

Summary of feedback and questions raised during the February 22nd, 2022, Farmer's meeting

Having had some time since the meeting to further digest the questions asked, we have taken the opportunity to answer them as best we can at this point in time. We will be seeking further farmer feedback

Material covered during the presentation is outlined in detail within the briefing pack and accompanying appendices provided to farmers via email. For ongoing access these documents have been archived in the farmer [Login](#) resources section of the NZPork Website under "publications and collateral".

Agenda Item	Details
Welcome Chair Update	Set meeting rules Update board activities and priorities
CE Update	Financial result Year End 30/09/21 Audit report summary Year To Date Financial position
Omicron response	
Pig Welfare Code	Update on Process 5 Domains Assessment Peer Review Key industry positions on welfare.
GIA, Operational agreement (OA)	OA - Final Version Legal opinion Process to establish a Biosecurity levy
Environment - Emissions pricing Consultation	Explain key issues Feedback from farmers
General Business Other	

Welcome/ chair update

CE update

No questions or feedback from attendees.

Omicron Response

Feedback

"When you get a positive PCR test, DHBs /MOH will ask if you want support from rural support trusts. It's a handy thing to say yes because of the support they offer and the link it creates to the knowledge of an outbreak on your farm. It assists them to get RAT tests etc out to your staff. I encourage you to say "yes" when you are asked that question".

Pig Welfare code

Questions asked

In relation to the findings of the 5 domains assessment peer review

Q – *“How do we use this to get the right mix of people reviewing the code? and what should we suggest who needs to be involved to get the best possible result for a code? the last 2 reviews have been a shambles”*

A - We are hoping that in conjunction with the economic impact analysis that the combined evidence of substantial economic costs AND a flawed application of a framework for assessing welfare impacts on sows and piglets by NAWAC will put some strong arguments before the Minister at our next meeting to suggest that code, as written, is a lemon. Ideally, we want greater input from industry who have so far been provided very limited opportunity in NAWAC's process to assist developing a draft set of minimum standards. We feel these pieces of work are not easily ignored.

In relation to an industry position on farrowing Pens

Q – *“Do we have any comment on the importance of including shunt fostering?”*

A - one of the issues with NAWACs 5 domains panel assessment is that fostering was not factored into decisions around confinement. There's evidence preweaning piglet mortality is not significant reduced by extending the post farrowing period of confinement between 5-7 days (when same pens are used on the same farm. Management techniques and labour factors also influence welfare outcomes and performance that are still in a grey area in terms of quantifiable research.

Q - *“Is it correct that conventional sow crates are to be phased out and will become illegal please?”*

A – the court declared that the current minimum standards 10 and 11 (covering farrowing and mating stalls respectively) and the regulations based on these minimum standards to be unlawful and invalid. The Minister was directed to consider introducing new regulations phasing out the use of farrowing crates and mating stalls. A NAWAC Pigs sub-committee was formed with the stated purpose to *Provide evidence-based animal welfare advice to the Minister responsible for animal welfare to support a move away from the current use of farrowing crate systems and mating stalls.* We think therefore that the wording means options could be any time less than 28 days post - farrowing. BUT we have agreed we should base our recommendations on science.

Q - *“do suggested positions on farrowing pen size include creep area or only area for sow?”*

A – Whole pen including creep area

In relation to proposed Space requirements

Q - *“at what stage of the time in a pen does this apply”*

A – If a farm currently manages its growing pigs throughout the growing stages to the maximum stocking density permitted which is based on a k value of 0.030, the amount of time that growing pigs are at a space allowance between 0.030 and 0.034 is very short, at the end of each growing stage.

Q – “Is the government going to grant building and Resource consents if changes are required for farms to be able to comply to changes?”

A- We don't know yet, we haven't been given any indication on what support the government may provide for a future transition. We were asked to provide our thoughts on support options to MPI/government. Expediting the consent process was one of the suggested areas put forward for them to investigate.

Q – “k value of around 0.070 is so ludicrous it highlights just how much of a lemon the suggested code is. Are we better tactically to have them suggest it given it's harder for them to justify than say 0.040 and therefore less likely to go through?”

A – Sapere will cost out the impacts of the suggested k values so they will have comment on the level of ridiculousness from that perspective in their report. A scientific analysis does support that a k value of around 0.070 grossly overestimates the space requirements of growing pigs. This analysis will be included in our submission on the Code during the consultation process.

