

Pig farmers in the news

Dear editor:

As a longtime, third generation hog farmer and also a very small time licensed livestock agent from Melancthon Township ? now for over 41 years ? I read with quite a very, very special interest Mr. Wes Keller's article in the Free Press paper about this new viral hog disease now in Ontario called porcine epidemic diarrhea. Myself and my late father have been in the Canadian swine business for many years. My late father started quite young and after he served his country in the Second World War, resumed his purebred swine business with myself for many years. I have seen many very, very bad diseases come and go, yes indeed in the pig business, but this one will likely put the nails in many of hundreds of Canadian hog farmers' coffins. Our federal VETS have slipped up once again ? what else is new ? at the border, no doubt missed a dirty, livestock truck and oh yes, that is all it has taken, a dirty diseased truck back from the U.S.A. which likely entered one swine business in Ontario. Our border VETS and inspectors need to sharpen up now and be really on their toes, most certainly in -30° weather livestock trucks are certainly very, very hard to disinfect, but it must be done. My heart does go out to many Ontario fellow producers in their fight with that new virus, but hopefully with good vaccines and good care our industry will hopefully make it out all right. I have watched too many good friends of mine in the USA and oh yes it has caused terrible losses in the USA hog industries and may well here too. We do not need so many bad or inaccurate news reports about it. Yes, the hog business has been damn bad for years no doubt this makes things worse in the industry and likely crash the pork prices once again and yes, our governments need to do something to help. Perhaps we in the industry don't take any more hits or I will publically state the pig business is done in North America, yes very, very true indeed.

I also wish to state to some reporters, oh yes news teams ? please do get the facts before telling incorrect stories and we likely will, in the industry, make it out of this but we as producers must not let many visitors to our big facilities ? no, we can't, we must be very, very cautious, yes indeed.

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