



U.S. Swine Health Improvement Plan

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Summary

The United States Swine Health Improvement Plan (U.S. SHIP) is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded pilot program to establish a voluntary health certification program for swine. The concept for the program was born out of a case study conducted by Iowa State University in 2018; it has since developed into a widely adopted pilot program. The program is intended to be a cooperative initiative between State, federal, and industry partners and is modeled after the U.S. poultry industry's National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). All sectors of the swine industry are eligible to participate - swine producers, packers, and live animal marketers.

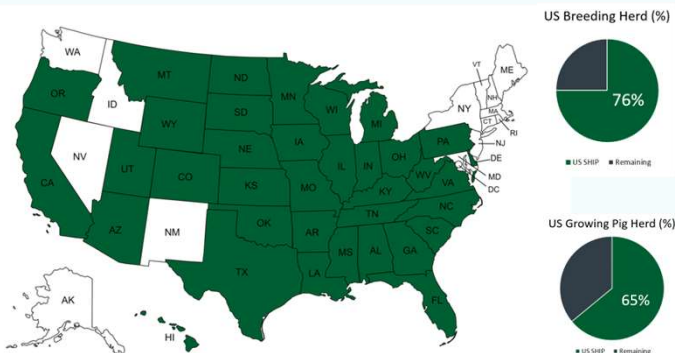


The key program goals are to:

- improve the health of the U.S. swine herd,
- increase swine traceability, and
- facilitate maintenance and resumption of trade following an African swine fever (ASF) or Classical swine fever (CSF) incursion.

Participants are certified based on compliance with Program Standards in the areas of biosecurity, traceability, and sampling and testing. The Program Standards have been adopted, and can be updated, via a vote of the delegate body at the annual house of delegates meeting. The pilot program is administered at a local (State) level with national coordination and oversight. USDA is currently in the rule-making process to migrate the pilot program concepts into a USDA-codified animal health program.

Current Status and Activities

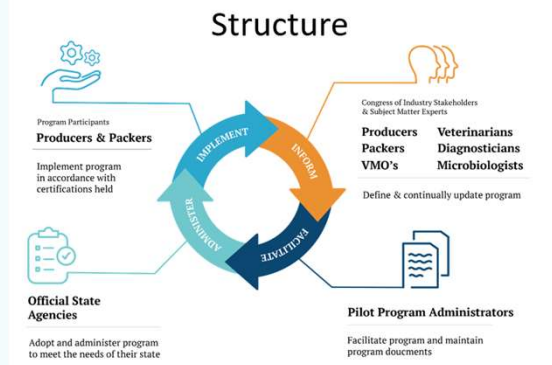


The U.S. SHIP pilot enjoys broad engagement across the swine industry. Currently, 36 states and over 12,000 individual sites, representing 76% of the U.S. breeding herd and 65% of the U.S. growing pig herd, are enrolled in the program. National industry groups, Official State Agencies, pilot program cooperators, and the USDA SHIP pilot administrative team are actively supporting ongoing outreach and education efforts encouraging recruitment of additional states and producers.

Stakeholder led working groups continue to discuss and develop strategies to tackle ongoing industry needs and to make sure the needs of niche groups within the industry are heard and accounted for in programmatic planning. Active working groups include site biosecurity and feral pig risk mitigation, surveillance, traceability, feed biosafety, swine exhibition, and market haul sanitation. In the future, formalized technical committees, composed of industry, academic, state, and federal subject matter experts, will be assembled to provide technical support for these efforts and input on related proposals being brought forward for consideration.



Program Vision

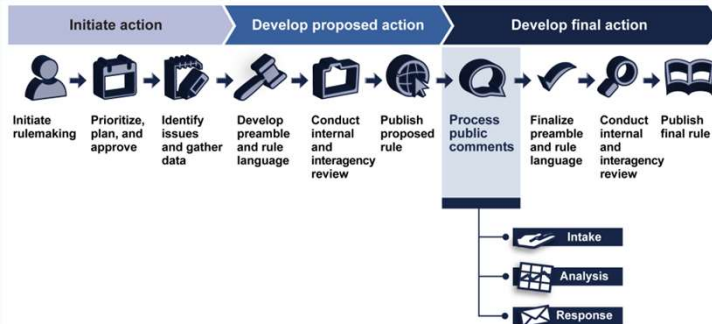


U.S. SHIP is envisioned to be a grassroots effort, informed by the needs and initiative of the swine industry. Through individual stakeholders, technical committees, working groups, or industry taskforces, resolutions or proposals can be brought forward to the delegate body at large. Resolutions serve as preliminary requests, highlighting areas where work is needed and advancing requests for support and participation with exploratory activities, e.g. a working group. The outcomes of work performed under resolutions frequently lead to proposals, formal requests to amend or update the program. Proposals are brought forward for discussion and voted upon during the annual house of delegates meeting; they serve as the primary mechanism through which program participants agree on new standards and thereby request updates to the Program Standards and administration of the program. Updates are rolled out by the program administrators through the Official State Agencies (OSAs), after which participants are required to meet the updated standards to be certified under the program.

Next Steps

USDA is actively working through the rule-making process to formalize U.S. SHIP into a codified program. The U.S. SHIP proposed rule and Program Standards were posted in the U.S. Federal Register for public comment on December 31, 2024. The comment period provides a window of time for the public and industry stakeholders to review the proposed rule and provide input. An initial 30-day comment period closed on January 30, 2025; USDA reopened the comment period for an additional 30 days on February 28, 2025. A total of 66 comments, overwhelmingly in favor of the proposed rule, were received by the close of the latest comment period on March 31, 2025.

Next steps in this process involve the review and analysis of all comments received. Each comment will be addressed in a formal response. As warranted, the proposed rule and Program Standards may be updated to address topics brought forward in the comments.



Once comment review and response has been completed, the USDA SHIP pilot administrative team will advance an updated version of the proposed rule and Program Standards. The rule will be reviewed at the department and interagency level. If there is support for the rule and formalization of the program, a final rule will be published and adopted into the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations. As currently written, U.S. SHIP would remain a voluntary program available across the production, packer, and marketing sectors of the swine industry.

In the interim, the USDA SHIP pilot administrative team will continue to oversee and facilitate the program in its pilot status. USDA has active cooperative agreements with each Official State Agency (OSA), providing financial support for the local administration and targeted outreach to grow the program. Monthly OSA meetings are held to monitor the program and provide a forum for program updates and to discuss needs, issues, and share ideas and best practices among participants.

The administrative team continues to advance efforts to provide infrastructure to support program administration. The team has hired a Senior coordinator and is designing a website to serve as a centralized landing page with resources about the program, enrollment, local contacts, and upcoming meetings and events.

At this time, enrolled participants are working with their OSA's to demonstrate their ability to adhere to the pilot program standards, making them eligible for certification under as ASF and CSF monitored.

