal care expectations exist (e.g., Animal Care Agreement, employee handbook, signed policy, or equivalent documentation). - Award 2 points
- No = No written animal care expectations are provided. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Zero-Tolerance Policy

- Yes = Written expectations clearly include a zero-tolerance policy for willful acts of animal abuse. - Award 2 points
- No = No zero-tolerance policy is documented in the written expectations. - Award 0 points

Q3 – Reporting Mechanism

- Yes = Written expectations clearly describe a mechanism for employees to report suspected abuse (e.g., hotline, manager reporting chain, anonymous drop box). - Award 2 points
- No = No reporting mechanism is included in the written expectations. - Award 0 points

Q4 – Signed Acknowledgements

- Yes = All family and non-family employees with animal care responsibilities have signed an acknowledgment within the past 12 months confirming receipt and understanding of expectations. - Award 2 points
- No = One or more required acknowledgments are missing or outdated. - Award 0 points

Resources

- See it Stop it Website
- <https://www.seeitstopit.org/>

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Key Considerations

- SOPs must be comprehensive written instructions covering daily, weekly, and/or monthly animal care activities.
- SOPs must be kept current and updated regularly.
- SOPs must be available in the workers' native language(s).
- SOPs may be maintained in paper or electronic format, but must be accessible at the farm.
- SOPs may be presented as separate documents or as part of a single manual, provided that all required topics are addressed.
- SOPs/Manual must include, at a minimum:
 - a. Animal handling
 - b. Piglet processing (for farms where piglets are born)
 - c. Feeding and watering protocols
 - d. Daily livestock observations
 - e. Caretaker training
 - f. Treatment management
 - g. Needle usage

Note: Euthanasia, Biosecurity, and Rodent Control SOPs are evaluated separately in this audit.

Audit Question

1. Does the site have a written SOP for all the following:
 - a. Animal handling
 - b. Piglet processing (if applicable)

- c. Feeding and watering protocols
- d. Daily observation
- e. Caretaker training
- f. Treatment management
- g. Needle usage

Auditing Compliance

Request to review SOPs/manuals.

- Verify that all required topics are addressed in writing (whether as separate SOPs or within a combined document).
- Confirm SOPs are available in the workers' native language(s).
- If piglets are not born on-site, note that the piglet processing SOP is not applicable.
- Document any missing SOPs or areas where SOPs are outdated, incomplete, or not accessible to workers.

Evaluation

- Yes = All required SOPs are present and accessible (piglet processing SOP only required if piglets are born on-site). - Award 2 points
- No = One or more required SOPs are missing, not accessible, or not in the workers' native language. - Award 0 points

Note: If piglet processing is the only SOP missing and piglets are not born on-site, mark "Yes" and note "N/A" in the audit report.

Key Considerations

- Internal site assessments must be conducted by the production management team, which may include veterinarians, supervisors, site managers, or other internal animal welfare auditors.
- Any assessment tool is acceptable, provided it evaluates the facility, animals, caretakers, and procedures.
- Producers are encouraged to use tools that provide feedback for continuous improvement.
- Frequency requirements:
 - a. Sow (breeding) farms: at least quarterly.
 - b. Nursery and finishing farms: at least semi-annually.

Audit Question

1. Does the site conduct an internal site assessment of the facility, animals, caretakers, and procedures at least quarterly on breeding sites and semi-annually on non-breeding sites?

Auditing Compliance

Request to review the site's internal assessment records.

- Verify that assessments include the required elements: facility, animals, caretakers, and procedures.
- Verify frequency of assessments:
 - a. Quarterly for breeding sites.
 - b. Semi-annually for non-breeding sites.

Record the date of the most recent assessment.

- Document any missing elements or lapses in required frequency.

Evaluation

- Yes = Internal assessments cover all required elements and are conducted at the required frequency. - Award 2 points
- No = Internal assessments are missing one or more required elements and/or frequency requirements are not met. - Award 0 points
- Example: A site conducts assessments quarterly, but only evaluates facilities and not caretaker practices - mark No.

Key Considerations

- Each operation must provide training to all pig caretakers (individuals with daily responsibility for animal care).
- Training must be documented in written or electronic form.
- All caretakers must receive retraining at least annually.
- Training records must include, at a minimum:
 - a. Date of training
 - b. Topic of training
 - c. Trainer
 - d. Trainee
 - e. Trainee signature (or electronic equivalent)
- Online training modules are acceptable if they include an electronic date stamp, training topic, and trainee identification

Audit Questions

1. Does the site have documentation of caretaker training specific to daily duties?
2. Do the training records demonstrate that all caretakers receive training at least annually?

Auditing Compliance

Request the list of all caretakers on site.

- Review training records for each caretaker.
- Verify that training records include all required information (date, topic, trainer, trainee, trainee signature or electronic equivalent).
- Confirm that training is provided at least once per year.
- Record the date of the most recent training.

Note any missing information or gaps in annual retraining.

Evaluation

Q1 – Documentation of Training

- Yes = Training documentation exists and includes all required elements (date, topic, trainer, trainee, signature/electronic equivalent). - Award 2 points
- No = Training documentation missing or incomplete (one or more required elements missing). - Award 0 points

Q2 – Annual Retraining

- Yes = Records show that all caretakers receive training at least annually. - Award 2 points
- No = Training is not conducted annually for all caretakers. - Award 0 points

Example: A site has training records with dates, topics, and signatures but no trainer name listed
- mark No for Q1 (incomplete documentation).

Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship

Key Considerations

- A Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) requires caretakers and veterinarians to work together to ensure the health and well-being of pigs on the site.
- A VCPR means:
 - A veterinarian has assumed responsibility for making medical judgments regarding animal health and treatment.

- The client (owner/caretaker) agrees to follow the veterinarian's instructions.
- The relationship exists only if the veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the animals through:
 - Examination of the animals, and/or
 - Medically appropriate and timely visits to the site.
- The site must have a valid VCPR within the past 12 months.
- Acceptable verification includes one of the following (dated within the past 12 months):
 - Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD).
 - Medical prescription label.
 - Site visit report.
 - Signed letter from the veterinarian confirming the relationship.

Audit Question

1. Does the site have a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) within the past 12 months?

Auditing Compliance

Request documentation verifying the VCPR.

- Acceptable forms of verification include: VFD, prescription label, site visit report, or signed veterinarian letter.
- Record:
 - How the VCPR was verified.
 - The name of the veterinarian.
 - The date of the verification document.
- If the verification is older than 12 months or missing, mark as No

Evaluation

- Yes = Site provides valid verification of a current VCPR within the past 12 months. - Award 2 points

- No = No valid VCPR verification, or documentation is older than 12 months. - Award 0 points

Example: Site provides a signed veterinarian letter dated 18 months ago - mark No (relationship not current).

Written Euthanasia Policy

Key Considerations

- All sites must have a written euthanasia policy that is readily accessible to caretakers.
- Euthanasia and carcass disposal must be consistent with local, state, and federal regulations.
- The written policy must include:
 - Only designated, trained farm personnel or the veterinarian may perform euthanasia.
 - Training records identifying:
 - Names of trained stockpersons.
 - Name of trainer.
 - Specific euthanasia methods covered.
 - Confirmation of validated competence (technique, equipment use).
 - Date(s) of training
 - A written plan covering primary and backup methods for each stage of production.
 - Compliance with current AASV euthanasia guidelines.
 - For methods requiring equipment: records showing maintenance per manufacturer recommendations, with equipment stored securely, protected, and kept clean.
 - Procedures requiring personnel to verify insensibility and death after each euthanasia.

Audit Question

1. Does the site have a written euthanasia policy meeting all the requirements?

Auditing Compliance

- Identify the caretakers trained and authorized to perform euthanasia.
- Review the written euthanasia plan to verify:
 - Primary and backup methods for each production stage.
 - Compliance with AASV guidelines.
- Review euthanasia training records for completeness (names, trainer, methods, validation of competence, dates).
- Review euthanasia equipment and maintenance records (if applicable).
- Observe that the written policy is accessible to caretakers on site.
- Record the primary and backup methods listed in the policy.

Note: Auditors are not required to observe euthanasia being performed during this step; evaluation here is limited to written policies and supporting records.

Evaluation

- Yes = The written euthanasia policy includes all required elements (authorized personnel, training records, primary/backup methods, AASV compliance, equipment maintenance, verification of death, and accessibility). - Award 2 points
- No = One or more required components of the written euthanasia policy are missing, incomplete, or not accessible. - Award 0 points

Example: The site has a written euthanasia policy with primary and backup methods listed, but no equipment maintenance records are kept - mark No (policy incomplete).

Resources

- On-Farm Euthanasia of Swine - Recommendations for the Producer Pork Checkoff)
<https://www.aasv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/euthanasia-recommendations-2016-en.pdf>

Key Considerations

- Biosecurity is a set of management practices designed to prevent the introduction and spread of disease-causing agents.
- A biosecurity SOP (or set of SOPs) must cover, at a minimum:
 - Barn sanitation
 - Rodent control
 - Worker and visitor entry policies
 - General farm security measures
- These elements may be included in a single SOP or covered in separate SOPs/documents (e.g., a dedicated rodent control SOP). As long as all elements are present in writing, the requirement is met.

Note: Implementation of visitor logs, signage, and rodent control practices are evaluated in separate audit sections.

Audit Question

1. Does the site have written SOP(s) covering barn sanitation, rodent control, worker/visitor entry policies, and general farm security measures?

Auditing Compliance

Review the site's written SOP(s).

- Confirm that the required elements are present, either in a single biosecurity SOP or distributed across separate SOPs/documents.
- Record which elements are included and note any missing from the written materials.

Evaluation

- Yes = All four required elements (barn sanitation, rodent control, worker/visitor entry, and general farm security) are addressed in SOP(s). - Award 2 points
- No = One or more required elements are not covered in the written SOP(s). - Award 0 points

Example: Site has sanitation and entry policies documented, but no written rodent control SOP - mark No (incomplete).

Daily Livestock Observation Records

Key Considerations

- Daily inspections must monitor:
 - Animal body condition and feed/water consumption.
 - Signs of lameness.
 - Coat and leg condition.
 - Cleanliness of the animals.
 - Signs of disease.
- All swine must be inspected and monitored at least daily to confirm health and detect early signs of lameness, sickness, or injury so timely action can be taken.
- Caretakers must inspect livestock and facilities at least once per day.
- During farrowing, more frequent inspections should be performed, including monitoring sows for signs of impending parturition.
- Sites must maintain a written record demonstrating all animals were observed at least daily.
- Records must include the date and caretaker initials.
- Records must be retained for 12 months, or for the duration of farm operation if <1 year (e.g., new construction or change of ownership).

Audit Question

1. Does the site have 12 months of records verifying that animals were observed at least once daily?

Auditing Compliance

Request daily observation records.

- Review how records are maintained (format and information recorded).
- Verify that entries include both date and caretaker initials.
- Select a random date within the past 12 months; confirm that a record exists for that day.
- Confirm retention of 12 months of records (or less if farm is new or under new ownership).
- Document any missing or incomplete entries

Evaluation

- Yes = Daily observation records are complete, current, and cover the required period (12 months or since farm began/changed ownership). Entries include both dates and caretaker initials. - Award 2 points
- No = Records are missing dates, initials, or days; or retention period does not meet the requirement. - Award 0 points

Note: If daily observation records are current and complete, but the site has operated <12 months due to new construction or ownership change, mark Yes and award points.

Example: A site has daily records with dates but no caretaker initials - mark No (records incomplete).

