

The Pig Health Scheme (2019-2021)

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

This scheme updates and extends the similar scheme of 2013¹. It is operated by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

The scheme will be undertaken in compliance with:

the EU agricultural block exemption regulation², (ABER), particularly Chapter I and Article 26

The Scheme is available to SMEs as set out in Article 26 (1) ABER.

Aid will be available up to 100 % of the eligible costs as set out in Article 26 (13) ABER.

The following legislation grants AHDB the power to undertake this aid :-

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Order 2008

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/576/contents/made>

Other aid to non-agricultural businesses and activities under this scheme (not covered by compensatory aid, Articles 46 and 47 or agri-environment-climate commitment aid) may also be provided in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 on De Minimis aid.

Aid will be available to large undertakings where appropriate, under a separate De Minimis Scheme.

In Accordance with the General Conditions of EU Regulation 702/2014 (ABER);

Aid shall not apply to export related activities contingent to import over export activities in accordance with Article 1.4(c).

Undertakings with an outstanding recovery as set out in Article 1.5 are not eligible to apply.

Undertakings that are in difficulty as set out in Article 1.6 are not eligible to apply.

The Scheme will not provide aid for activities or projects in which the beneficiary would in any case engage even in the absence of the aid.

No aid will be granted in respect of activities or projects already undertaken by the beneficiary

What is the Pig Health Scheme?

The Scheme will monitor pigs at slaughter for prevalence and severity of specified conditions, with the aim to help pig producers to reduce the level of disease within their own herds and within the national pig population. Scheme statisticians will analyse the data collected during assessments, and the resulting national data will be distributed widely. Those statistics will not include information on an individual farm level, however, benchmarking is available on producer reports to allow for the comparison against the nationally based data. The aim of the Scheme is to improve the health and welfare of pigs and to help reduce production losses throughout the supply chain.

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 AHDB. AHDB supports this project as part of a 'A strategy for British Pig Health and Welfare' as a tool used to inform and monitor the health status of a producer's herd and can be used alongside their veterinary surgeon to inform decisions around disease control. It will thus have a valuable role in post-mortem assessments, with the potential to recognise new and emerging disease and will enhance animal health, animal welfare and production quality throughout the supply chain. It will also develop a more pro-active relationship between the producer and their 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 post-mortem veterinary examinations of pigs at slaughter from participating farms and abattoirs to assess for different conditions, and provide robust, objective post-mortem information on a number of pig health conditions, indicating the absence, presence and severity of a range of conditions.
- Collate, analyse and disseminate objective information about conditions observed..
- Make the resulting regional/national statistical data available to all interested parties including producers, veterinarians, abattoirs, commercial sponsors, government authorities and the European Commission.
- Provide producers with benchmarking data, to enable comparison of producer's results with the statistically analysed data for all participating pig producers.
- With producer's permission, provide their data to their veterinarian. This enables them to draw up, at their own expense, long-term strategies with their veterinarian to improve herd health, responsibly reduce the use of medication, encourage quality production, improve animal health and welfare and use relevant technical information.
- The conditions and scoring system are:

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Permitted Scores</i>
Enzootic pneumonia – like lesions	0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55
Pleuritis	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
Damaged tails	Blank or 1
Viral-like lesions	Blank or 1
Pleuropneumonia – acute	Blank or 1
Pleuropneumonia – chronic	Blank or 1
Abscess	Blank or 1
Pyaemia	Blank or 1

The assessors will undertake specialist training in condition assessment and scoring. The assessors will be subject to ongoing independent training and quality assurance to ensure consistency with the scoring protocol.

The assessors are prohibited from making any diagnosis of health issues or communicating directly or indirectly with producers or other individual Scheme participants. This prohibition avoids their obtaining further economic benefit. No veterinary advice to producers 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 can be used to improve herd health, reduce the use of medication, encourage quality production, improve animal health and welfare and provide you with technical information.

You will benefit from the Scheme, because:

- a scheme assessor assesses all batches of pigs on a random basis 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 receive individual robust, objective post-mortem information on a number of pig health conditions, indicating the absence, presence and severity of a range of conditions.
- you will not incur the cost of assessment. Commercial sponsors do not currently provide supportive funding but have in the past. AHDB will provide para-fiscal support (without AHDB involvement, commercial sponsors would not have been willing to participate).

How do I apply?

If you wish to participate in the Scheme, you must sign up via your Pig Hub Account.

Once you have signed up to the Scheme via your Pig Hub account, the results of any pigs assessed, that are linked to your account will be sent to you, your specified vet, the abattoir where the pigs were slaughtered and any sponsors. The form includes your agreement that AHDB sends that information to them, to comply with the Data Protection Legislation.

This document is published at <http://www.ahdb.org.uk/about/Procurement.aspx>. For further information on the Scheme please contact AHDB at PHS@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 11 objectively selected abattoirs because resources are limited. This will not prevent you from joining the Scheme; you will just need to submit a consignment of pigs to a participating abattoir on an assessment date .

When will the Scheme start?

The Scheme will **start on 1 August 2019** and the last assessments will be performed in time to allow the Scheme to **close on 31 July 2021**.

Assessments that were to be carried out after 31 July 2019 under the preceding ('2013-2020') scheme will be transferred to this extended scheme of 2019 to 2021.

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.