

THE PREVALENCE OF DISEASE PREVENTION PRACTICES

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The maxim that "prevention is better than a cure" still holds; however, most veterinary practitioners everyday see breaches of generally recommended prevention procedures. The reason for these breaches are many but include ignorance, neglect, low return for the cost of implementation, or the inappropriateness of the practice for the farms circumstances.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As part of the pre-testing procedures for the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) program in 1989 a survey was administered to 51 swine farms in 4 states (Alabama, Illinois, Tennessee, and Wisconsin). The survey had 137 questions in 3 sections: General swine farm survey, Swine facilities and feed survey, and Feed section and Economics. In addition, a diary was kept by all participating managers in which they recorded in detail every farrowing event, feed delivery and disappearance and subsequent piglet health events until weaning. This report is based on 24 questions from the survey and the value reported for pigs born alive in the diary cards.

RESULTS

Herd Size:	The average herd size was 114 sows (range 11-798 sows).
Records:	88% of farmers kept any type of production records, but all farmers with more than 150 sows kept some records.
Boots:	Only 33% of farmers required a change of boots before entering the farm.
Visitors:	Only 49% of farmers never had visitors from another farm of market visit.
Vaccines:	Only 78% of farmers gave any vaccines to sows, gilts or boars.
Mange/Lice:	65% of farmers treated their sows for mange/lice and only 63% of farmers treated their boars.
Quarantine:	Before bringing them onto the hog farm, 75% of farmers separated their boars but only 67% of farmers separated their gilts.
Health Test:	Only 48% of farmers tested their gilts before they entered the herd.

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