

# FOOD SAFETY

## FACT SHEET



Food safety starts with selecting a healthy animal for slaughter. In addition to inspecting their overall health, a healthy animal means preventing hazards from becoming contaminants in the pork. These hazards can be categorized as either physical, chemical, or biological.

Pigs of all types, whether they are raised indoors or outdoors, are susceptible to serious diseases, which can be a pig and human health concern.

A broken needle is a major food safety issue if it ends up in meat products. Take precautions to keep needles from breaking and be aware of what to do if a broken needle is suspected.

Harmful agents, such as those found in medications and wood preservatives in bedding, can build up in pig tissue and remain in the meat, making it dangerous to eat.

Bacteria such as *Salmonella*, *Leptospira* and *E. coli* could infect your herd. The presence of these bacteria can be due to contaminated water, the presence of rodents and cats and unsanitary housing conditions.

**Keeping your pigs safe keeps your customers safe.**



### PHYSICAL HAZARD

- Broken needles
  - Securely restrain the animal when giving injections and use only sharp, clean and correct needle size.
  - Inject only in the neck muscle.
  - If a needle breaks, identify the pig, make a record of the broken needle and inform the slaughter plant of the location of the broken needle.

### CHEMICAL HAZARDS

- Medication withdrawals
  - Any medication used should be on veterinary advice and on a veterinary prescription.
  - All medication administered should be recorded and withdrawal times should be followed.
- Harmful agents in beddings
  - Bedding should be free from wood-preserving agents such as PCPs and chromated copper arsenate.
  - For bedded production, pens must be kept dry and the bedding removed at least once a year.



## BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

- Bacteria, viruses and parasites
  - Water should be tested at least annually. It may contain bacteria and viruses that can lead to salmonella infection.
  - Have a barn cleaning and disinfection program. Unsanitary housing conditions can become reservoirs for pathogens.
  - Have a rodent control plan. Rodents can pass along diseases to pigs.

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR SAFE FOOD PRODUCTION



## DO

- ✓ **Work with a veterinarian on pig care and before administering any medication to your pigs.** Keep records of treatment and follow medication withdrawal times before slaughtering an animal.
- ✓ **Completely empty, clean, disinfect, and dry (at least annually) pens and shelters.** Pathogens like bacteria and viruses can thrive in poorly cleaned housing, posing a threat to food safety.
- ✓ **Identify any animals that show signs of disease and if they are to be processed, contact your veterinarian** to determine whether they are fit to be slaughtered for human consumption.
- ✓ **Cook pork to the recommended (end) internal temperature of 71°C (160°F).** Contamination (or disease) transmission can occur from consuming raw or under cooked meat products.



## DON'T

- X **Don't let broken needles get into the food chain.** Follow safe injection protocols to reduce the risk of a broken needle and of creating an injection site abscess.
- X **Don't use wood shavings for bedding.** If using wood shavings, get a letter of guarantee that the shavings are free from harmful wood-preserving agents.
- X **Don't let animal with heavily contaminated coat go into the slaughter process.** Look at the conditions of the animal prior to slaughter and make sure they are not dirty and soiled as this can increase the risk of bacteria entering the food chain.
- X **Don't let meat that has recently been butchered to sit at room temperature for long period of time.** Make sure to store meat in a dependable, clean freezer to avoid microbial contamination.

More information and resources about food safety can be found at [www.SmallScalePigFarming.com](http://www.SmallScalePigFarming.com).