

The English Pig Health Scheme (2014-2020)

This document explains the English Pig Health Scheme (the Scheme) and how you, as a pig producer in England, can participate.

This scheme updates the similar scheme of 2013¹ and will comply with changes in EU law. It is operated by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) through its BPEX division.

The scheme will be undertaken in compliance with:

- (a) the EU agricultural block exemption regulation², particularly Chapter I and Article 26; and
- (b) the European Union Guidelines for State aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas 2014 to 2020³.

What is the English Pig Health Scheme?

The Scheme will screen pigs at slaughter for animal diseases, to help you and other pig producers to reduce the level of sub-clinical disease in the pig herd in England. It will monitor the incidence and severity of pig diseases on individual farms. It will provide you with information about the disease level in your own herd. Scheme statisticians will analyse the information, and the resulting national data will be distributed widely. Those statistics will not include information about the disease level on your farm or any other individual farm. However, you will be able to compare your own farm's disease level with the nationally based data. The Scheme will improve welfare for pigs and the efficiency of the industry.

The Scheme will not provide definitive diagnosis of pig health conditions nor veterinary consultancy to you as an individual pig producer. It will not help the Scheme's assessors to provide consultancy as a result of their participation in the Scheme. Information provided by the Scheme provides only a foundation upon which you can implement pro-active health strategies in self-funded consultation with your own veterinarian as part of good agricultural practice.

The Scheme, funded by statutory levy, will be managed by BPEX. BPEX supports this project because the Scheme will develop health management strategies based on sub-clinical observations rather than awaiting the onset of clinical symptoms of diseased animals. It will thus have a valuable role in post-mortem carcass assessment and will enhance animal health, animal welfare and quality production. It will also develop a more pro-active relationship between you and your own private veterinarian, leading to increased industry efficiency.

¹ Aid scheme SA.36362 (2013/XA), notified under EU Agricultural Block Exemption Regulation 1857/2006.

² Commission Regulation (EU) No 702/2014 of 25 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas compatible with the internal market in the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. OJ L 193, 1.7.2014, p. 1.

³ OJ C 204, 1.7.2014, pp. 1-97.

How will the Scheme operate?

The Scheme will:

- Undertake quarterly veterinary examinations of carcasses from participating farms to assess lesions to provide robust, objective post-mortem information on a number of pig health conditions, indicating the absence, presence and severity of a range of sub-clinical conditions based on histopathology.
- Collate, analyse and disseminate objective information about lesions.
- Make the resulting regional/national statistical data available to all interested parties including you, veterinarians, abattoirs, commercial sponsors, government authorities and the European Commission.
- Provide you with benchmarking data, to enable comparison of your results with the statistically analysed data for all participating pig producers.
- With your permission, provide your data to your veterinarian. This enables you to draw up, at your own expense, long-term strategies with the veterinarian to improve herd health, reduce the use of medication, encourage quality production, improve animal welfare and use relevant technical information.
- The conditions and scoring system are:

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Permitted Scores</i>
Enzootic pneumonia	0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55
Pleurisy	Blank, 1 or 2
Pericarditis	Blank or 1
Peritonitis	Blank or 1
Milk Spot	Blank or 1
Hepatic Scarring	Blank or 1
Papular Dermatitis	Blank, 1, 2 or 3
Tail-biting	Blank or 1
Viral-type distribution	Blank or 1
Pleuropneumonia – acute	Blank or 1
Pleuropneumonia – old	Blank or 1
Abscess	Blank or 1
Pyaemia	Blank or 1
Snout	Blank, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5

The assessors will be a consortium of independent veterinarians. They will undertake specialist training in condition scoring and will be subject to ongoing independent assessment and training as necessary to ensure consistency with the scoring protocol.

The assessors are prohibited from making any diagnosis of health issues or communicating directly or indirectly with you or other individual Scheme participants. This prohibition avoids their obtaining further economic benefit. No veterinary advice to you will be funded by the Scheme.

Benefits of the Scheme

You will be able to apply the information provided by the Scheme to your own farm as a tool to establish appropriate long-term health management plans in accordance with good agricultural practice, in association with your own veterinarian, at your own cost. This will improve herd health, reduce the use of medication, encourage quality production, improve animal welfare and provide you with technical information.

A single assessment by a private veterinarian would cost you approximately £120. You will benefit from the Scheme, because:

- a Scheme assessor assesses all batches of pigs in a particular abattoir during a day, providing very significant economies of scale and avoiding the time and expenses per batch incurred where only one batch of pigs is being assessed;
- only condition scoring (not diagnosis) is undertaken under the Scheme;
- you will not incur the cost of assessment. Commercial sponsors will provide supportive funding and BPEX will provide para-fiscal support (without BPEX involvement, commercial sponsors would not have been willing to participate).

How do I apply?

If you wish to participate (or to continue to participate) in the Scheme, you must complete and return a membership form. This is annexed to this document, and is also available from the BPEX website, by telephone and from other media sources including a flyer that will be included in pig industry journals.

You will need to send the form to BPEX. Once your details are on the Scheme database, the results of any assessment of pigs linked to you will be sent to you, your specified vet, the abattoir where the pigs were slaughtered and the sponsors. The form includes your agreement that AHDB sends that information to them, to comply with the Data Protection Act 2000.

This document is published at <http://www.ahdb.org.uk/about/Procurement.aspx>.

For further information on the Scheme please contact BPEX at bphs@bpex.ahdb.org.uk.

How will participants be selected?

No participants will be selected; the Scheme will be open to all pig producers in England⁴. However, the Scheme will only operate assessments in 15 objectively selected abattoirs (which represent 92% of pig slaughterings) because resources are limited. This will not prevent you from joining the Scheme; you will just need to submit some consignments of pigs to participating abattoirs.

When will the Scheme start?

The Scheme will **start on 1 October 2014** and the last assessments will be performed in time to allow the Scheme to **close on 31 March 2020**.

Assessments that were to be carried out after 30 September 2014 under the preceding ('2013-2020') scheme will be transferred to this scheme.

⁴ Subject to State aid law, which includes a prohibition on providing support to any undertaking that is subject to an outstanding recovery order following a previous Commission Decision declaring an aid illegal and incompatible with the internal market.

Membership Form

We cannot send you any results for your pigs until you have completed and returned this form.

Please check the details for this unit and enter your Defra herd number for this unit

<i>Current Records</i>		<i>Please enter any corrections in this column</i>						
Assurance number (if applicable)								
Assurance scheme								
Defra herd number								
Please insert all slapmarks used by this unit NB Slapmarks will be used to make sure results are correctly assigned to units								
Production System (please circle the most appropriate that describes your finishing system) <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>indoor slates</td> <td>indoor straw</td> <td>outdoor - continuous</td> </tr> <tr> <td>batch - liquid</td> <td>compound</td> <td>home mill and mix</td> </tr> </table>			indoor slates	indoor straw	outdoor - continuous	batch - liquid	compound	home mill and mix
indoor slates	indoor straw	outdoor - continuous						
batch - liquid	compound	home mill and mix						
Company Name								
Name								
Site Address								
Postal Address								
Please insert telephone and fax number								
Please insert e-mail address clearly if you wish to receive your reports electronically								
Vet practice address								

I wish to participate in the English Pig Health Scheme.

I agree to my health score reports being issued by AHDB to my vet, the abattoir where the pigs were slaughtered and to the sponsors
 (Please tick)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Please post your completed form to:

English Pig Health Scheme, AHDB
Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2TL