

Eight “Must do’s” for pig owners



Regardless of the size of your enterprise or hobby farm, pig owners play a vital role in maintaining the health and welfare of livestock and providing quality pork products to consumers. There are a number of requirements for pig owners that are monitored by State government and industry authorities. This brochure provides information on these “must do’s”. Further information can be found from the web sites listed at the end of this brochure.

1. Register your property

All properties where pigs are kept should be registered and have a property identification code (PIC). Your PIC is needed when completing travel documents (National Vendor Declarations, NVDs) that accompany your pigs when you sell them and/or have them processed at an abattoir.

2. Identify your pigs

You need to identify individual pigs if you sell them or have them processed at an abattoir, and some states require that you identify pigs if you sell them to another farmer. Weaner

pigs must be identified with an ear tag when sold in some States. The nationally-agreed method for identifying larger pigs is the body tattoo/brand.

3. Register on the PigPass database

You will need an NVD when you sell your pigs or have them processed at abattoirs. Some states require NVDs even when pigs are moved between farms but ownership does not change. This assists with tracking the movements of livestock in the event of an exotic disease outbreak or a food safety scare. The first step in getting an NVD is to register with the PigPass database. To register, visit <http://www.pigpass.com.au> or phone the PigPass Help Desk on 1800 001 458

4. Ensure all pigs that move off-farm are accompanied by a travel document (NVDs)

The PigPass NVD is the nationally-recognised and recommended travel document for

pigs. You must complete all sections of the PigPass NVD and sign the declarations. PigPass NVD books can be purchased on-line or by phoning the Help Desk on 1800 001 458. Alternatively, an electronic (E-PigPass) can be completed on-line and downloaded at no cost. Emergency NVDs are available to producers who have ordered a book and have not yet received it and need to move pigs. Emergency PigPass forms can be downloaded from <http://www.pigpass.com.au>.

5. Be welfare-compliant

If you own or have animals on your land, you have a duty of care to look after them. The Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (Pigs) – Revised 2007 outlines welfare standards and “best practice” guidelines for pig owners. In addition, each state has legislation governing welfare requirements of pigs. Links to the MCOP and to individual state welfare legislation can be found at <http://www.apl.au.com>, under “industry information - welfare”.



6. Get training in pig husbandry

From March 2011, it will be a legal requirement that anyone who cares for pigs is suitably qualified or works under the supervision of a suitably qualified person. The qualifications required to care for pigs differs among States, but may include having a Certificate III in Agriculture (Pigs) or being assessed as “competent” by a registered training organization. Visit <http://www.apl.au.com>, under “industry information - welfare” for more information. For specific information on training requirements in your state, contact your local industry representative.

7. Keep your pigs healthy

There are five things you should do to keep your pigs healthy:

1. Have and adhere to a Herd Health Program.
2. Do not feed restricted feedstuffs (swill).

3. Report unusual/notifiable diseases (e.g. foot and mouth disease).
4. Only use restricted (Schedule 4) veterinary medicines that have been prescribed by a veterinarian for your pigs.
5. Adhere to all label instructions on non-veterinary chemicals (eg Taktic, Dectomax etc) including dose rate and withhold or export slaughter intervals. Ideally you would have an approved chemical farm list.

A veterinarian or State Government industry representative can assist you with training in recognition in exotic diseases, as well as designing a herd health program that best suits you. Further information on recognizing exotic diseases of pigs and the recommended Herd Health Program Checklist for the Australian pig industry can be found in the “Pig health and disease” section of <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/pigs>.

8. Start a quality assurance program

The Australian Pig Industry Quality Assurance Program (APIQ) was developed to optimise the quality of pig meat grown in Australia. It includes food safety, welfare, biosecurity and traceability standards. All export abattoirs require that pigs are sourced from a holding that has a recognised quality assurance program that is annually audited by an independent body. This is also a requirement of domestic abattoirs in some states. Further information on APIQ can be found at <http://www.apl.au.com>, under “industry information - product integrity”.

Need More Information?

For more information on piggery “must-do’s”, visit the web sites listed in the table below or contact the State Government Industry representative listed at the end of this brochure.

State website addresses with information on property identification, pig identification and prohibited feedstuffs	
NSW	http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/pigs
Vic	http://new.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture
Qld	www.dpi.qld.gov.au
SA	www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animalhealth/
WA	www.agric.wa.gov.au
Tas	http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au



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