

# Rensselaer Swine Services, P.C. <sup>TM</sup>



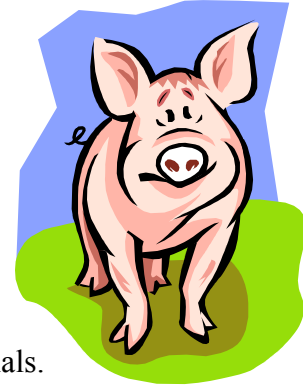
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Dear 4-H Swine Member,

April, 2010

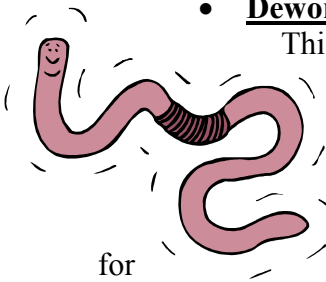
As you are gearing up for the upcoming show pig season, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of some of the general health issues that you need to keep in mind when purchasing and caring for your pigs. Understandably, most of your focus is on pig quality when choosing the right pigs for your 4-H project, but please keep in mind the source and health status of the pigs. The following tips are meant to help you minimize major health issues in your 4-H pigs:

- **Mixing sources** – Although this is common, it is never a good idea to mix pigs from different sources. If you can, isolate pigs from different sources from 10 to 21 days after you bring them home. Ideally, they would be housed at least 200 feet apart and different boots would be worn at each location. If they are carrying any disease agents, this will become apparent within a short time period and you will not have exposed the rest of your animals. This will also give you time to ensure that all of your pigs have had the same vaccinations and are carrying the same disease protection. An added protection measure is to use a long acting injectable antibiotic, i.e. Draxxin or Excede, or a good antibiotic given through the water for several days.



- **Vaccinations** – Most pig sources today will have the pigs vaccinated before selling them. It is your responsibility to inquire about the vaccination status of the pigs when you buy them. Ask what specific vaccines they have been given and when these were given. We recommend that 4-H pigs be vaccinated against these pathogens: porcine circovirus, mycoplasma, pneumonia, and erysipelas and influenza virus. These diseases are very common among all pigs. Exposure occurs when animals travel to different shows throughout the summer season. If pigs that you purchase are not vaccinated for these diseases, vaccinate pigs as soon as you bring them home. You can view our suggested vaccination

chart at [www.rssvet.com](http://www.rssvet.com) There are a couple of brands of mycoplasma vaccines (RespiSure One and Ingelvac MycoFlex) that only require one dose to be given, but otherwise, pigs should have two doses of mycoplasma vaccines. At this time, it would be best to use a one dose mycoplasma product and a one dose circovirus vaccine. In addition, the influenza product, PneumoStar SIV can be given once pigs are 8 weeks of age. The only available erysipelas vaccines require two doses, so start this regime immediately and give the booster dose two to three weeks after the first.



- **Deworming** – Internal parasites can be a big problem in 4-H pigs.

This is particularly true when pigs are housed on dirt lots or old barns that previously housed pigs. Roundworm and whipworm eggs can survive in the environment for 10-20 years. Therefore, routine deworming is essential to keep your pigs free of internal parasite problems. We recommend using Safe-Guard top-dressed on the feed three to five continuous days. This needs to be repeated every 6-8 weeks in most situations. A cough may be the first indicator that it is time to deworm your pigs. Part of the life cycle of the roundworm includes migration through the lungs where they are coughed up and swallowed where the adult stage begins.

- **Mange** – Mange is common in 4-H pigs and appears as small, red skin lesions on your pigs, particularly between the legs and under the neck, causing the pigs to scratch. Ivomec treats mange along with most internal parasites. Treat pigs with Ivomec after you get them home, either in the feed or with the injectable product, to eliminate a mange concern.



We look forward to working with you again this show pig season. Hopefully, the above tips are helpful to you in keeping your pigs healthy. Although you may do everything correctly, pigs may still become sick. Prompt and proper treatment is needed to get pigs back on track as quickly as possible. We will be happy to help you pursue appropriate treatment. Please feel free to give us a call (219-866-6465) or toll free (877-866-7675) with questions.

