



Section

Fields (of activity)

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Requirements analysis for an efficient and sustainable veterinary health care management on pig farms

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Key words

Livestock veterinarian, data collection systems, data networking, herd management, pig health, stakeholder analysis, survey

Aim of the study

Due to the major changes in the pig industry in Switzerland, the needs of the veterinary livestock practitioners (BTA) and the roles of the stakeholders have changed considerably. The aim of this project was to find out the requirements of the BTA as the most direct stakeholders with regard to animal welfare and pig health: What do veterinarians need for modern and effective health care management? In addition, the tasks, relationships, influences and challenges of the relevant stakeholders of pig farms in Switzerland are systematically documented so that the resulting stakeholder list can be used for analyses and future projects.

The findings by means of a comprehensive survey should serve as a basis for the development of a concept for modern veterinary health care management, the implementation of which offers added value for livestock farmers and the veterinary practitioner and meets future requirements (target vision for pig health 2025+). The structures created should be demanded 'bottom up' and improve the compliance of livestock farmers and BTA in order to enable sustainable and efficient veterinary health care management and significantly strengthen the pig health programme.

Material and methods

The survey was conducted as a mixed-methods study, i.e. qualitative and quantitative questions are combined in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the situation (Fallowfield, 1995; Migiro & Magangi, 2011). The questionnaire contained both closed questions for quantitative data collection and open questions to gain qualitative insights.

Stakeholders are listed with different labels and further information about their relationship to pig farms. The list was discussed with different experts from the pig industry.

Results and significance

The project focussed on the most direct stakeholder on the farms with regard to pig health: the livestock veterinarian. A survey was undertaken to collect the opinions of 35 active BTA (response rate 37%). The survey focussed on the use of data and the evaluation of digital tools and offered programs. The comprehensive requirements analysis should help to identify the essential tools for efficient and effective swine health management.

The majority of vets are open to new technologies as long as they are easy to implement and have APIs to the practice software. The effort required to compile the data for preparation and for data recording during the visit is considered to be rather high. The BTA wish for better and more efficient access to various data and more return on investment from the data they collect. In principle, the participants support the current system of health programme and TAM visits, but would like to keep the bureaucratic effort to a minimum.

The project team derived the following direct recommendations to the FSVO from the results of the survey:

- a. Revise and update the StAR therapy and vaccination guidelines (as already planned by the FSVO) and review the “Biosicherheits-Check für Schweinebetriebe”.
- b. Promote the further development and ensure the continuation of the CliniPharm website (active substance database, Antibiotic-Scout, Vaccine-Scout).
- c. Further development and optimisation of the PHIS app (user-friendliness, reports for BTA, offering additional value for veterinary practices and farms) in order to increase user numbers. The promotion of the PHIS app also serves to increase the number of cases in the PathoPig and ZoE-BTA programmes.
- d. Strengthening cooperation with laboratories regarding submissions, data transfer and counselling as well as integration of laboratory application forms in PHIS.
- e. Demand and promote closer cooperation between various stakeholders and the BTA, giving sufficient consideration to the business interests of the veterinary practice as an enterprise.
- f. Implement the announced access to Fleko data for the BTA, either directly on the basis of an existing TAM contract or indirectly via the farm.
- g. Improve data availability so that relevant data can be provided to the BTA by pig health programme providers and PHIS in real time. Data should be routinely collected for herd management and then analysed for the BTA, but data collection should be limited to a small amount of data in accordance with a HACCP concept due to the lack of staff and time. The Smart Animal Health indicators provide a good basis, which would have to be adapted for the purpose of herd management.

In addition, a list of stakeholders was drawn up from the perspective of the pig farm, which can be used as basis for stakeholder analysis in further projects.

Based on the project results, a concept for modern and sustainable management will be developed in a follow-up project. In addition, it will be investigated how the efficiency of management could be measured in order to be able to test and validate the proposed measurement parameters in the follow-up project.

Publications, posters and presentations

The results from the survey we're presented and discussed with the interested veterinarians. Up to now, no further publications are planned.

Project:

1.24.06 «Bedarfsanalyse für eine effiziente und nachhaltige Bestandsbetreuung beim Schwein»

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