Key Considerations

- Medication and treatment records provide documentation demonstrating proper drug use.
- Records must be retained for 12 months after treatment, or for the duration of farm operation if <1 year (e.g., new construction or ownership change).
- Sites that have not treated animals in the past 12 months, or that participate in an antibiotic-free program, must still provide documentation confirming no animals were treated and when those animals were marketed.
- Caretakers must follow FDA's Compliance Policy Guide (CPG) Sec. 615.200 for Proper Drug Use and Residue Avoidance by Non-Veterinarians.
- The FDA expects medication and treatment records (including vaccinations) to include:
 - Date
 - Animal/Group ID
 - Product Name
 - Dose
 - Route
 - Given By
 - Withdrawal Date
- Records may be electronic, handwritten, or a combination.

Audit Questions

1. Do medication and treatment records contain all required information (date, ID, product, dose, route, given by, withdrawal date)?
2. Are medication and treatment records retained for at least 12 months (or since farm began if <1 year)?

Auditing Compliance

- Review medication and treatment records for required information.
- Confirm records include: date, animal/group ID, product name, dose, route, given by, withdrawal date.
- Select a random date within the past 12 months; verify that records exist for that day.
- Confirm records are retained for at least 12 months, unless farm has operated <1 year (new construction/ownership change).
- Document any missing elements or retention gaps.

Evaluation

Q1 – Medication and Treatment Records

- Yes = All treatment records contain the required information. - Award 2 points
- No = One or more treatment records missing required information. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Retention of Records

- Yes = Records are retained for \geq 12 months, or since farm began if <1 year. - Award 2 points
- No = Records not retained for 12 months and no applicable exception. - Award 0 points

Note: If treatment records are current and complete, but the site has operated <12 months due to new construction or ownership change, mark Yes and award points.

Resources

- FDA's Compliance Policy Guide (CPG) Sec. 615.200 for Proper Drug Use and Residue Avoidance by Non- Veterinarians (CPG 7125.37) <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/cpg-sec-615200-proper-drug-use-and-residue-avoidance-non-veterinarians>.

Key Considerations

- The site must have a written emergency action plan that covers likely emergencies or catastrophes relevant to the area.
- The plan must be readily available to all employees.
- At a minimum, the plan must include:
 - Telephone numbers for: owner, veterinarian, electrical power company, fire, and police.
 - The site address.
 - For sites without an address: GPS coordinates or clear directions from the nearest town.
- All caretakers must be familiar with the emergency procedures.

Audit Question

1. Does the facility have a written Emergency Action Plan that outlines how to effectively manage emergencies or crisis situations that could occur?

Auditing Compliance

Request to review the site's written emergency action/crisis plan.

- Verify that the plan includes:
 - Site address (or GPS/directions if no address).
 - Required contact numbers (owner, veterinarian, power company, fire, police).
 - Review the plan to see what types of events are covered (e.g., fire, power outage, disease outbreak, severe weather).
 - Document whether the plan is accessible to caretakers.

Evaluation

- Yes = Written plan exists and includes required elements (address/GPS, contact numbers, emergency events). - Award 2 points

- No = No plan exists, or plan missing address/GPS and/or required contact numbers. - Award 0 points

Example: The site has a written emergency plan that lists fire and disease outbreak procedures but does not include the veterinarian's contact number - mark No (plan incomplete).

Emergency Contacts

Key Considerations

- Emergency contact names and phone numbers, along with the site address, must be posted conspicuously in locations accessible to all caretakers.
- Emergency contact information must be legible and provided in all languages understood by workers on site.
- Contact information must be current and accurate.

Audit Question

1. Are emergency contact name(s) and number(s) and the site address posted in a prominent location(s) across the operation in the language(s) understood by workers?

Auditing Compliance

Verify that emergency contact names, phone numbers, and the site address are visibly posted.

- Confirm postings are in languages understood by all caretakers.
- Ensure information is legible, current, and accurate.
- Record where the postings are located.

Evaluation

- Yes = Emergency contact information is posted in a conspicuous place, is legible, up to date, and available in all languages understood by caretakers. - Award 2 points
- No = Emergency contact information is missing, illegible, outdated, or not available in the language(s) understood by caretakers. - Award 0 points

Example: Emergency contacts are posted at the site entrance, but only in English where several caretakers speak Spanish exclusively - mark No.

Emergency Backup Equipment Testing Records

Key Considerations

- Facilities with all indoor housing must have intervention procedures or equipment to prevent animal deaths in the event of mechanical ventilation failure.
- Intervention procedures may be manual or automated, depending on the ventilation type.
- Emergency backup equipment must be tested at least twice per year, and the testing must be documented in writing.
- Documentation may be handwritten logs or electronic logs generated by the equipment, as long as the record clearly shows date, frequency, and outcome of testing.

Audit Question

1. Is there a written record of emergency backup equipment being tested at least twice per year?

Auditing Compliance

Review written or electronic records of emergency backup equipment testing.

- Confirm that tests were conducted at least twice per year.
- Record the frequency of testing and the date of the most recent test.
- Document any gaps in testing or missing records.

Evaluation

- Yes = Records (handwritten or electronic) show emergency backup equipment testing is conducted at least twice per year. - Award 2 points

- No = No records exist, or testing occurs less than twice per year. - Award 0 points

Note: if the site is non-mechanically ventilated or all outdoors, this question should be marked

Not applicable (N.A.)

Example: A site has records of testing once in the past 12 months - mark No (does not meet twice-per-year requirement).

CARETAKER COMPETENCY & TRAINING

Caretaker Training

Key Considerations

- Each operation must provide training to all pig caretakers (individuals with daily responsibility for animal care).
- Caretakers must receive and be able to articulate training specific to their daily duties, as detailed in the farm's written SOPs.
- All caretakers must be PQA Plus® certified within 90 days of employment and must maintain certification while employed.
- Acceptable equivalents:
 - a. Youth caretakers (≤ 14 years): Youth PQA or Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA).
 - b. Canada: PigSAFE or PigCARE certification.

Audit Questions

1. Are caretakers able to articulate the training they received specific to their daily duties?
2. Do all caretakers have a current PQA Plus® certification (or acceptable equivalent) or are within 90 days of their employment start date?

Auditing Compliance

- Request a list of all caretakers on the site.
- Interview a sample of caretakers:
 - a. Ask them to describe or demonstrate what they were trained to do in their daily duties.
 - b. Acceptable responses should show familiarity with site SOPs and animal care tasks.
- Review PQA Plus® (or equivalent) certifications for caretakers.
- Record the name and PQA Plus® expiration date for each caretaker.
- For new employees, record their employment start date and verify if within 90 days.
- Note any expired, missing, or incomplete certifications.

Evaluation

Q1 – Training Articulation

- Yes = Caretakers are able to describe or demonstrate their training specific to daily duties. - Award 15 points
- No = Caretakers are unable to describe/demonstrate training, or training not specific to their duties. - Award 0 points

Q2 – PQA Plus® Certification

- Yes = All caretakers hold current PQA Plus® certification (or acceptable equivalent), or are within 90 days of new employment. - Award 15 points
- No = One or more caretakers lack certification, certification is expired, or are beyond the 90-day window without certification. - Award 0 points

Key Considerations

- According to the site's written euthanasia policy, caretakers responsible for euthanasia must have documented training.
- Caretakers performing euthanasia must be familiar with the site's euthanasia plan.
- Trained caretakers must be able to articulate:
 - The farm's primary and backup euthanasia methods they are responsible for.
 - Animal handling methods during euthanasia.
 - Confirmation of insensibility and death.
- Euthanasia training may also include carcass disposal and cleaning/maintenance of equipment or supplies.

Audit Question

1. Are caretakers responsible for euthanasia able to articulate the site's euthanasia plan?

Auditing Compliance

- Identify caretakers trained and authorized to perform euthanasia.
- Interview trained caretakers about the site's euthanasia plan, including:
 - Primary and backup methods.
 - Animal handling procedures during euthanasia.
 - Steps to confirm insensibility and death.
- A trained caretaker may demonstrate or simulate proper use of euthanasia equipment for training verification, if appropriate.

- ▶ Confirm caretaker responses align with the site's written euthanasia policy.

Note: If the site does not have a written euthanasia policy but trained caretakers can articulate euthanasia methods that comply with AASV recommendations, handling procedures, and confirmation of insensibility/death, mark as compliant.

Evaluation

- ▶ Yes = Trained caretakers are able to articulate all required components of the euthanasia plan (methods, handling, confirmation of death), and responses are consistent with the written policy or AASV guidelines. - Award 15 points
- ▶ No = Caretakers are unable to articulate one or more required components, or responses are inconsistent with the written policy/AASV guidelines. - Award 0 points

Animal Treatment Administration

Key Considerations

- ▶ Caretakers administering treatments must be trained per the site's SOPs, including:
 - Proper animal handling techniques.
 - Selecting the correct needle gauge and length.
 - Responding to broken needle events.
- ▶ Caretakers must be able to demonstrate or articulate the site's animal treatment and recordkeeping practices in compliance with FDA's Compliance Policy Guide (CPG) Sec. 615.200.
- ▶ Caretakers must use a method for tracking treated animals, documenting:
 - Treatments administered.
 - Duration of treatment.
- ▶ Caretakers must evaluate the effectiveness of treatment and, when necessary, make appropriate decisions about timely euthanasia.

Audit Questions

1. Can caretakers articulate their method for tracking what treatments have been administered and how long each animal has been receiving treatment?
2. Can caretakers articulate the site's protocol for handling broken needles?

Auditing Compliance

- ▶ Identify caretakers responsible for administering animal treatments.
- ▶ Interview caretakers about:
 - Treatment tracking and duration methods.
 - The site's broken needle policy.
- ▶ Confirm responses align with written SOPs/policies.

Evaluation

Q1 – Treatment Tracking

- ▶ Yes = Caretakers can clearly describe how treatments are tracked and for how long each animal has been under treatment. - Award 15 points
- ▶ No = Caretakers cannot describe treatment tracking and/or treatment duration. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Broken Needle Protocol

- ▶ Yes = Caretakers can articulate the site's broken needle protocol, or the site uses a needleless system (N/A). - Award 15 points
- ▶ No = Caretakers cannot describe the broken needle protocol, or no protocol exists. - Award 0 points

CRITICAL CRITERIA – Willful Acts of Abuse or Neglect

Key Considerations

This topic is critical to assuring good animal well-being and is an area of automatic failure of the audit.

No willful acts of abuse or neglect are observed during the audit. These criteria apply to all pigs on site during the audit. Willful acts of abuse or neglect are defined as acts outside of normally accepted production practices that intentionally cause pain and suffering including, but not limited to:

- ▶ Intentionally applying prods to sensitive parts of the animal such as the eyes, ears, nose, genitals, or rectum. Excessive prod use could qualify as a willful act of abuse. Electric prods must not be used on suckling piglets or on the day of weaning.
- ▶ Malicious hitting/beating of an animal. This includes forcefully striking an animal with closed fist, foot, handling equipment (e.g. sorting board, rattle paddle, etc.), or other hard/solid objects that can cause pain, bruising or injury.
- ▶ Deliberate slamming of gates on animals.
- ▶ Driving pigs off high ledges, platforms or steps while moving, loading, or unloading (animals are falling to the ground).
- ▶ Dragging of a conscious animals by any part of their body except in the rare case where a non-ambulatory animal must be moved from a life-threatening situation. Non-ambulatory pigs may be moved by using a drag mat.
- ▶ Purposefully dropping or throwing animals.
- ▶ Causing physical damage to the snout or tusks of a boar as a means to reduce aggression (this excludes nose ringing and tusk trimming).
- ▶ Failure to provide food, water and care that results in significant harm or death to animals. This includes the intentional failure to provide food, water or care that falls outside of normal husbandry practices and would reasonably be considered neglect.

