

Experiences with a risk based meat inspection standard in pigs

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Abstract

The European Union legislation provides several possibilities to modernize meat inspection. Improvement of food safety by active contribution of food business operators in the supply chain being responsible for food safety is envisaged in these new standards.

In 2006 Dutch pork slaughterhouses were the first to implement a risk based meat inspection system for pigs. Food safety is ensured in this system by using controlled housing systems for pigs, integrated forward and backward data exchange of relevant food chain data and by surveillance of hazards with serology on blood. Slaughterhouse data and inspection results are used to inform farmers and for targeted monitoring of antibiotic residues. Incision of lymph nodes could be omitted because pig herds accepted for risk based meat inspection have a controlled risk regarding *Mycobacterium avium* and classical tuberculosis. Quality control systems (including HACCP) are an integrated part of this system with information exchange and obligatory corrective actions, thus increasing the safety of pork. With this risk based meat inspection system a frame work is build where food safety hazards are controlled in a targeted approach. This framework offers clear opportunities to develop the system further so new/other relevant hazards can be targeted easily. The most relevant hazard in this respect is *Toxoplasma gondii*.