

Vaccination of Poultry & Pigs

Dr. Audrie McNab

This article attempts to share with you our readers that even farm animals are vaccinated against diseases, some in the same way as you the human.



Poultry

Poultry Vaccination is aimed at protecting the broiler (meat) birds and layer (table egg producers) birds against respiratory diseases, such as Avian Influenza, H5N1 (Bird 'flu) and Infectious Bronchitis (yup, birds do suffer from bronchitis too). Vaccinations against other diseases which affect the immune system of the bird are also done such as. Infectious Bursal Disease (Gumboro), Marek's disease and Fowl Pox ("yaws").

In your human world, vaccination is primarily done to the young, with boosters in the older human, using a needle and syringe and also via oral drops. It is no different in my world of swine and poultry. Baby chicks are vaccinated in the wing and in the neck using specialized needle and syringe equipment. They are also vaccinated via inhalation (breathing in) of a 'liquified' vaccine that is sprayed on them as a coarse mist, in a spray cabinet in the hatchery, inside the chicken house. Vaccines can also be administered in the drinking water. We in the CB Group are proud, that six years on, we continue to practice vaccination of the un-hatched baby chick (*in ovo* or in the egg)- to help minimise the stress of vaccination and improve protection before the chick even hatches.

Pigs:

Vaccines are available for pigs at all life stages and are administered by injection. Because the entire carcass of the pig is valuable, gone are the days when one would vaccinate in the back leg (this is the ham). Vaccination is now done only behind the ear of the piglet or pig.

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Pigs can be vaccinated against diseases such as:

- *Mycoplasma* – which causes a respiratory disease called “enzootic pneumonia”.
- Leptospirosis – which can cause pregnancy loss in sows, and possibly pass to humans.
- Swine Erysipelas – a bacterial infection that causes high fever and blotchy skin discolourations.
- Circovirus – a nasty little bug that causes a variety of problems and production losses
- Parvovirus – Pig parvo causes severe “abortion storms” in sows

Often, multiple diseases are included in a single injection.

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