- Malicious driving of ambulatory animals on top of one another either manually or with direct contact with motorized equipment (this excludes loading a non-ambulatory animal for transport).

Audit Question

1. Were any willful acts of abuse or neglect observed during the audit?

Auditing Compliance

- If a willful act of abuse or neglect is observed:
 - The auditor must immediately intervene to stop the act if reasonably and safely possible.
 - The incident must be reported to the site representative, farm owner, and manager.
- Although this results in automatic failure, the auditor may complete the audit at their discretion to collect remaining site data.

Evaluation

- Yes (willful act(s) observed) = Automatic failure of the audit.
- No (no willful acts observed) = Audit continues as normal.

CRITICAL CRITERIA – Humane Euthanasia

Key Considerations

This topic is critical to assuring good animal well-being and is an area of automatic failure of the audit.

Animals on the site are euthanized in a timely manner, which is defined as:

- Animals that have no prospect for improvement or not responding to care and treatment after two days of intensive care must be humanely euthanized unless otherwise recommended by a veterinarian. The caretaker's past experiences

- with similar conditions should be used to make informed decisions about the likelihood of recovery.
- Severely injured or non-ambulatory pigs with the inability to recover are euthanized immediately.
- An animal is considered non-ambulatory if it cannot get up or if it can stand with support but is unable to bear weight on two of its legs.
- Any animal that is non-ambulatory with a body condition score of 1 must be euthanized immediately.
- Pigs with hernias that are:
 - Perforated - euthanized.
 - Ulcerated and necrotic - euthanized.
 - Large, ground-touching, impairing mobility, and ulcerated - euthanized.
- Any pig with an untreated prolapse that has become necrotic must be euthanized.
- Uterine prolapses must be euthanized immediately.

Animals must be handled humanely during the euthanasia process.

If not euthanized in place, suitable equipment must be available to move non-ambulatory animals for humane euthanasia.

Caretakers must confirm insensibility and death (per AASV guidelines) before carcass removal.

Audit Questions

1. Are animals euthanized in a timely manner?
2. If euthanasia is observed, are animals handled humanely during the process?
3. If euthanasia is observed, are animals euthanized in place or is suitable equipment available to move non-ambulatory animals so they can be humanely euthanized?
4. If euthanasia is observed, do caretakers confirm insensibility and death, per AASV guidelines, after the euthanasia method is applied and before being removed from the facility?

Auditing Compliance

These criteria apply to all pigs on site during the audit.

- Euthanasia is not required to be performed during the audit but must be observed opportunistically if it occurs.
- If it is possible that an animal requiring euthanasia became severely injured between the last caretaker barn check and the audit, mark Yes (e.g., a deformed piglet at birth or sudden injury).
- Interview caretakers and review treatment records for animals on site that appear to meet timely euthanasia criteria.
- Document whether humane handling, proper equipment, and confirmation of insensibility/death are demonstrated if euthanasia is observed.

Evaluation

- Automatic Failure = Any animal meeting timely euthanasia criteria is present but not euthanized.
- If euthanasia is observed and caretakers fail to handle animals humanely.
- If appropriate equipment is not available to move non-ambulatory animals humanely.
- If caretakers fail to confirm insensibility and death before carcass removal.
- If an animal was euthanized prior to the audit but auditor finds it unconscious but not dead.
- Compliant = No animals requiring euthanasia are found; if euthanasia is observed, caretakers handle animals humanely, use appropriate equipment, and confirm insensibility and death.

Resources

- On-Farm Euthanasia of Swine - Recommendations for the Producer Pork Checkoff)
- <https://www.aasv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/euthanasia-recommendations-2016-en.pdf>

Animal Observations – Breeding Stock (Mature sows, gilts, boars)

Key Considerations

Body Condition Score (BCS):

- Standard scale is 1–5.
- A score of 1 or <2 = emaciated (ribs, vertebrae, hips, pin bones easily visible).
- A score of >4 in sows may predispose to leg issues and farrowing difficulties.
- A BCS of <2 indicates a welfare concern.

Severe lameness:

- Non-ambulatory (unable to rise or stand without assistance), OR
- Cannot bear weight on an affected limb while standing/walking.

Injuries assessed in this criterion include:

- Abscesses/swollen ears = multiple abscesses of any size; single abscess \geq tennis ball; or swollen ear.
- Prolapses = vaginal, rectal, or uterine.
- Severe hernias = impede movement, touch the ground while standing, or present as ulcerated/infected.
- Lacerations/open wounds = unhealed wounds penetrating the skin (beyond scratches), including vulva or tail injuries; scabbed-over wounds are not considered open.

Note: Shoulder sores are evaluated separately for breeding stock.

Audit Questions

1. Does 1% or less of sampled breeding stock have a BCS <2?
2. Is 1% or less of sampled breeding stock severely lame?
3. Does 5% or less of sampled breeding stock have injuries?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe only the sample population determined at the start of the audit.
- Exclude pigs housed in dedicated sick pens from the sample.
- Attempt to get all pigs standing, except sows actively farrowing and/or nursing.
- Record each observed condition separately (e.g., one pig may be both severely lame and low BCS).
- Mark/spray pigs once observed in group pens to avoid double-counting.
- Record total number of pigs observed.
- For suckling pigs: approximate using litters observed \times 11, or herd average litter size.
- Calculate prevalence for each condition by dividing the number of affected pigs by the number of pigs observed.
- Record condition counts and locations in the audit report.

Evaluation

Q1 – Body Condition Score

- Compliant = 1% or less of sampled breeding stock with BCS <2.
- Major Non-conformance (corrective action within 60 days) = More than 1% with BCS <2.

Q2 – Severe Lameness

- Compliant = 1% or less of sampled breeding stock severely lame.
- Major Non-conformance (corrective action within 60 days) = More than 1% severely lame.

Q3 – Injuries

- Compliant = 5% or less of sampled breeding stock with injuries.
- Major Non-conformance (corrective action within 60 days) = More than 5% with injuries.

- Compliant = 5% or less of sampled breeding stock with injuries.
- Major Non-conformance (corrective action within 60 days) = More than 5% with injuries.

Minor Non-conformance = Not applicable for this criterion.

Resources

Images courtesy of the National Pork Board

TABLE AW.1 BODY CONDITION SCORING		1	2	3	4	5
Score	Condition	Emaciated	Thin	Ideal	Fat	Obese
Detection of Ribs, Back Bone, "H" Bones and Pin Bones	Obvious	Easily detected with pressure	Barely felt with firm pressure	None	None	None

Taken from "Assessing Sow Body Condition" by R.D.Coffey, G.R. Parker, and K.M. Laurent (ASC-158, 1999)

TABLE AW>2 LAMENESS SCORING	
SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	Pig moves freely and uses all four limbs and feet evenly
1	Pig shows weight-shifting activities away from affected limb upon standing but shows little or no lameness or limping when walking
2	Pig obviously shifts weight away from affected limb when standing and shows limping or adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, quickend step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
3	Pig is reluctant to stand and/or walk, shows obvious limp and adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, has quickened step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
4	Pig is non-weight bearing on the affected limb when either standing or walking

Lameness Score Scale adapted from Karraker et al., and Nalon et al., 2014.

Animal Observations – Shoulder Sores in Breeding Stock (Mature sows, gilts, boars)

Key Considerations

- Shoulder sores are caused by pressure compressing blood vessels over the shoulder blade, leading to tissue damage and lesions.
- Lesions typically develop during the first weeks after farrowing due to pressure while lying.
- Shoulder sores are analogous to human pressure ulcers (bed sores).
- Once developed, sores are difficult to treat and often recur in subsequent lactations.

Audit Question

1. Does 5% or less of the sampled breeding stock have shoulder sores?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe breeding stock only from the sample population determined at the beginning of the audit.
- Exclude pigs in dedicated sick pens from the sample.
- Attempt to get all pigs standing, except sows actively farrowing or nursing.
- Spray/mark pigs after observation in group pens to prevent double-counting.
- Track and record the total number of pigs observed.
- Shoulder sores must only be counted if they are open or scabbed-over.
- Healed sores without scabs must not be counted.
- If both shoulders have sores, count the animal once.
- Calculate the prevalence of shoulder sores by dividing the number of affected pigs by the number observed.
- Record findings in the audit report.

Evaluation

- Compliant = 5% or less of sampled breeding stock have shoulder sores.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action within 60 days) = More than 5% of sampled breeding stock have shoulder sores.
- Minor Non-conformance = Not applicable.

Resources

- NPB Fact sheet on Sow Shoulder Sores <https://porkcdn.s3.amazonaws.com/sites/all/files/documents/PorkStore/03043.pdf>

Key Considerations

Body Condition Score (BCS):

- Standard scale is 1–5.
- A score of 1 or <2 = emaciated (ribs, vertebrae, hips, pin bones easily visible).
- A score of >4 in sows may predispose to leg issues and farrowing difficulties.
- A BCS of <2 indicates a welfare concern.

Severe lameness:

- Non-ambulatory (unable to rise or stand without assistance), OR
- Cannot bear weight on an affected limb while standing/walking.

Injuries assessed in this criterion include:

- Abscesses/swollen ears = multiple abscesses of any size; single abscess \geq tennis ball; or swollen ear.
- Prolapses = vaginal, rectal, or uterine.
- Severe hernias = impede movement, touch the ground while standing, or present as ulcerated/infected.
- Lacerations/open wounds = unhealed wounds penetrating the skin (beyond scratches), including vulva or tail injuries; scabbed-over wounds are not considered open.

Audit Questions

1. Does 1% or less of the sampled suckling pigs have a BCS <2 ?
2. Is 1% or less of the sampled suckling pigs severely lame?
3. Does 5% or less of the sampled suckling pigs have injuries?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe only the sample population determined at the start of the audit.
- Exclude pigs in dedicated sick pens from the sample.
- Attempt to get all pigs standing (except if sows are actively farrowing or nursing).
- Record each condition separately (a pig may be counted in multiple categories).
- Spray/mark pigs in group pens once observed to prevent recounting.
- Record the total number of pigs observed.
- For suckling pigs, approximate using litters observed $\times 11$, or herd's average litter size.
- Tabulate condition totals and calculate prevalence (% affected).
- Record observation details and locations in the audit report.

Evaluation

Q1 – Body Condition Score

- Compliant = 1% or less of suckling pigs sampled with BCS <2.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 1% with BCS <2.

Q2 – Severe Lameness

- Compliant = 1% or less severely lame.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 1% severely lame.

Q3 – Injuries

- Compliant = 5% or less with injuries.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 5% with injuries.

Minor Non-conformance = Not applicable.

Resources

Images courtesy of the National Pork Board

TABLE AW.1 BODY CONDITION SCORING		1	2	3	4	5
Score	1	2	3	4	5	Obese
Condition	Emaciated	Thin	Ideal	Fat		
Detection of Ribs, Back Bone, "H" Bones and Pin Bones	Obvious	Easily detected with pressure	Barely felt with firm pressure	None	None	

Taken from "Assessing Sow Body Condition" by R.D.Coffey, G.R. Parker, and K.M. Laurent (ASC-158, 1999)

TABLE AW-2 LAMENESS SCORING	
SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	Pig moves freely and uses all four limbs and feet evenly
1	Pig shows weight-shifting activities away from affected limb upon standing but shows little or no lameness or limping when walking
2	Pig obviously shifts weight away from affected limb when standing and shows limping or adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, quickened step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
3	Pig is reluctant to stand and/or walk, shows obvious limp and adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, has quickened step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
4	Pig is non-weight bearing on the affected limb when either standing or walking

Lameness Score Scale adapted from Karriker et al., and Nalon et al., 2014.