Other feedback received on the pigs code of welfare

On pen-based farrowing systems:

“This is minimum standard and should rely on well-established science that is peer reviewed. this review has been looking at emerging or new studies with little or no peer reviewed info.”

“Loose farrowing is not an option! this is not enhancing animal welfare in any way in its current form.”

Space suggestion of “a Combi crate at 5.2 or 5,.5m2 or less if fully freedom”

On the length of time in a farrowing crate post farrowing:

“7 days post farrowing is better than 5days which most farmers would agree was difficult to manage”

On shunt fostering-

“I think we have to have the ability to temporarily confine a sow for a few hours for special circumstances e.g., obstetric procedures, shunt fostering etc”

On the length of time in a farrowing crate pre-farrowing:

“Due to the range gestation dates for a sow, then 5 days pre farrowing would be a minimum to reduce any possible welfare issues.” 2 people commented they agreed

“Be careful on pen size- keep it as small as science says to account for changing science. Outcome based specifications would be better with a recommendation for best practice containing square meterage rather than prescribed as a minimum standard”

“We don't want to be too prescriptive and whatever we come up with will need to be future proofed to prevent stifling future industry growth and allow us to change with technology”.

“I think NAWAC will insist on a size but Remember the 7000 backyard farmers including iwi who will have to comply with the code, and Sunpork's option so perhaps any dimensions should only apply to combi-pens and so loose housing should be descriptive rather than prescriptive”

“So, we need to all agree what the industry will accept as an alternative to sow crates”

On confinement

“Having NO confinement would be a disaster I have no desire to have a whole lot of dead piglets on my hands from an inability to dodge out of the mother’s way.”

“After fifty years in the business what’s being proposed certainly doesn't sit well with me”

On mating stalls:

Suggestion to “go free access. with 3-day limit? what does science indicate?” Other calls for “4-5 days and 3-4 days in a mating stall”

On space for growing pigs:

“If K value was set at 0.072 then that would be 2.4 x what it is now - or 140% increase”

“This should be at the bottom end of what the science says- It’s a minimum standard, we don’t get any handouts or support to increase space so this one has me really worried.”

“The % of a pig's life when k sits between 0.034 and 0.03 may also be a valid issue in any system - as the Canadian's have achieved.”

“Space requirements will be the biggest impact coming. need it be smallest change as possible if we still want an industry”

On a minimum weaning age:

“We used to wean at 8 weeks. but improvements have reduced this to 3 weeks in a lot of instances.”

“with an improvement in health status very achievable to wean down to 18-21 days”

“a weaning age of 4 weeks outdoors would be a disaster for most farmers i.e. sows cycling before weaning”

“There are so many factors in the proposals to change this including, health status, facilities, nutrition of sow, milking ability, genotypes, farm systems, 21 vs 28 days means high weight pigs. In future sow lactation and ability to produce might change with genetics etc. Prescriptive weaning requirements cover all these factors across a wide variety of farm types, with huge differences. Putting a one age fits all on this is not a good way to go.

“One of the questions to NAWAC is what’s driving a review of the weaning age? We didn’t really get any answers. Changes should be made to address an issue. We don’t see evidence of this in the industry from vets and the supply chain, so why the change? We should put that ball back in NAWAC’s court on this.”

“When NAWAC makes recommendations, there’s a lot of comparison to other countries. Every opportunity we have we should emphasise that Europeans are not subject to NZ’s stringent animal welfare act. In NZ a breach can result in prosecution, in the EU flouting the rules does not result in prosecution. It must be considered inappropriate to compare an EU system where there is no compulsion to adhere to rules vs an NZ scenario where there is absolute compulsion.”

We want famers to have their say. We can't represent you without hearing your views so we are encouraging further feedback and questions on the animal welfare code to be directed to brent.kleiss@pork.co.nz or info@pork.co.nz or call him on 0278074418

GIA, operational agreement

Questions asked

In relation to adding disease to the operational agreement.

Q – “We might see further syndrome type diseases (eg PMWS) that are hard to nail down and MPI has historically been reluctant to agree to classifying them as diseases. How practical will it be to actually add new diseases (ones that don't even have a name yet) like this to the agreement?”

Q - “Can we look at getting Syndromes included as potentially being able to be added to the list of covered non-zoonoses”

Q - “Can we change the wording to include some scientific justification for the decision making on including a new disease or not? Or perhaps looking to include the word syndrome in the agreement.”

