

Abstract

Costs of endemic infectious disease and preventive measures for endemic infectious diseases in pigs and cattle

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Pigs and cattle in Sweden are, in general, very healthy. In herds with healthy animals good animal care is combined with high productivity. Swedish animals are free from many diseases present in other countries. Both pigs and cattle are, however, affected by more or less severe endemic infectious diseases, which cause animal suffering as well as considerable economic losses. The knowledge about costs of endemic infectious diseases, and of preventive measures against such diseases is, however, limited. Therefore, studies were performed to evaluate costs of relevant endemic infectious diseases in pigs and cattle. Moreover, cost efficiency of improving biosecurity within and between herds in existing pig and cattle herds through building measures with the aim to prevent infectious diseases was evaluated using different evaluation models.

The economical consequences of infectious diseases increase with herd size due to the fact that the risk for spread of infections between animals increases. In addition, measures to control diseases may be more difficult to implement in larger herds. The information generated in this project can be used to visualize and motivate the benefits of introducing preventive biosecurity measures. The costs for such measures should be related to their expected benefits, and the value of these benefits should in turn be related to the investment using principles of business economics. If the calculations suggest a long term positive economical outcome, they ought to contribute to increased activities in disease preventing measures. If a producer sees an economic advantage of measures that improves biosecurity it is reasonable to assume that the motivation for performing such measures increases. As it for natural reasons is cheaper to do the right thing from the start, it is emphasized that these aspects should be considered already at the planning of new buildings or when rebuilding.