Animal Observations – Non-breeding pigs (nursery, grow/finish, immature boars and gilts)

Key Considerations

Body Condition Score (BCS):

- Standard scale is 1–5.
- A score of 1 or <2 = emaciated (ribs, vertebrae, hips, pin bones easily visible).
- A score of >4 in sows may predispose to leg issues and farrowing difficulties.
- A BCS of <2 indicates a welfare concern.

Severe lameness:

- Non-ambulatory (unable to rise or stand without assistance), OR
- Cannot bear weight on an affected limb while standing/walking

Injuries assessed in this criterion include:

- Abscesses/swollen ears = multiple abscesses of any size; single abscess \geq tennis ball; or swollen ear.
- Prolapses = vaginal, rectal, or uterine.
- Severe hernias = impede movement, touch the ground while standing, or present as ulcerated/infected.
- Lacerations/open wounds = unhealed wounds penetrating the skin (beyond scratches), including vulva or tail injuries; scabbed-over wounds are not considered open.

Audit Questions

1. Does 1% or less of the sampled non-breeding pigs have a body condition score of less than 2?
2. Is 1% or less of the sampled non-breeding pigs severely lame?
3. Does 5% or less of the sampled non-breeding pigs have injuries?

Audit Compliance

- Observe only the sample population determined at the start of the audit.
- Exclude pigs in dedicated sick pens from the sample.
- Attempt to get all pigs standing.
- Record each condition separately (a pig may be counted in multiple categories).
- Spray/mark pigs in group pens once observed to prevent recounting.
- Record the total number of pigs observed.
- Tabulate condition totals and calculate prevalence (% affected).

Score

Q1 – Body Condition Score

- Compliant = 1% or less of non-breeding pigs sampled with BCS <2.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 1% with BCS <2.

Q2 – Severe Lameness

- Compliant = 1% or less severely lame.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 1% severely lame.

Q3 – Injuries

- Compliant = 5% or less with injuries.
- Major Non-conformance (Corrective action: 60 days) = More than 5% with injuries.

Minor Non-conformance = Not applicable.

Resources

Images courtesy of the National Pork Board

TABLE AW.1 BODY CONDITION SCORING		1	2	3	4	5
Score	Emaciated	Thin	Ideal	Fat	Obese	
Condition	Emaciated	Thin	Ideal	Fat	Obese	
Detection of Ribs, Back Bone, "H" Bones and Pin Bones	Obvious	Easily detected with pressure	Barely felt with firm pressure	None	None	

Taken from "Assessing Sow Body Condition" by R.D.Coffey, G.R. Parker, and K.M. Laurent (ASC-158, 1999)

TABLE AW-2 LAMENESS SCORING	
SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	Pig moves freely and uses all four limbs and feet evenly
1	Pig shows weight-shifting activities away from affected limb upon standing but shows little or no lameness or limping when walking
2	Pig obviously shifts weight away from affected limb when standing and shows limping or adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, quickened step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
3	Pig is reluctant to stand and/or walk, shows obvious limp and adaptive behaviour when walking (head bob, arched back, caudal swagger, has quickened step on affected limb, or shortened stride)
4	Pig is non-weight bearing on the affected limb when either standing or walking

Lameness Score Scale adapted from Karraker et al., and Nalon et al., 2014.

Daily Observation of Swine

Key Considerations

- Caretakers must conduct and document daily observations and provide prompt care to address individual animal health, welfare, and facility/management issues.
- Daily observations should evaluate:
 - Animals - eating, drinking, lying behaviors, and signs of sickness/injury.
 - Environment - pig- and barn-level conditions, including temperature and air quality appropriate for the production phase.
 - Equipment - fans, flooring, penning, feeders, waterers, and other systems to ensure proper function.
- Total mortalities must be recorded daily.

Audit Question

1. Can caretakers articulate and/or demonstrate the site's SOP for daily observations?

Audit Compliance

- Review the site's daily observation records.
- Interview a sample of caretakers:
 - Ask them to describe or demonstrate how they conduct and record daily observations.
 - Verify their descriptions include animals, environment, and equipment.
 - Confirm caretaker responses align with the site's SOP for daily observations.
- Optional: Use daily observation records with notes or facility adjustments to ask scenario-based interview questions (e.g., "On 7/12/25, it's noted that you adjusted the ventilation – tell me more about that decision.").

Evaluation

- Yes = Caretakers can articulate and/or demonstrate daily observations in a way that aligns with the site's SOP (or covers animals, environment, and equipment if no SOP exists). - Award 20 points
- No = Caretakers cannot describe or demonstrate daily observations, or their description does not align with the SOP. - Award 0 points

Note: If no written SOP exists but caretakers can articulate a consistent process that covers animals, facilities, and environment, mark Yes.

Animal Handling

Key Considerations

- Caretakers must be trained to handle animals appropriately for their age, size, and condition in accordance with:
 - Site SOPs.
 - PQA Plus® guidelines.
 - Use of proper handling equipment.
- General handling principles:
 - Move pigs at their normal walking pace.
 - Move pigs in groups small enough that handlers maintain control and can apply interventions.
 - Avoid aggressive handling, which includes:
 - Excessive or improper use of electric prods.
 - Excessive noise or yelling.
 - Moving pigs too fast or in too-large groups.
 - Overcrowding pigs in chutes, ramps, alleyways.
 - Rough physical contact (e.g., forcefully striking with a sorting board).

► **Piglets/Nursery pigs:**

- May be moved by herding, by hand, or using carts.
- When picked up: support under rib cage, over the back, or rear leg above hock.
- When released: pig must have two points of ground contact before release.
- Must not be tossed, thrown, or lifted by ears or tail.
- Electric prods must not be used on suckling/weaned piglets or to move nursery pigs from pens.

► **Finisher pigs:**

- Move in groups small enough to maintain control.
- Electric prods must not be used to move pigs from pens.

► **Breeding stock (sows, gilts, boars):**

- Groups must remain small enough for handlers to maintain control.
- Electric prods must not be used to move sows or boars from pens.

Audit Questions

1. Are animals handled appropriately for their age and size?
2. Can animal caretakers articulate or demonstrate appropriate equipment use during animal handling?

Audit Compliance

Identify caretakers responsible for animal handling.

- Observe animal handling activities if they occur during the audit.
- Record the types of handling equipment used on site.
- Interview caretakers; ask them to describe or demonstrate proper handling equipment use.

Evaluation

Q1 – Animal Handling

- Yes = Animals are handled appropriately for their age/size, following SOPs and guidelines. - Award 20 points
- No = Animals observed being handled inappropriately (e.g., excessive prod use, pigs moved too fast, improper handling of piglets). - Award 0 points

Q2 – Equipment Use

- Yes = Caretakers can describe or demonstrate proper equipment use for handling pigs. - Award 20 points
- No = Caretakers cannot articulate or demonstrate proper use of handling equipment. - Award 0 points

Note: If no handling is directly observed, but caretaker descriptions/demonstrations are appropriate for pigs on site, mark Yes.

Resources

- National Pork Board Humane Handling Guidelines
<https://porkgateway.org/resource/safe-animal-handling/>

Tail Docking & Castration (Piglet Processing)

Key Considerations

- If the site performs piglet processing (tail docking and/or castration), they must have:
 - A written SOP describing the procedures.
 - Trained caretakers to perform the procedures.
 - Clean, sharp equipment to minimize pain and infection risk.

Castration:

- Performed to reduce aggressive behavior and improve pork quality.
- If surgical castration is performed, it should occur as soon as possible after birth and before weaning, with no open wounds at weaning. (AASV Position Statement, 2024).

Tail docking:

- Performed to reduce tail biting and cannibalism.
- Should be performed early and before weaning, with no open wounds at weaning. (AASV Position Statement, 2024).
- AASV supports research and application of analgesic/anesthetic protocols or alternatives that reduce pain and improve piglet outcomes.

Audit Question

1. Can caretakers responsible for piglet processing procedures demonstrate or articulate the training they received to conduct the procedure according to the site's SOP?

Auditing Compliance

- Identify caretakers who perform piglet processing.
- Review the site's piglet processing SOP.
- Interview caretakers:
 - Ask them to describe or demonstrate piglet processing steps.
- Verify caretaker responses align with the site's written SOP.
- Record any analgesics or anesthetics used during piglet processing.

Note: Auditors are not required to observe piglet processing; verification is based on SOPs, training, and caretaker articulation.

Evaluation

- Yes = Caretakers can describe or demonstrate piglet processing procedures consistent with the SOP (or minimally compliant with AASV requirements if no SOP exists). - Award 20 points
- No = Caretakers cannot describe/demonstrate procedures, or responses do not align with SOP/AASV requirements. - Award 0 points
- N/A = Site does not farrow piglets.

Note: Analgesic or anesthetic use should be documented by the auditor, but it is not scored in this criterion.

Resources

- AASV Position Statement on Castration of Swine - <https://www.aasv.org/position-statements/position-castration-of-swine/>
- AASV Position Statement on Tail Docking and Teeth Clipping of Swine - <https://www.aasv.org/position-statements/position-taillock-teethclip/>

Weaning Age

Key Considerations

- Weaning is a stressful event for piglets, involving:
 - Transition from milk to solid feed (gut and immune changes).
 - Change in housing/accommodation.
 - Mixing with other piglets.
- Natural weaning in semi-natural environments occurs gradually, typically at 12–17 weeks (84–119 days).
- Commercial practice: Piglets are usually weaned at 21–30 days.

- Welfare concerns: Earlier weaning has been associated with:
 - Reduced post-weaning growth performance.
 - Inconsistent finishing growth.
 - Increased "undesirable behaviors" (e.g., tail chewing, ear sucking, escape attempts, belly-nosing).
- Research challenge: Most studies compare different "early" weaning ages (well below natural weaning), making welfare conclusions complex.
- EU Directive (2001/93/EC): Prohibits weaning before 28 days unless health/welfare of sow or piglet requires it.
- Sites that farrow piglets must maintain a written record of weaning age.

Audit Question

1. What is the minimum weaning age of piglets?

Auditing Compliance

- Review the site's weaning records.
- Record the minimum age at weaning (in days).
- Confirm documentation matches reported practices

Evaluation

Assign Step Level based on minimum weaning age:

- Step 1 = 28 days
- Step 2 = 35 days
- Step 3 = 42 days
- Step 4 = 56 days
- Step 5 = >60 days

N/A = Site does not farrow/wean piglets.

Resources

- How does weaning age affect the welfare of the nursery pig?

<https://porkgateway.org/resource/how-does-weaning-age-affect-the-welfare-of-the-nursery-pig/>

Key Considerations

- De-tusking (complete removal of upper and/or lower tusks in boars) is prohibited under this audit.
- Tusk trimming may be permitted:
 - To prevent tusks from growing into the head of the animal, OR
 - To reduce risk to handlers and/or other animals.

Trimming must:

- Leave at least 2 cm (0.78 in) above the gum line to avoid cutting into the sensitive pulp chamber.
- Be performed with proper equipment – bolt cutters or other chopping devices are prohibited.

- Sites should maintain a written record of tusk trimming events and reasons.

Audit Question

1. Does the site de-tusk or trim tusks?

Auditing Compliance

- Review written records of tusk trimming, if applicable.
- Ask caretakers about tusk management practices.
- Record any animal observations indicating tusk trimming or de-tusking.

Evaluation

- Compliant = No de-tusking performed; tusk trimming (if practiced) follows guidelines
- (≥ 2 cm above gum line, proper tools, written record).
- Minor Non-conformance - Evidence of de-tusking, trimming into pulp chamber, use of improper tools, OR no record of trimming when tusks clearly managed.
- N/A = Site does not keep boars.