A – the agreement covers it where its “Any additional pig-specific diseases can be added by agreement between MPI and NZPork” so whilst it would be by agreement there is the option to add further items than the list. Following on from this conversation we are talking with MPI to make sure they share our understanding of the agreement and determine if there needs to be a change to the wording.

Q – “Can we extend the agreement longer than 3 years?”

A – Not yet. The 3-year term is set due to the current Biosecurity act review and Gia Deed review being finalised.

Q – “If the fiscal cap of 2 mil includes compensation it won't go very far. If we decide to contribute more funds to a response, how do we know MPI will also do so.”

A - The decision to continue with a response would be a joint decision. Without signing the operational agreement, we are not at the table to influence that decision at all.

Q - “Can we suggest a \$3m fiscal cap and still get the same split in the initial document?”

A – “2 mil (50% of reserves at the time) was set as a trigger point to allow funds to be immediately available to get initial response underway without the process being held up and the horse bolting while decisions are made. Given the industry size, the cap is lower but comparable to other operational agreements in place.”

In relation to the biosecurity levy

Q “is a levy imposed on imports? as that's where the incursion is to come”

A - we tried for that, but the Minister would not accept

Q - “could we push for the discount to start from date of signing rather than being historical?”

A – this part of the agreement is a standardised incentive clause that is covered across all operational agreements as a way for MPI to encourage uptake under the GIA deed when the framework was first setup. It won't be changed

Q - "Are producers financially liable if no reserves left?"

A – Yes, where costs are generated from agreed activities, any funds for this would be generated via a biosecurity levy. The levy amount would be set in consultation with industry.

Q "Can a biosecurity levy be charged to imported pork?" "they pose the greatest threat to a biosecurity incursion"

A – No, we tried but the minister did not agree.

Other feedback received on the operational agreement

"cost sharing can be in-kind contributions"

"If you have an incursion, then you certainly need this agreement. if you don't have an incursion it doesn't matter. what matters is who makes the decision as to when you stop spending money.."

"we want to be at the table"

Comment on the fiscal cap *"there needs to be consideration of the ability for those levy payers/critical mass left to repay any biosecurity levy forms a key component when setting the fiscal cap"*

"the payback levy needs to be a known amount"

We want farmers to have their say. We can't represent you without hearing your views so please- NZPork encourages further feedback and questions on the GIA Operational agreement to be directed to brent.kleiss@pork.co.nz or info@pork.co.nz call him on 0278074418

Environment - Emissions pricing Consultation

Questions asked

Q – "What's the likely hood that they will continue to reduce the discount down to zero?. that will have us at a levy of \$100K per annum. this has got nightmare written all over it!!"

A – the discount starts at 95% in 2025 and will reduce by 1% every year. CO2 price per tonne will increase at the same time.

Q – "the money is supposed to go back into agriculture, is this likely to be specific to each individual sector."

A – they have indicated that there will be an equitable distribution of funds based on everyone paying into the system. We think we might need to fight quite hard for recognition of our industries needs over the ruminant sector, methane emissions etc. We don't know how it will actually work in practice at this stage.

Q – “can we own and manage our own PigGas model rather than be crowbarred into a less appropriate version threat he waka eke noa is suggesting.?”

A - we have raised this issue with MPI and been told Govt won't want to reinvent the wheel and would most likely use the PigGas methodology within the 'Central Calculator'. W

They have said they recognise that there would need to be accurate calculations for pig farmers.

We have some concerns with the feasibility of this but will continue to make the offer for PigGas to be available to HWEN in our submission and send copies to Govt and MPI.

Other feedback received on emissions pricing consultation.

“I don't think the \$138 for 2030 is realistic. It will be closer to \$1000+/T”

“We will need to line up some projects to get our fair share back.”

We want famers to have their say. We can't represent you without hearing your views so please- NZPork encourages further feedback and questions on the Emissions Pricing consultation to be directed to Hannah.ritchie@pork.co.nz or info@pork.co.nz call on

General Business/Other

Other Issues raised

“Imported pork coming into NZ at a cut price”

Appreciation was expressed for David Baines and his contribution to the industry over the last 3 years. *“I'd like to express my gratitude, we're not an easy industry to work with but I think he's done a pretty damn good job”*

In terms of recruitment -NZPork as advertised the CE position via Sheffield in NZ and Aus. We had 19 responses which has been narrowed down to four interview candidates. Interviews are taking place on the 10th of March. Hopeful that an appointment will be made soon after that. Frances Clement will be standing in for the interim.

David Baines thanked the farmers for the kind words and the support over the last few years.