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SVC Veterinarians — Helping to Lead the Way Through the Coronavirus Crisis

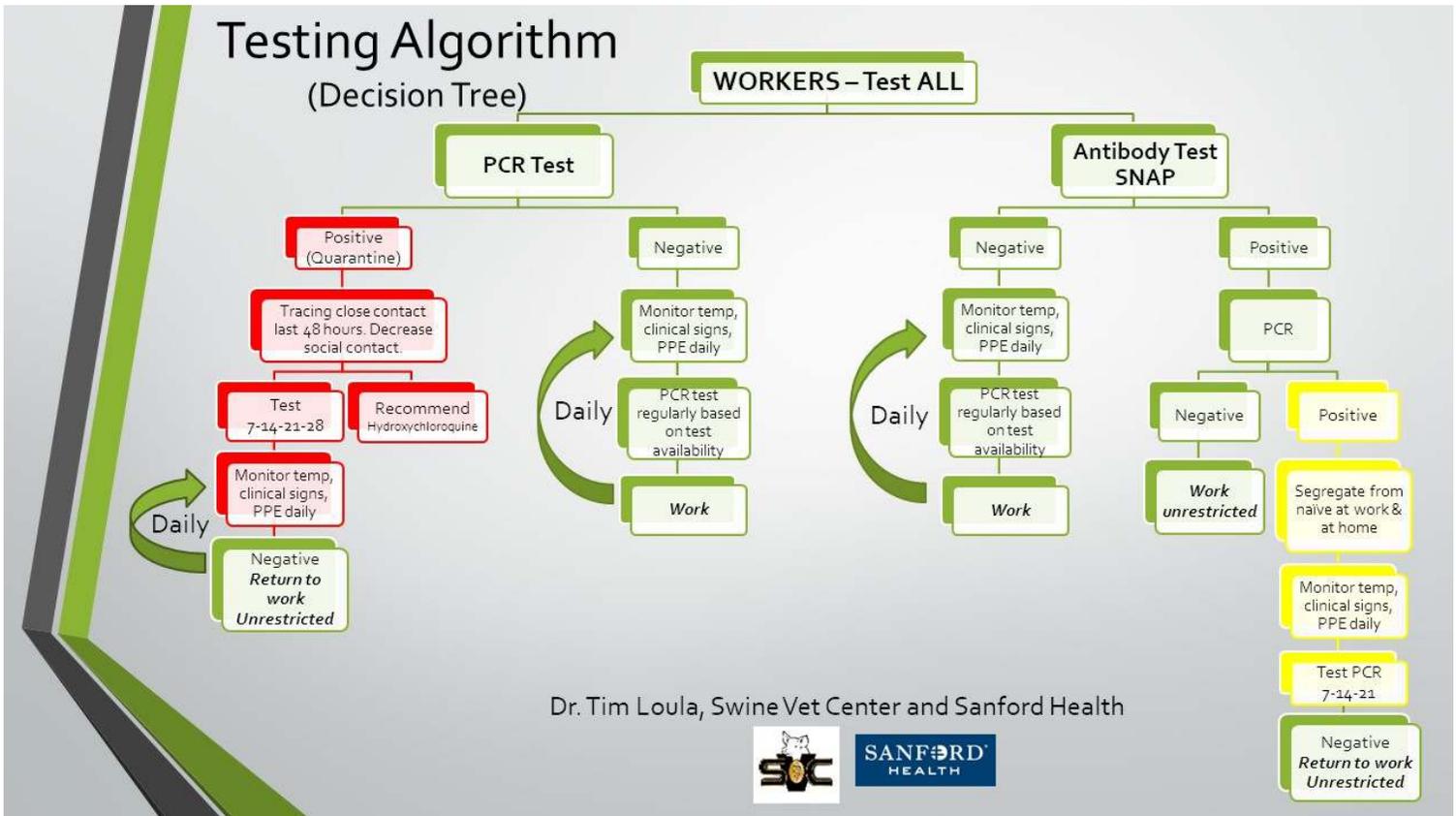
The hog industry is facing unprecedented times with the closures of packing plants leading to a severe back up of hogs to be processed in the United States. SVC veterinarians strive to be leaders in times of crisis.