Key Considerations

- Dead animals must be removed from the living space upon identification, after ensuring the food, water, and ventilation needs of other animals are met.
- For sow and piglet well-being, mortality removal may be delayed until farrowing is complete.

Audit Question

1. Are dead animals removed from the living space upon identification?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe all pig living spaces for the presence of dead animals.
- If a dead animal is present, ask the caretaker when the last barn check was completed (e.g., before the audit began that day).

Evaluation

- Yes = No dead animals are observed in living spaces. - Award 20 points
- No = Dead animals are observed in living spaces. - Award 0 points

Special Notes:

- If it is possible the pig died between the last barn check and the audit, mark Yes.
- If dead piglets are present with an actively farrowing sow, mark Yes.

FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

Thermal Comfort/Air Temperature

Key Considerations

- Pigs should be free from thermoregulatory behaviors indicating heat or cold stress (e.g., piling, shivering, panting, open-mouth breathing, excessive spreading out).

- Air temperature at pig level should remain in the preferred range for each production phase.
- If pigs show stress and temperatures are outside the preferred range, caretakers must implement corrective actions (fans, heaters, bedding, sprinklers, etc.).
- Measures must be in place to protect pigs from hypothermia, hyperthermia, and sunburn across all stages of production.
- Shade is required in all outdoor/pasture areas.
- When ambient temperature $\geq 70\text{-F}$ (21-C), pigs outdoors must have access to wallows, showers, or sprinklers.

Audit Questions

- 1a. Do pigs appear free from thermoregulatory behaviors indicating heat or cold stress?
- 1b. If no, is air temperature at pig level within the preferred range for the production phase?
- 1c. If no, have caretakers implemented corrective measures to minimize stress?
2. Are management/physical measures in place to protect pigs from hypothermia, hyperthermia, and sunburn?
3. Are supplemental heating/cooling systems available and functional as needed?
- 4a. (Outdoor only) Is shade provided in all outdoor/pasture areas?
- 4b. (Outdoor only) When ambient temperature $\geq 70\text{°F}$ (21°C), do pigs have access to wallows, showers, or sprinklers?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe pigs for signs of heat or cold stress.
- Measure or verify air temperature at pig level (thermometer, electronic readouts, or caretaker records).
- Interview caretakers to confirm corrective actions used in cases of heat/cold stress. Verify by observation (e.g., misters running, heaters in use).

-Check facilities for bedding, shelter, shade, heating devices, fans, sprinklers, wallows, and other measures across production stages.

- Verify supplemental systems (heaters, fans, coolers) are functional: review inspection/maintenance records and/or request caretaker demonstration.

Outdoor checks:

- Observe for shade in all outdoor/pasture areas.
- Observe for wallows/showers/sprinklers, or interview caretakers on when/how they are used.

Evaluation

Q1a-1c (Pig-level comfort):

- Yes = Pigs show no thermoregulatory stress behaviors; OR pigs show thermoregulatory stress behaviors, temperature is outside preferred range, but corrective measures are in place and functioning. - Award 25 points
- No = Pigs show thermoregulatory stress behaviors, temperature is outside range, and no corrective measures are in place. - Award 0 points

Q2 (General measures):

- Record and list management/physical measures in place.

Q3 (Supplemental systems):

- Record/list how supplemental systems were verified functional.

Q4a (Shade, outdoor only):

- Yes = Shade provided in all outdoor/pasture areas. - Award 25 points
- No = Shade not provided in all outdoor/pasture areas. - Award 0 points

Q4b (Cooling, outdoor only):

- Yes = When $\geq 70^{\circ}\text{F}$, pigs have functional access to wallows, showers, or sprinklers. - Award points
- No = When $\geq 70^{\circ}\text{F}$, pigs lack functional access to wallows, showers, or sprinklers. - Award 0 points
- N/A = If pigs do not have outdoor access, Q4a and Q4b are not applicable.

Resources

Picture courtesy of the National Pork Board

FIGURE AW.1: THERMOREGULATORY LAYING POSTURES OF SWINE

The images in Figure AW.1 portray the normal thermoregulatory laying postures of pigs in an environment with three different air temperatures. Take note of the pigs in relation to each other as well as the amount of free space within the pen. Image A depicts a pen of 10 pigs in an environment with cold air temperature. These pigs huddle very close together in a dense pile in one area of the pen. Image B depicts a pen of 10 pigs in an environment with ideal air temperature. These pigs have body contact with each other but do not pile excessively. Image C depicts a pen of 10 pigs in an environment with hot air temperature. These pigs spread out throughout the pen and avoid physical contact with other pigs in the pen.



Taken from Shao et al., 1997, in volume 40 of the Transactions of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers.

Key Considerations

- Housing must be appropriately ventilated to minimize humidity, odors, and discomfort.
- Daily air quality monitoring is part of livestock operations.
- OSHA threshold (used in this audit):
 - Ammonia should ideally be <10 ppm and must not exceed 25 ppm.
 - Inhalable dust must not exceed 10 mg/m³.
- Caretakers must take corrective actions if air quality exceeds limits or is noticeably unpleasant.
- Pig signs of poor air quality include watery/mattery eyes and difficulty breathing.
- If pigs show such signs, ammonia concentrations must be measured at pig level.

Audit Questions

- 1a. Do pigs show signs of exposure to poor air quality?
- 1b. If so, does the ammonia concentration exceed 25 ppm?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe pigs for signs of poor air quality (eyes, breathing).
- Note sensory observations of air quality.
- If poor air quality is suspected:
 - Measure ammonia at pig height (~1 foot above floor), in room center, at one-third intervals down barn length.
 - Avoid sampling near inlets or heat sources.
 - Calculate average ammonia concentration.
- Interview caretakers about corrective steps if ammonia exceeds 25 ppm.
- Record observations, results, and caretaker responses in audit comments.

Evaluation

Q1a (Pig observation):

- Yes = No signs of poor air quality observed. - Award 25 points
- No = Signs of poor air quality observed- proceed to Q1b.

Q1b (Ammonia concentration):

- Yes = Signs observed but ammonia <25 ppm. - Award 25 points
- No = Signs observed and ammonia \geq 25 ppm. - Award 0 points

Special Note: If signs consistent with poor air quality are observed but ammonia cannot be measured, note observations in comments and award 25 points.

Lighting

Key Considerations

- Housing must have a lighting system that provides a consistent daily cycle of light and darkness for pigs.
- Intensity requirements:
 - At least 50 lux (5 foot-candles) at pig head height during light periods.
 - About 5 lux or less during dark periods.
 - 50 lux is approximately the brightness needed for a person with normal vision to read standard newspaper print.
- Duration requirements:
 - At least 8 hours of continuous light in 24 hours.
 - At least 6 consecutive hours of darkness in 24 hours.
 - Exceptions: natural daylight variation, use of creep/heat lamps in farrowing pens, or first 48 hrs post-weaning.

- ▶ Lighting must allow pigs to exhibit normal behaviors, rest, and enable thorough inspection of pigs/facilities.
- ▶ Adequate portable lighting must be available for inspections in dim areas.
- ▶ Fixtures, equipment, and windows must be clean, functional, and well-maintained.

Audit Questions

1. Is lighting sufficient to allow pigs to exhibit normal behaviors, rest, and permit thorough inspection of animals and facilities at any time (using fixed or portable lighting if necessary)?
2. Does the lighting system provide pigs with at least 8 hours of continuous light (≥ 50 lux) and at least 6 consecutive hours of darkness (~ 5 lux or less) per 24 hours, with exceptions only for natural daylight variation and farrowing creep/heat lamps?
3. Are lighting fixtures, equipment, and windows kept clean and well-maintained to ensure consistent function and intensity?

Auditing Compliance

Check intensity:

- ▶ If possible, measure with a light meter at pig head height in representative barn/pe locations.
- ▶ Auditor should be able to read newspaper print at pig level.

Check schedule:

- ▶ Interview caretakers on how lighting schedules are managed (automatic timers, natural light, manual switching).
- ▶ Verify pigs receive ≥ 8 hrs of light and ≥ 6 hrs of darkness (exceptions noted).

Check functionality:

- ▶ Confirm lighting allows pigs to rest and show normal behaviors without disturbance.
- ▶ Verify portable lighting is available and operational.
- ▶ Inspect fixtures/windows: spot-check for dirt, damage, or non-functioning bulbs.
- ▶ Interview caretakers on maintenance practices (cleaning, replacement schedules).

Score

Q1 – Lighting sufficiency

- Yes = Lighting allows pigs to rest normally, show undisturbed behaviors, and auditor can inspect animals/facilities clearly. - Award 25 points
- No = Lighting does not allow for inspection or restricts pig behaviors. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Light/dark program

- Yes = Verifiable evidence (records, interviews, electronic systems) confirms ≥ 8 hrs continuous light (≥ 50 lux) and ≥ 6 hrs consecutive darkness (~ 5 lux). Exceptions for natural daylight or creep lamps noted in comments. - Award 25 points
- No = No verifiable evidence of a compliant light/dark program. - Award 0 points

Q3 – Maintenance

- Yes = Lighting system (fixed or portable) is clean, functional, and maintained. - Award 25 points
- No = Fixtures, bulbs, or windows are excessively dirty, damaged, or non-functional. - Award 0 points

Resources

- Review: The influence of light on pig welfare. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1751731124002507>

Key Considerations

- Farrowing stalls must allow sows to:
- Avoid touching both sides simultaneously (excluding anti-crush rails).
- Avoid touching both ends simultaneously.
- Avoid touching the top bars.
- Lie down without obstruction from raised troughs or rear gates.
- Piglets in temporary housing (split-suckling, management practices) must be able to:
- Lie fully on their side without resting on another pig.
- Stand up easily from lying.
- Lie without head resting on a raised feeder.

Individual sow stalls must allow sows to:

- Avoid touching both sides simultaneously.
- Avoid touching both ends simultaneously.
- Avoid touching the top bars.

Boar stalls must allow boars to stand, lie down, and rest normally; boars in stalls must be given exercise at least four times per week.

Group-housed sows and gilts (breeding/gestation):

- Each sow/gilt must have at least 24 sq. ft. (2.2 m²) of usable floor space.
- Sows/gilts must be able to turn around freely without contacting enclosure sides or other animals.
- Group housing must be managed to minimize aggression.
- All group-housed pigs must be able to lie fully on their side, stand easily, and avoid lying with head on a raised feeder.

Audit Questions

1. Do 98% or more of the individually housed animals meet the criteria for adequately sized housing?
2. Do 100% of the sample population of group-housed sows/gilts in breeding and gestation have 24 sq. ft. (2.2 m²) of usable floor space and can turn around freely?

Auditing Compliance

- Conduct space allowance observations only on the sample population selected at the start of the audit.
- Evaluate lactating sows with their litters as a unit.
- For temporary split-suckling housing:
 - Consider acceptable if piglets still meet lying/standing criteria without the split area.
- Record all individually housed animals in the sample that do not meet size requirements.
- For group-housed sows/gilts:
 - Measure pen width \times length to calculate total floor space.
 - Subtract unusable space (raised feeders, large waterers, ESF equipment).
 - Divide usable area by number of animals to confirm ≥ 24 sq. ft. per animal.
 - Observe sows/gilts for ability to turn freely.
- Example: A pen measures 16 ft \times 20 ft = 320 sq. ft.
 - Subtract 12 sq. ft. for a raised feeder = 308 sq. ft. usable.
 - 12 sows in the pen $308 \div 12 = 25.6$ sq. ft. per sow.
 - Result: Compliant (≥ 24 sq. ft./sow).

