



Season 7, Episode 3: Turning Biosecurity Plans into action

Dr. Josh Flohr, assistant professor at Kansas State University, discusses the gap between biosecurity policies on paper and their day-to-day execution on the farm. He shares insights on building a culture of biosecurity, gaining employee buy-in and ensuring protocols are followed consistently, even when operations are at their busiest.

Background

Biosecurity remains one of the most important tools for protecting livestock health, but success depends on more than having a written plan. It requires clear communication, consistent training and a team that understands how to put protocols into practice every day. As disease threats continue to evolve and some pathogens become more infectious, effective on-farm biosecurity is more important than ever. In this episode, the discussion begins with Dr. Josh Flohr, talks about the steps producers need to take when it comes to biosecurity measures and gives insight into how far the swine industry has come in terms of disease prevention. When working at Seaboard Foods as swine nutrition consultant in 2016, Dr. Flohr was able to lead the biosecurity team and many others where he learned how communication and consistent training are important factors that need to be addressed to achieve consistency in execution of biosecurity protocols.

Places To Improve in a Biosecurity Plan

A strong biosecurity program depends on clear communication and effective training, yet this is still a major gap in the industry. Dr. Flohr highlights the need for better communication between supervisors and caretakers, especially when explaining the “why” behind protocols. Strengthening understanding, improving feedback, and spending more meaningful time with employees can help close these gaps. Ultimately, strong relationships between supervisors and caretakers are the foundation for better training, better execution, and a stronger team culture within the farm.

More On Building the Culture of Proper Execution in Biosecurity

A culture of execution begins with helping employees understand that every action and routine carries real biosecurity risk. Dr. Flohr notes that caretakers often rely on past experience, assuming a shortcut is safe simply because it “hasn’t caused a break yet,” which can undermine compliance and stall progress. Reinforcing that risk is always present, even when disease hasn’t occurred, helps employees see why protocols must be followed consistently. When supervisors communicate this clearly, provide steady feedback, and build an environment where employees feel responsible for herd health, accountability and consistency become shared values. This mindset is especially important during outbreak investigations, where the true source is rarely identified, and employees may fall back on habits or narrow thinking. Encouraging them to broaden their perspective and recognize that past luck does not guarantee future safety is essential for strengthening biosecurity execution across the farm.

Key Takeaways

The discussion highlights a key point that biosecurity can’t be about just “checking a box” and employees need to have an understanding that their actions directly affect the health and wellbeing of the animals of their care especially since sick pigs bring challenges and frustrations to the industry. Collaboration of different levels of farm management to evaluate expectations and see where there are gaps in understanding is essential for lessening the risk of disease outbreak. It is easy to make specific protocols, but what swine industry leaders need improvement on is providing feedback which will push for better outcomes in pork production.

To listen to this full podcast please visit: <https://globalagnetwork.com/pigx/podcast/season-7-episode-3-turning-biosecurity-plans-into-action>