Dr. Tim Loula with Sanford Health has developed a testing algorithm to try to best understand the health status of packing plant workers, and keep the plants open. (See the most recent article in the Farm Journal where Dr. Loula describes using our knowledge of herd immunity and testing to keep plants open or get them back up and running. *Herd Immunity in Pigs: A Case Study for Getting America Back to Work.*)



As a follow up article for the Farm Journal, Dr. Loula describes the pig industry's experience with a Chinese Coronavirus, PEDV. The pig industry utilized herd immunity to eliminate PED from sow farm populations. Dr. Loula describes PCR vs. antibody testing (ELISA) in this article and how we can further utilize antibody testing to our advantage.

<https://www.agweb.com/article/antibody-testing-critical-piece-puzzle-people-and-pigs>



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SVC Office Hours: Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM

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Drs. Brad Leuwerke and Jake Schwartz led a webinar sponsored by the National Pork Board, “COVID-19, Tools for Managing the Current Situation”. It is a tough decision that producers have to make when they decide to euthanize pigs. Drs. Leuwerke and Schwartz provided insight on how this could be done humanely and effectively.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1543&v=0J3aSNaw5IU&feature=emb_logo

Dr. Jordan Graham has written a proposal to the states of Minnesota and Iowa for support of a swine mass depopulation plan. This plan would provide a safe and humane option for producers to have market hogs euthanized and disposed of in an efficient and environmentally friendly manner. It would also act as the accounting piece in anticipation of a Federal Indemnity Program.



Dr. Paul Yeske along with NPPC and AASV submitted a proposal which could help turn a negative situation for the industry into a positive one. We do not see the packing plants returning to 100% for the foreseeable future, which leaves us with too many pigs and not enough shackle space. If producers are forced to make the decision to euthanize market weight animals, could we turn it into a positive for the industry by possibly reducing disease pressure? They are suggesting just that by developing a program similar to the Accelerated Pseudorabies Eradication Program from the 90’s (APEP). The culling could be targeted towards herds with chronic diseases.

If forced to make the decision to remove swine herds, AASV is encouraging farmers to work with their veterinarians whenever possible and strategically remove populations or herds that have long-term active health problems from endemic diseases. The industry goal of this targeted effort would be to help improve the overall herd health of the entire swine industry. Endemic diseases pose a significant loss in performance and increased vaccination and medication cost to farmers. Minimizing disease challenges also enhances animal wellbeing.

Ideally the industry would be able to work cooperatively with USDA APHIS to structure a program similar to what was used in the Accelerated Pseudorabies Elimination Program (APEP) to help fund this. But with government funding still uncertain, we need to act on our own for now.

Other COVID-19 Resources



Dr. Brad Freking of New Fashion pork lays out nicely the status of the pork industry and the importance of testing 100% of the packing plant employees. In this podcast, Dr. Freking reveals some preliminary results of these tests. 2400 total employees were tested at Triumph Foods. Of the 2400, 750 of the samples have been tested and results revealed 71 COVID-19 PCR positives. The most interesting piece of information is that 90% of those individuals that tested positive, did not have any clinical signs of COVID-19. <https://youtu.be/CAgo5cQFk0U>

Swine Vet Center New Arrivals

In the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, it’s a pleasure to get to report some happy news!

It’s a Boy for Tina and Levi Witte!

Henry James Witte arrived March 26, 2020 weighing in at 8lbs. 2 ounces and 21 3/4 inches long. Baby Henry has already begun sleeping through the night and loves when big brother Charley gets to hold him. Showing early signs of being quite the adventurer, Henry also enjoys going for stroller rides. Congratulations Tina and Levi.



Dr. Ryan and Sarah Strobel Welcome a Baby Boy

Jack Donavin Strobel arrived Sunday, April 11, 2020, weighing 7 pounds, 1 ounce, 19” long. As you can imagine, big brother Levi (2) was quite excited to finally get to meet and hold his new little brother and will surely be a big help in taking care of baby Jack. Congratulations Ryan and Sarah!