Score

Q1 – Individually housed animals

- Yes = 98% or more of the sample population meet criteria for adequate space. - Award 35 points
- No = 97% or fewer of the sample population meet criteria. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Group-housed sows/gilts

- Yes = 100% of the sample population meet both requirements: ≥ 24 sq. ft. usable space and ability to turn freely. - Award 35 points
- No = Any sow/gilt in the sample population fails either requirement. - Award 0 points
- N/A = If group housing is not used during breeding/gestation.

Resources

- California Department of Food and Agriculture Sow Housing Guide
https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/AnimalCare/docs/sow_housing_guide.pdf

Space Allowance – Growing Pigs

Key Considerations

- Growing pigs must have at least 1.5× their thermoneutral lying area as total floor space.
- Minimum lying and total space allowances for growing swine are outlined in the audit reference table (by pig weight).

Live weight (kg)	Live weight (lbs)	Lying area (m ²)	Lying area (ft ²)	Total area (m ²)	Total area (ft ²)
10	22	0.10	1.1	0.15	1.6
20	44	0.15	1.6	0.22	2.4
30	66	0.20	2.2	0.30	3.2
40	88	0.26	2.8	0.40	4.3
50	110	0.31	3.3	0.47	5.0
60	132	0.36	3.9	0.55	5.9
70	154	0.41	4.4	0.61	6.6
80	176	0.45	4.8	0.67	7.2
90	198	0.47	5.0	0.71	7.6
100	220	0.50	5.4	0.75	8.1
110	243	0.53	5.7	0.80	8.6
120	265	0.56	6.0	0.84	9.0
130	287	0.58	6.2	0.87	9.3

- All growing pigs must be able to:
 - Lie fully on their side (full lateral recumbency) without lying on another pig.
 - Stand up easily after lying.
 - Lie without the head resting on raised feeders or equipment

Audit Question

1. Do 98% or more of the growing swine have adequate space?

Auditing Compliance

- Auditing Compliance
- Conduct space allowance checks only on the sample population identified at the start of the audit.
- Observe pigs to verify lying and standing requirements are met.
- Check enclosure space:
 - Use the weight-based space allowance table.
 - Measure pen dimensions if needed and calculate usable floor area.
- Record any pens/groups in the sample population that fail to meet lying or total space requirements.
- Optional: review farm records that document pen sizes, stocking rates, or pig weights to support verification.

Note: If pigs are in very large enclosures that clearly exceed space requirements, auditors may describe the housing style in comments rather than calculate exact footage.

Evaluation

- Yes = 98% or more of sampled pigs meet both the lying and total space requirements for their size. - Award 35 points
- No = 97% or fewer of sampled pigs meet requirements (lying space, total space, or both). - Award 0 points

Key Considerations

- Pigs are highly motivated to root, chew, and explore; enrichment must be provided to support these natural behaviors and improve welfare.
- Enrichment can:
 - Reduce abnormal/harmful behaviors (tail/ear biting).
 - Decrease aggression when pigs are mixed.
 - Reduce handling stress.
 - Promote normal behavior patterns.
- A written SOP for enrichment is recommended to specify tools used at each production stage.
- High-value enrichment = chewable, deformable, destructible (e.g., straw, hay, wood chips, ropes, natural safe materials).
- Other enrichment options include toys (balls, ropes, ice blocks, hanging chains) and sensory/social enrichment (novel odors, caretaker interaction).
- Enrichment must be safe for pigs, caretakers, and the environment, and not interfere with manure systems.
- Two or more forms of enrichment must be provided to pigs at all stages of production.

Audit Question

1. Are pigs provided with two or more forms of enrichment at all stages of production?

Auditing Compliance

- Observe pigs and facilities for presence of enrichment.
- Record enrichments used for each stage of production.
- Review enrichment SOP (if available) and compare to observed enrichments.
- Interview caretakers about enrichment practices (e.g., frequency of replacement, cleaning, type selection).

Evaluation

- Yes = Two or more verifiable enrichments provided at all production stages. - Award 35 points
- No = Only one, or no enrichments are provided at any production stage. - Award 0 points

Note: If enrichments are present in some, but not all, production stages - mark No and describe in audit comments.

Resources

- Canadian Pork Excellence – PigCARE Fact Sheet 11 Environmental Enrichment Examples
<https://www.cpc-ccp.com/file.aspx?id=cc84bf79-9050-44c2-b513-6f101532344a>

Lying Areas/Flooring

Key Considerations

- All pigs must have continuous access to a dry, clean lying area large enough for all pigs to rest simultaneously in side-lying position.
- Housing must provide adequate drainage and/or bedding management to prevent mud, muck, or manure buildup.
- Bedding (if used) must remain dry enough to avoid transfer of manure/mud onto pigs.
- Service pens must have flooring that provides adequate grip (through dryness or bedding) and be large enough for natural courtship/mating behaviors.
- Flooring must be designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize risk of injury/slipping, be appropriate for production phase, and be kept in good repair.
- Where concrete slatted floors are in use, UK legislation on slot and beam widths must be followed.

Class of pig	Max. permitted tolerance (mm)	Max. width of slots (mm)	Min. beam width (mm)
Piglets	0	11	50
Weaners	± 2	14	50
Rearing & finishing pigs	± 3	18	80
Gilts after service, sows	± 3	20	80
Boars	± 3	20	80

Audit Questions

1. Is the flooring appropriate for the phase of production, well-maintained, and designed to minimize slipping or injury?
2. Do pigs have a dry, clean space to lie down if they choose?
3. If concrete slatted floors are used, do they meet the UK slot and beam width requirements?

Auditing Compliance

- Evaluate flooring only in pens housing the sample population.
- Auditor discretion applies to entering pens; some checks may require closer inspection.
- Observe pigs and flooring for suitability to production phase, safe design, and maintenance condition.
- Note and record any flooring in poor repair or creating injury/slipping risks.
- Verify lying area: pigs must have a dry, clean place to rest.
- Measure slot and beam widths (if concrete slats are present) and confirm compliance with UK standards.
- Example (Cooling systems): If wet flooring is observed from sprinklers/misters used for cooling, pigs still have access to dry lying areas, and this should be marked compliant.

Evaluation

Q1 – Flooring appropriateness & maintenance

- Yes = Flooring is appropriate for the phase of production, designed/maintained to prevent injury or slipping. - Award 35 points
- No = Flooring is inappropriate or poorly maintained, posing/imminent risk to pigs. - Award 0 points

Q2 – Dry lying space

- Yes = Clean, dry lying areas are available. - Award 35 points
- No = No clean/dry lying areas, or pens are muddy/mucky. Award 0 points

Note: Wet flooring from sprinklers/misters for cooling does not count as Non-conformance.

Q3 – Concrete slatted floors (if applicable)

- Yes = Slot and beam widths comply with UK legislation. - Award 35 points
- No = Slot and beam widths do not comply. - Award 0 points
- N/A = No concrete slatted floors used.

Key Considerations

- **Structures & Equipment:** Housing, fittings, fences, penning, chutes, alleyways, and equipment must be appropriate for the production phase, in good repair, and free of hazards that could injure pigs (e.g., protrusions, sharp edges, broken parts).
- **Feeders & Waterers:** Systems must function properly, be unobstructed, and allow pigs to access feed and water freely.
- **Hazard Prevention:** Pigs must not contact toxic substances (maintenance materials, cleaning chemicals, pest control products).
- **Inspection & Maintenance:**
 - Caretakers must inspect all essential equipment daily.
 - Repairs must be made immediately; if not possible, interim measures must be implemented and maintained until repair is complete.
 - Routine maintenance schedules and SOPs are recommended.

Audit Questions

1. Are facilities, equipment, feeders, waterers, penning, chutes, alleyways, and fittings appropriate for the production phase, in good repair, and free from hazards that could injure pigs?
2. When defects are identified, are they repaired immediately, or if not possible, are interim measures implemented and maintained to safeguard pigs until full repair occurs?

Auditing Compliance

- Evaluate only the facilities and equipment used by or containing the sample population.
- Inspect visually: housing, flooring, gates, feeders, and waterers.
- Confirm functionality: pigs can access feed and water freely; waterers positioned for normal use.
- Check for hazards: protrusions, broken parts, sharp edges, exposed toxins, blocked pathways.
- Interview caretakers: ask how equipment problems are addressed (repairs or temporary measures).

- Verify interim measures if current defects exist (e.g., temporary trough if nipple drinker broken, barrier covering sharp edge).
- Review records or observe fixes to ensure animals remain protected until repairs are completed.

Score

Q1 – Facility/equipment condition

- Yes = All observed facilities, equipment, feeders, waterers, penning, chutes, alleyways, and fittings are appropriate and in good repair, free from hazards. - Award 35 points
- No = Any observed item is inappropriate, poorly maintained, or hazardous. Award 0 points

Q2 – Repair & interim measures

- Yes = Caretakers demonstrate prompt response to defects, including effective interim measures until repairs are complete. - Award 35 points
- No = Caretakers cannot demonstrate a process or evidence of interim measures when defects occur. - Award 0 points

Access to Feed & Water

Key Considerations

Water

- Pigs must have access to clean, fresh water at least once daily.
- Systems must be inspected and maintained daily to ensure function.
- Delivery must meet demand so all pigs can drink freely when needed.
- Water must be free of contaminants (feed, algae, manure, nitrates, pathogens).
- Water quality must be tested periodically per state/local requirements.
- In wet-dry feeder systems, each pen must provide at least one additional drinker.

Feed

- All pigs must have access to feed at least once daily.
- Protocols may vary, but adequacy is assessed through body condition scoring (BCS).

Audit Questions

1. Do pigs have access to clean, fresh water at least once daily?
2. Do all pigs have access to feed at least once daily?

Auditing Compliance

- Evaluate access to feed and water only for pens containing the sample population selected at the start of the audit
- Observe pigs drinking and confirm water is available.
- Inspect waterers for cleanliness, function, and positioning.
- Interview caretakers about daily inspection routines; review water quality test records if available.
- Check feed systems to confirm feed is present and available.
- Interview caretakers about feeding schedules/protocols.
- Cross-check with body condition scores recorded earlier in the audit (animal-based measures).

Evaluation

Q1 – Water

- Yes = Water is clean, fresh, and available at least once daily.→ Award 35 points
- No = Water not clean/fresh or unavailable at least once daily.→ Award 0 points

Q2 – Feed

- Yes = Feed available at least once daily, supported by BCS observations.→ Award 35 points
- No = Feed not available at least once daily OR BCS suggests inadequate feeding.→ Award 0 points

Responding to Animal Health & Welfare Needs

Key Considerations

- Animal observations: Lesions (abscesses, wounds, tail biting injuries, shoulder sores), lameness, and poor body condition indicate how pigs are coping with their environment and management.
- Caretaker responsibility: Caretakers must recognize these conditions and respond appropriately at all production stages.
- Treatment and management options: Responses may include continued observation, hospital pen use, medical intervention, or euthanasia.
- Consistency of response: Decisions must be timely, aligned with farm protocols, and ensure good animal welfare outcomes.

Audit Question

1. For any animal health or welfare concerns observed during the audit (e.g., lesions, lameness, poor body condition, shoulder sores, injuries) had caretakers already identified those animals and were appropriate actions (treatment, isolation, monitoring, or euthanasia) being taken?

Auditing Compliance

- Evaluate only animals in the sample population observed during the audit.
- If an issue is observed, ask caretakers if they were aware of the condition.
- Verify actions taken (treatment records, hospital pen placement, caretaker explanation).
- Confirm the response aligns with farm protocols and protect animal welfare.

