



CQA® | FOR CANADIAN HOG PRODUCERS

Food Safety at Work



FAQs for Producers

What is the CQA® Program?

The CQA® program is an on-farm program that assists you in creating flexible, effective food safety-related procedures for your operation. CQA® is based on the seven basic principles of the internationally-recognized HACCP (Hazard Prevention Critical Control Point) model. The program is administered by the Canadian Pork Council and provincial representatives.

Why Get Involved?

Canadian hog farmers produce some of the best pork in the world. We have an international reputation for safe, high quality pork, and we want to maintain that reputation.

Canadian pork is exported to over 80 countries around the world. Today's customers, both here in Canada and in our export markets, are looking for assurances that everything possible is being done to produce top quality pork. Being able to provide that assurance helps maintain our access to these markets. CQA® is helping provide these assurances.

How Does CQA® Minimize Food Safety Hazards?

The program is comprised of a set of HACCP-based "best practices" for reducing

or eliminating potential hazards on farm that could result in a food safety concern in the final product, pork. Hazards can come from inputs to your operation, such as feed, stock, or your production process, for example, medication use. Hazards are generally classified in three categories: physical (such as broken needles), chemical (such as residues of medications) and biological (such as salmonella). By following the recommended procedures, you can reduce or eliminate potential hazards that might otherwise occur in your operation.

What's Involved?

To get involved in the CQA® program, contact your provincial delivery agent (see list), and obtain a copy of the most recent CQA® Pro-

ducer Manual. The Manual outlines good production practices that help to promote the production of safe food. It also outlines what are known as critical control points. These are specific areas on your farm that need special attention.

When you are familiar with the Manual, complete the On-Farm Quality Assessment Form. By answering the questions on this form, you are tailoring the program to your own operation. You will be asked to describe procedures for a variety of things you do on your farm. You will also be asked to keep certain records.

Once you are satisfied the Assessment Form reflects your operation, and you have at least three months of record keeping, you are ready to have your farm validated.

What is Validation?

Validation is the term used by the CQA® program to describe the evaluation of your operation to determine if the CQA® program requirements are being met. This involves having a program validator come to your farm, review the Assessment Form and related records, and visit your facilities.

What Does Validation Involve?

With the On-Farm Quality Assessment Form completed, you will request to have your operation validated. This involves contacting a recognized program validator and arranging a visit to your farm. On the first visit, the validator will review your On-Farm Quality Assessment Form, and ensure that responses to the shaded questions are appropriate. The validator will review your records for accuracy. He or she will also visit your farming operation to ensure the protocols are working as presented, and are effective. The validator will complete a CQA® Validation Report that will include a review of the findings for your operation. The Report includes an

opportunity to state where improvements on the farm will need to be made and verified before moving ahead. Some improvements may need to be made and verified before moving ahead. Others will be only need to be made at your own discretion, and verified at a future validation visit. The validator will recommend whether or not your operation meets program requirements.

The validator will ask you to sign the Validation Report to declare that you will maintain the standards of the program. This completed report will be forwarded to the provincial delivery agent for a final review and decision on recognition.

Who Are The CQA® Validators?

CQA® validators are individuals that have taken the CQA® training program for validators, and have successfully passed a nationally-set test. At the current time, the vast majority of CQA® validators are licensed veterinarians. The provincial delivery agent for CQA® in your province can provide a list of active validators.

What are the Program Requirements?

The program requirements are presented in the On-Farm Quality Assessment Form. Shaded questions are considered “essential” program requirements. Unshaded questions will also be evaluated, and although important, are not decisive factors during your validation.

What Records Do I Have To Keep?

You will be required to complete an On-Farm Quality Assessment Form, as well as Outgoing Pig Treatment Records, a Rations Used on Farm Record, Feed Mixing and Sequencing Records, a Medication and Vaccine Usage Plan, and Pen or Individual Treatment Records (for all pigs beyond the weaning phase). Samples of these forms are available as part of the producer materials for the program.

What Will It Cost?

The administration of the CQA® program is funded through producer levies. Provinces may charge for registration to the program and for program materials. Producers are responsible for the costs related to validation.

What is CFIA Recognition?

The Canadian federal government is establishing a mechanism to provide oversight to on-farm food safety programs. It consists of a two-stage approach. The first stage, already in working order, takes a look at the content of the program. This involves bringing together a team of federal, provincial, and territorial government experts in food safety to review the HACCP model upon which the program is based. To ensure that food safety hazards have been appropriately identified, the review proceeds to examine the producer materials to ensure that the food safety hazards identified in the

HACCP model have been adequately addressed.

The second step in Canadian Food Inspection Agency oversight is currently under development and will entail an examination of the effectiveness of the delivery of the on-farm programs.

How Can I Get Involved in CQA® and Receive Additional Information?

You can get involved with the CQA® program by contacting your provincial CQA® delivery agent (see list). Contact information and some production-related information will be required at that time.

For more information on the CQA® program, write or call the Canadian Pork Council at the address and phone number below.

CQA® Program

Canadian Pork Council
1101 – 75 Albert Street,
Ottawa, ON K1P 5E7
Tel: 613-236-9239
Fax: 613-236-6658

Email: cqa@cpc-ccp.com
www.cpc-ccp.com

or, contact your provincial CQA® delivery agent at:

British Columbia:
(604) 853-9461

Alberta:
(780) 477-6729

Saskatchewan:
(306) 244-7752

Manitoba:
(204) 237-7447

Ontario:
(519) 767-4600

Quebec:
(450) 679-0530

New Brunswick:
(506) 458-8051

Prince Edward Island:
(902) 892-4201

Nova Scotia:
(902) 895-0581