



PIG FARMERS MOVE TO NEEDLE-FREE INJECTORS WORTH THE INVESTMENT

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CANADA - The Director of Animal Health with Hylife says, despite the increased cost, the decision to move from needles to needle-free injection has been well worth the investment, writes Bruce Cochrane.

In 2010, in an effort to eliminate the risk of broken needles in meat, Hylife began converting its swine barns to needle-free injection and in January 2011 the company was completely needle free from birth to slaughter.

"*Needleless Injectors: 5 Years of Lessons Learned*" was among the topics discussed yesterday as part of the 2016 Manitoba Swine Seminar in Winnipeg.

Dr. Karine Talbot, the Director of Animal Health with Hylife, says the biggest challenge in making the switch was training.

Dr Karine Talbot-Hylife:

Training is very important but it's not very difficult to learn. The unit itself is very simple.

It's mechanical so you just need to make sure someone is accountable on the farm to do the maintenance.

That's the most important part, so change the O-rings,

maintain the unit, oil it but it's nothing very complicated, everybody can learn it.

The maintenance, most of it is simple maintenance, you change O-rings to make sure the pistons are working, that it's injecting the proper dose so that's the down side.

If it's not done properly the units will have some issues.

It won't inject or it will fire for no reason or it won't give the right dose but if they're maintained properly they work very good.

So maintenance is very important but it's as simple as changing O-rings.

Like any mechanical equipment, there's some higher maintenance sometimes that must happen after a lot of usage of it but the basic maintenance, our staff can do it.

The equipment has been very reliable. We've used those guns for over 5 years now.

Some, they inject over 6,000 pigs a week so it's pretty high usage on those guns and they've been very reliable considering we're in a farm environment with high usage.

Like we mentioned before, as long as they're maintained properly and oiled and change O-rings, they're working pretty good.

Dr. Talbot acknowledges needle-free injectors are expensive and, in many cases farms will require multiple injectors to accommodate different sizes of pig but the ability to guarantee customers that there is no risk of needle fragments in the meat justifies the investment.

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