Evaluation

Compliant

- All sample animals with observed health/ welfare concerns had been identified by caretakers.
- Appropriate actions were underway (treatment, isolation, monitoring, euthanasia).
- Records/ caretaker explanation confirm consistent response.

Minor Non-conformance

- 1–5 animals in the sample with observed concerns had not been previously identified.
- When pointed out, caretakers acknowledge and take immediate, appropriate action.
- System generally shows awareness, but minor gaps in daily observation/follow-up exist.

Major Non-conformance

- Multiple sample animals with concerns had not been identified, or no evidence of action was being taken.
- Caretakers show limited awareness of animal conditions.
- Records/observations indicate systemic failure to respond to animal health and welfare needs.

NOTE: If zero animals in the sample populations were observed with health or welfare issues, this question can be marked N.O.

Animal Health Product Storage

Key Considerations

- Animal health products = injectable or oral biologicals/pharmaceuticals (antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, vaccines, reproductive injectables).
- Products must be stored in a clean, dry, dark location.
- Storage must follow label instructions or a written SOP/veterinary recommendation.
- Products must not be expired.
- Products should remain in the original labeled container. If transferred, the new container must be clearly labeled to prevent misidentification.

Audit Question

1. Are animal health products stored properly and not past the expiration date?

Auditing Compliance

- ▶ Visually inspect all animal health products stored on site.
- ▶ Verify products are:
 - Not expired.
 - Stored in line with label directions.
- ▶ If storage differs from label instructions, confirm there is a written veterinary SOP specifying alternate storage.

Evaluation

- ▶ Yes = All animal health products are stored properly (per label or written SOP) and none are expired. → Award 15 points
- ▶ No = Any product is expired and/or stored improperly. → Award 0 points
- ▶ Note: If products are stored differently than label instructions but according to a written veterinary SOP, mark Yes.

Needle Use

Key Considerations

- ▶ Needle selection: Correct size and length must be used to ensure proper drug deposition in the intended tissue.
- ▶ Detectability: All needles 16 gauge or larger (lower number) must be detectable.
- ▶ Exceptions: Needles outside PQA Plus® recommendations may be present if justified (e.g., blood collection, sow induction) and supported by a written SOP or veterinary guidance.

Injection type	Subcutaneous		Intramuscular	
	Gauge	Length	Gauge	Length
Baby pigs	18 or 20	5/8" or 1/2"	18 or 20	5/8" or 1/2"
Nursery	16 or 18	3/4" or 5/8"	16 or 18	1/2"
Finisher	16	1"	16	3/4"
Breeding Stock	14 or 16	1" or 1/2"	14 or 16	1"

Sharps disposal

- Used sharps must be placed immediately in a rigid, puncture-resistant container.
- Glass containers are not acceptable.
- Containers must be clearly labeled as sharps per state regulation, designed to prevent penetration during storage/transport, and sealed securely when full.
- Proper disposal prevents injury to workers, children, waste handlers, and livestock, and reduces environmental contamination.

Audit Questions

1. Is the site using the appropriate needle sizes per PQA Plus® recommendations (or veterinary SOP)?
2. Are all 16 gauge or larger needles detectable?
3. Are used sharps disposed of in properly labeled, rigid puncture-resistant containers?

Auditing Compliance

- Inspect needles on site and record sizes/lengths.
- Verify appropriateness: confirm needle sizes align with PQA Plus® recommendations, or are supported by a written SOP/veterinary guidance.
- Confirm detectability: check that 16 gauge or larger needles are detectable.
- Inspect sharps disposal: confirm containers are rigid, puncture-resistant, properly labeled, and used correctly..

Auditing Compliance

Q1 – Needle size

- Yes = All needles are appropriate per PQA Plus® or supported by a written SOP/veterinary guidance.→ Award 15 points
- No = Any needles inappropriate with no SOP/veterinary justification.→ Award 0 points

Q2 – Detectability

- Yes = All 16 gauge or larger needles are detectable.→ Award 15 points
- No = Any 16 gauge or larger needles are not detectable.→ Award 0 points

Q3 – Sharps disposal

- Yes = All used sharps disposed of in rigid, puncture-resistant, properly labeled containers.
→ Award 15 points
- No = One or more sharps not disposed of correctly.→ Award 0 points

NOTE: If the site uses a needleless system, mark all questions in this section as Not Applicable (N.A.).

General Farm Security & Visitor Entry

Key Considerations

- Visitor logging: All sites must maintain a log of individuals entering the facility.
- Access control: Sites must use signage or other physical/security measures to control and restrict access for biosecurity compliance.
- Examples of access controls: Locked gates, doors, posted signs, cameras, or other barriers.

Audit Questions

1. Does the site have a log for visitors?
2. Does the site have signage or other methods to control and restrict access for biosecurity compliance?

Auditing Compliance

- Confirm whether you were asked to sign the visitor log as part of the audit.
- Verify the presence of a visitor log and check for recent entries.
- Observe and record signage or other access-control methods in place at the facility.

Evaluation

Q1 – Visitor log

- Yes = Visitor log is present and in use.→ Award 15 points
- No = Visitor log not present.→ Award 0 points

Q2 – Access control

- Yes = Signage or other effective access-control measures (e.g., locked gates, cameras, doors) are in place.→ Award 15 points
- No = No signage or access-control methods present.→ Award 0 points

Key Considerations

- A written pest management SOP must be implemented to prevent the introduction and spread of rodents, birds, and insects.
- Rodents are important disease vectors (e.g., salmonellosis, erysipelas, colibacillosis).
- Waiting until feces, tracks, or live rodents are observed indicates an existing infestation.
- Cats and dogs are not acceptable methods of rodent control in or around barns.
- Rodenticides must be stored safely out of reach of pigs. If accidental exposure occurs, a veterinarian or qualified professional must be consulted.
- An effective rodent control program should include:
 - Exclusion – preventing rodent entry.
 - Sanitation & habitat control – removing food sources and harborage (e.g., ≤20 cm vegetation, eliminating spilled feed, trash, or unused equipment).
 - Population reduction – baiting and/or trapping, with defined bait station placement and inspection.
 - Evidence of implementation must be visible (e.g., bait stations present, maintained, containing bait).

Audit Question

1. Is there evidence that the site's rodent control protocol is being followed?

Auditing Compliance

- Review the rodent control SOP for details of the program.
Observe physical evidence: bait stations, traps, sanitation practices, vegetation control.
- Inspect bait stations (where applicable) for maintenance and bait presence.
- Review supporting documentation: commercial pest control records, inspection logs, or baiting logs.
- Interview caretakers about rodent control routines and responsibilities.

Key Considerations

- A written pest management SOP must be implemented to prevent the introduction and spread of rodents, birds, and insects.
 - Rodents are important disease vectors (e.g., salmonellosis, erysipelas, colibacillosis).
- Waiting until feces, tracks, or live rodents are observed indicates an existing infestation.
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 - Evidence of implementation must be visible (e.g., bait stations present, maintained, containing bait).

Audit Question

1. Is there evidence that the site's rodent control protocol is being followed?

Auditing Compliance

- Review the rodent control SOP for details of the program.
Observe physical evidence: bait stations, traps, sanitation practices, vegetation control.
- Inspect bait stations (where applicable) for maintenance and bait presence.
- Review supporting documentation: commercial pest control records, inspection logs, or baiting logs.
- Interview caretakers about rodent control routines and responsibilities.

Evaluation

- Yes = Verifiable evidence exists that the site's rodent control protocol is being followed.
→ Award 15 points
- No = No verifiable evidence of rodent control implementation. → Award 0 points

NOTE: If the site lacks a written SOP but caretaker interviews and physical evidence confirm a rodent control program is in place, mark Yes.

Transport/Load-out

Key Considerations

Certification & Training

- All transporters must be Transport Quality Assurance (TQA) Certified, verified by a current TQA card or name.
- Canadian transporters may alternatively hold Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) certification.
- Individuals loading or unloading pigs must be trained in practices consistent with PQA Plus® or TQA.

Facilities & Trailers

- Transport trailers must be in good repair and properly aligned with loading/unloading areas.
- Trailers must be appropriately equipped for weather conditions, with adjustments based on season and production phase.

Animal Handling During Loading/Unloading

- Handlers must move pigs in a way that prevents falling.
 - *Definition: A fall occurs when a pig suddenly loses upright position and any body part other than the limbs touches the ground.*
- Performance standard: Fewer than 1% of pigs may fall during loading or unloading
- Pigs unable to walk or significantly injured (per TQA's fitness-for-transport guidelines) must not be transported.

Electric Prod Use

- Electric prods must not be used as a primary handling tool.
- If used:
 - Apply only to the pig's back behind the shoulder.
 - Duration must not exceed one second.
 - Allow at least five seconds for the pig to respond before reapplication.
 - No more than 25% of pigs may receive an electric shock.

- Prods must not be used on non-ambulatory pigs, nor more than twice on any ambulatory pig refusing to move.
- Excessive prod use, or intentional application to sensitive areas (eyes, ears, nose, genitals, rectum), qualifies as a willful act of abuse.

Audit Questions

1. Are electric prods used as the primary tool for animal movement?
2. If electric prods are used, are they applied correctly?
3. Do 25% or less of pigs being moved receive an electric shock?
4. Do 1% or less of pigs fall during loading/unloading?
5. Are any pigs that are unable to walk or significantly injured being loaded?
6. Do pigs loaded on the trailer show signs of overcrowding?
7. Is the trailer in a good state of repair?
8. Is the trailer properly aligned with the loading/unloading area?
9. Is the trailer appropriately equipped for weather conditions and production phase?
10. Do transporters have current TQA (or CLT equivalent) certification?

Auditing Compliance

- If loading/unloading is occurring, evaluate on the entire load.
- Ideally: observe ~1/3 of pigs from the pen, ~1/3 from the alley, and ~1/3 from the chute.
- Adjust as needed for biosecurity/facility limitations.
- Observe handlers, pigs, and equipment throughout load-out.
- For trailer questions, verify alignment, repair, and equipment function (mark N.O. if not observable).
- For electric prods: auditor must confirm use was energized (visual/auditory/behavioral cues).
- Count a pig shocked more than once as 1 animal toward the 25% maximum.
- Review transporter TQA/CLT certification (card or name).

Evaluation

Q1 – Primary tool prod use

- No = Prods are not the primary tool. Award 25 points
- Yes = Prods used as primary tool. Award 0 points
- N.A. if no prods are used

Q2 – Correct prod application

- Yes = Prods used (if at all) correctly (location, duration, interval, % pigs shocked). Award 25 points
- No = Prods used incorrectly. Award 0 points
- N.A. if no prods are used

Q3 – Shocks

- Yes = $\leq 25\%$ pigs shocked. Award 25 points
- No = $> 25\%$ pigs shocked. Award 0 points
- N.A. if no prods are used

Q4 – Falls

- Yes = $\leq 1\%$ pigs fall during loading/unloading. Award 25 points
- No = $> 1\%$ pigs fall. Award 0 points

Q5 – Unfit pigs loaded

- No = No unfit/immobile pigs are being loaded. Award 25 points
- Yes = Unfit/immobile pigs are loaded. Award 0 points

Q6 – Overcrowding

- No = No signs of overcrowding observed. Award 25 points
- Yes = Pigs show signs of overcrowding. Award 0 points

Q7 – Trailer repair

- Yes = Trailer in good repair. Award 15 points
- No = Trailer not in good repair. Award 0 points
- N.O. if not observable

Q8 – Trailer alignment

- Yes = Trailer properly aligned. Award 15 points
- No = Trailer not aligned. Award 0 points
- N.O. if not observable

Q9 – Trailer weather/phase equipment

- Yes = Trailer appropriately equipped. Award 15 points
- No = Trailer not appropriately equipped. Award 0 points
- N.O. if not observable

Q10 – Certification

- Yes = Transporter has current TQA/CLT certification. Award 10 points
- No = No current certification. Award 0

SWINE WELFARE AUDIT FORM

Date	
Operation Name	
Operation Contact Name	
Operation Contact Phone	
Operation Contact Email	
Operation Address	
Auditor Affiliation	
Auditor Name	
Auditor Phone	
Auditor Email	

Section	Topic	Question	Result				
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non- conformance	Major Non- conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
	Records of Production	1. Does the site have production records?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Are the production records retained for at least 2 years?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
Records & Documentation	Animal Care Agreement	1. Does the site have an Animal Care Agreement?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Does the Animal Care Agreement include a zero-tolerance policy for willful acts of animal abuse?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				

		3. Does the Animal Care Agreement include a reporting mechanism for caretakers to report abuse?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		4. Have all employees with animal care responsibilities (family and non-family) signed an Animal Care Agreement within the past year?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)	Does the site have a written SOP for all the following: a. Animal handling b. Piglet processing (if applicable) c. Feeding and watering protocols d. Daily observation e. Caretaker training f. Treatment management g. Needle usage	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Internal Assessments	Does the site conduct an internal site assessment of the facility, animals, caretakers, and procedures at least quarterly on breeding sites and semi-annually on non-breeding sites?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Caretaker Training Records	1. Does the site have documentation of caretaker training specific to daily duties?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Do the training records demonstrate that all caretakers receive training at least annually?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				

	Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)	Does the site have a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) within the past 12 months?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Written Euthanasia Policy	Does the site have a written euthanasia policy meeting all the requirements?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Biosecurity Protocols	Does the site have written SOP(s) covering barn sanitation, rodent control, worker/visitor entry policies, and general farm security measures?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Daily Livestock Observation Records	Does the site have 12 months of records verifying that animals were observed at least once daily?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Treatment Records	1. Do medication and treatment records contain all required information (date, ID, product, dose, route, given by, withdrawal date)?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Are medication and treatment records retained for at least 12 months (or since farm began if <1 year)?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Emergency Action Plan	Does the facility have a written Emergency Action Plan that outlines how to effectively manage emergencies or crisis situations that could occur?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				

	Emergency Contacts	Are emergency contact name(s) and number (s) and the site address posted in a prominent location(s) across the operation in the language(s) understood by workers?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Emergency Backup Equipment Testing Records	Is there a written record of emergency backup equipment being tested at least twice per year?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.A.

Section	Topic	Question	Result				
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Caretaker Competency & Training	Caretaker Training	1. Are caretakers able to articulate the training they received specific to their daily duties?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Do all caretakers have a current PQA Plus® certification (or acceptable equivalent) or are within 90 days of their employment start date?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Euthanasia Training	Are caretakers responsible for euthanasia able to articulate the site's euthanasia plan?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Animal Treatment Administration	1. Can caretakers articulate their method for tracking what treatments have been administered and how long each animal has been receiving treatment?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				

		2. Can caretakers articulate the site's protocol for handling broken needles?	Yes - 2 pts. No - 0 pts.				
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Section	Topic	Question	Result				
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Animal-based Measures/ Observations	CRITICAL CRITERIA - Willful Acts of Abuse or Neglect	Were any willful acts of abuse or neglect observed during the audit?		Yes - Critical Failure No - Audit Continues			
		Are animals euthanized in a timely manner?		Yes - Audit Continues No - Critical Failure			
	CRITICAL CRITERIA - Humane Euthanasia	If euthanasia is observed, are animals handled humanely during the process?		Yes - Audit Continues No - Critical Failure			N.O.
		If euthanasia is observed, are animals euthanized in place or is suitable equipment available to move non- ambulatory animals so they can be humanely euthanized?		Yes - Audit Continues No - Critical Failure			N.O.
		If euthanasia is observed, do caretakers confirm insensibility and death, per AASV guidelines, after the euthanasia method is applied and before being removed from the facility?		Yes - Audit Continues No - Critical Failure			N.O.

		1. Does 1% or less of sampled breeding stock have a BCS <2?	<1%			>1%	
		2. Is 1% or less of sampled breeding stock severely lame?	<1%			>1%	
		3. Does 5% or less of sampled breeding stock have injuries?	<5%			>5%	
		No suckling pigs observed during audit					N.O.
		Does 5% or less of the sampled breeding stock have shoulder sores?	<5%			>5%	
		No breeding stock observed during audit					N.O.
		1. Does 1% or less of sampled suckling pigs have a BCS <2?	<1%			<1%	
		2. Is 1% or less of sampled suckling pigs severely lame?	<1%			<1%	
		3. Does 5% or less of sampled suckling pigs have injuries?	<5%			>5%	
		No breeding stock observed during audit					N.O.
		1. Does 1% or less of sampled non-breeding pigs have a BCS <2?	<1%			<1%	
		2. Is 1% or less of sampled non-breeding pigs severely lame?	<1%			<1%	

		3. Does 5% or less of sampled non-breeding pigs have injuries?	<5%			>5%	
		No non-breeding pigs observed during audit					N.O.

Section	Topic	Question	Result				
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
	Daily Observations of Swine	Can caretakers articulate and/or demonstrate the site's SOP for daily observations?	Yes - 20 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Animal handling	1. Are animals handled appropriately for their age and size?	Yes - 20 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Can animal caretakers articulate or demonstrate appropriate equipment use during animal handling?	Yes - 20 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.A.
	Tail Docking & Castration	Can caretakers responsible for piglet processing procedures demonstrate or articulate the training they received to conduct the procedure according to the site's SOP?	Yes - 20 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.A.
	Weaning Age	What is the minimum weaning age of piglets?	Circle the applicable step: Step 1 = 28d Step 2 = 35d Step 3 = 42d Step 4 = 56d Step 5 = >60d				N.A.

	De-tusking & Tusk Trimming	Does the site de-tusk or trim tusks?	No		Evidence yes		N.A.
	Dead Animal Removal	Are dead animals removed from the living space upon identification?	Yes - 20 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.A.

Section	Topic	Question	Result				
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/Not Observed (NO)
Facilities & Environment	Thermal Comfort/Air Temperature	1a. Do pigs appear free from thermoregulatory behaviors indicating heat or cold stress?	Yes - 25 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		1b. If no, is air temperature at pig level within the preferred range for the production phase?					
		1c. If no, have caretakers implemented corrective measures to minimize stress?					
		2. Are management/physical measures in place to protect pigs from hypothermia, hyperthermia, and sunburn?	Record & list				
		3. Are supplemental heating/cooling systems available and functional as needed?	Record & list				
		4a. (Outdoor only) Is shade provided in all outdoor/pasture areas?	Yes - 25 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		4b. (Outdoor only) When ambient temperature $\geq 70^{\circ}\text{F}$ (21°C), do pigs have access to wallows, showers, or sprinklers?					N.A.

	Air Quality	1a. Do pigs show signs of exposure to poor air quality? 1b. If so, does the ammonia concentration exceed 25 ppm?	Yes, No - 25 pts. Yes, Yes - 0 pts.				
Lighting		1. Is lighting sufficient to allow pigs to exhibit normal behaviors, rest, and permit thorough inspection of animals and facilities at any time (using fixed or portable lighting if necessary)?	Yes - 25 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Does the lighting system provide pigs with at least 8 hours of continuous light (≥ 50 lux) and at least 6 consecutive hours of darkness (~ 5 lux or less) per 24 hours, with exceptions only for natural daylight variation and farrowing creep/heat lamps?	Yes - 25 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		3. Are lighting fixtures, equipment, and windows kept clean and well-maintained to ensure consistent function and intensity?	Yes - 25 pts. No - 0 pts.				
Space Allowance - Sow Barn		1. Do 98% or more of the individually housed animals meet the criteria for adequately sized housing?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Do 100% of the sample population of group-housed sows/gilts in breeding and gestation have 24 sq. ft. (2.2 m^2) of usable floor space and can turn around freely?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.				

		No Sow barn observed					N.O.
Space Allowance - Growing Pigs	Do 98% or more of the growing swine have adequate space?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					
	No Growing pigs observed						
Environmental Enrichment	Are pigs provided with two or more forms of enrichment at all stages of production?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					
Lying Areas/ Flooring	1. Is the flooring appropriate for the phase of production, well-maintained, and designed to minimize slipping or injury?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					
	2. Do pigs have a dry, clean space to lie down if they choose?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					
	3. If concrete slatted floors are used, do they meet the UK slot and beam width requirements?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					N.A.
Condition of Facilities & Equipment	1. Are facilities, equipment, feeders, waterers, penning, chutes, alleyways, and fittings appropriate for the production phase, in good repair, and free from hazards that could injure pigs?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					
	2. When defects are identified, are they repaired immediately, or if not possible, are interim measures implemented and maintained to safeguard pigs until full repair occurs?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.					

Section	Topic	Question			Result		
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Nutrition & Water Access	Access to Feed & Water	1. Do pigs have access to clean, fresh water at least once daily?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Do all pigs have access to feed at least once daily?	Yes - 35 pts. No - 0 pts.				

Section	Topic	Question			Result		
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non-conformance	Major Non-conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Health & Veterinary Practices	Responding to Animal Health & Welfare Needs	For any animal health or welfare concerns observed during the audit (e.g., lesions, lameness, poor body condition, shoulder sores, injuries), had caretakers already identified those animals and were appropriate actions (treatment, isolation, monitoring, or euthanasia) being taken?	100% of animals observed identified by caretakers		1-5 animals observed not identified by caretakers	> 5 animals observed not identified by caretakers	N.O. - No observed animals in the sample population
		Are animal health products stored properly and not past the expiration date?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Needle Use	1. Is the site using the appropriate needle sizes per PQA Plus® recommendations (or veterinary SOP)?					
		2. Are all 16 gauge or larger needles detectable?					
		3. Are used sharps disposed of in properly labeled, rigid puncture-resistant containers?					

Section	Topic	Question			Result		
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non- conformance	Major Non- conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Biosecurity & Pest Management	General Farm Security & Visitor Entry	1. Does the site have a log for visitors?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				
		2. Does the site have signage or other methods to control and restrict access for biosecurity compliance?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				
	Rodent And Pest Control	1. Is there evidence that the site's rodent control protocol is being followed?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				

Section	Topic	Question			Result		
			Compliant (Yes/No/Points)	Critical Failure (Yes/No)	Minor Non- conformance	Major Non- conformance	Not Applicable (NA)/ Not Observed (NO)
Transportation was observed during the audit (circle one):		Yes No					
Transportation	Electric Prod Use	1. Are electric prods used as the primary tool for animal movement?	No - 25 pts. Yes - 0 pts.				N.A.
		2. If electric prods are used, are they applied correctly?	No - 25 pts. Yes - 0 pts.				N.A.
		3. Do 25% or less of pigs being moved receive an electric shock?	No - 25 pts. Yes - 0 pts.				N.A.
	Loading/ Unloading process	4. Do 1% or less of pigs fall during loading/unloading?					
		5. Are any pigs that are unable to walk or significantly injured being loaded?					

		6. Do pigs loaded on the trailer show signs of overcrowding?	No - 25 pts. Yes - 0 pts.				N.O.
Trailer Conditions		7. Is the trailer in a good state of repair?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.O.
		8. Is the trailer properly aligned with the loading/unloading area?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.O.
		9. Is the trailer appropriately equipped for weather conditions and production phase?	Yes - 15 pts. No - 0 pts.				N.O.
Drivers	10. Do transporters have current TQA (or CLT equivalent) certification?	Yes - 10 pts. No - 0 pts.					