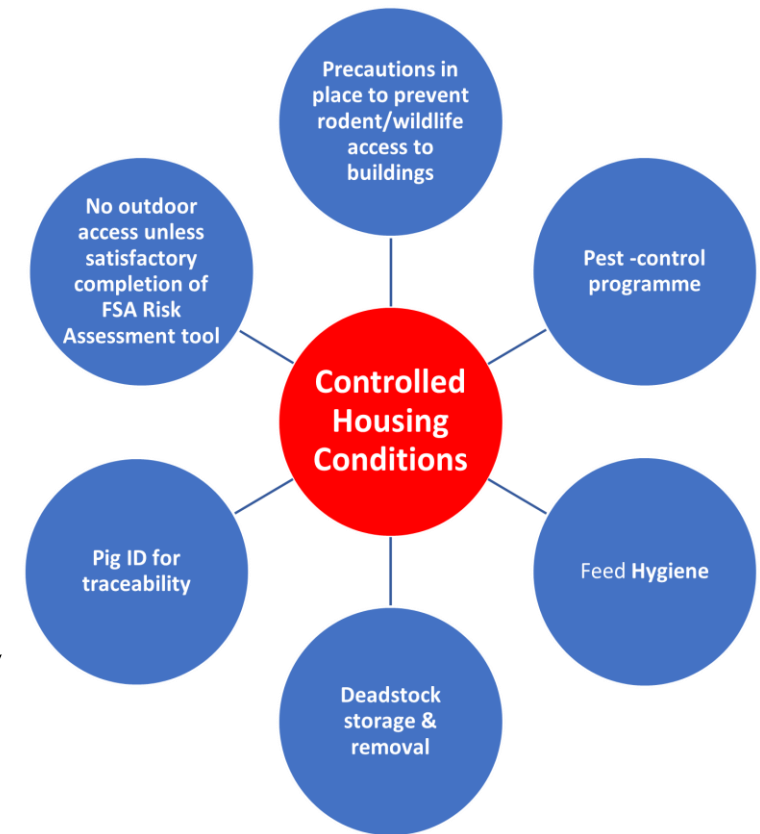


GUIDANCE: Official Recognition of Controlled Housing Conditions (CHC) for *Trichinella*

Background

- *Trichinella* is a small parasitic worm that can affect both humans and animals. In humans it causes diarrhoea and stomach cramps and can lead to more serious symptoms if untreated. People can become infected through eating raw, undercooked or processed meat from pigs, wild boar, horses or game that contain microscopic larval worms (known as trichinae) encysted in muscle tissue.
- Animals become infected when they ingest meat containing the parasitic worm. This can happen in pigs if they eat infected dead rodents or wildlife either directly or via contaminated pig feed.
- Now that we have left the EU, trade in live pigs and pig meat must be certified as eligible for trade by an Official Veterinarian and meet the *Trichinella* requirements set out by the EU for 3rd Countries. Meat must be either tested for *Trichinella*, or frozen unless the live pigs from which the meat/meat preparation has come from are certified as sourced from farms that apply controlled housing conditions or were unweaned piglets under 5 weeks of age.
- The controlled housing conditions are set out in Retained EU Regulation 2015/1375:-. One of these conditions is that none of the domestic swine has access to outdoor facilities unless the operator can show by a risk analysis to the satisfaction of the competent authority that the time period, facilities and circumstances of outdoor access do not pose a danger for introduction of *Trichinella* into the holding.
- In the UK, carcasses of all sows and boars must also be tested, regardless of whether the farm they have come from is applying controlled housing conditions or not.



Red Tractor

The above rules have been in place for several years and farmers have decided for themselves whether their pigs are reared under “controlled housing” and then have self-declared this on their food chain information./movement licences. However, the Food Standards Agency intends to introduce external verification so that the farm, or groups of pigs in the farm, can be officially recognised as applying controlled housing conditions.



- Red Tractor has liaised closely with the FSA and Pig Veterinary Society to develop a system of controlled housing status verification while avoiding additional inspections for Red Tractor Pig Scheme members.

Controlled housing or not?

- The following units can declare they are applying controlled housing conditions simply by being Red Tractor-assured, if any farms they source pigs from are also deemed to be applying controlled housing:
 - Pigs reared in fully enclosed indoor units (where pigs have no outdoor access)
 - Pigs weaned into indoor facilities or onto another holding at or before 5 weeks of age even if born in outdoor breeding units
- Units where pigs over 5 weeks of age (excluding breeding boars and sows) have outdoor access must undergo the FSA's Trichinella risk assessment tool, applied at least annually by their designated vet, to determine whether the farmer can declare the pigs as reared under controlled housing or not.
- This list is not exhaustive, but for clarity the following would be considered as having 'outdoor access' and would therefore need the FSA risk assessment applied:
 - Weaner tents with solid side barriers and some roof cover on soil or solid flooring (i.e., partially enclosed)
 - Free-range weaners/finishers penned with electric fencing or stock fencing and access to a hut (i.e., highly exposed)
 - Straw yard with only partial roof covering and/or outdoor area (i.e., partially enclosed, even if outdoor area only used for part of the year)



Covered finisher shed - would be considered fully enclosed



Weaner tent with open area - would be considered as having outdoor access



FSA Risk Assessment

- The FSA Risk Assessment tool is a spreadsheet-based document which vets doing a Red Tractor inspection must complete for relevant farms, based on their knowledge of the unit and using information supplied by the producer or their representative. It is available to download [here](#).
- The risk assessment tool requires selection of appropriate pre-set responses to a series of questions. Where a unit is Red Tractor assured and the question is already covered by the Red Tractor standards, the appropriate answer has already been pre-selected. Guidance for vets on the questions and responses is provided within the tool.
- The risk assessment tool generates a score for the holding based on the selected responses. The score indicates whether the holding can be considered as applying controlled housing conditions (CHC) or not. The vet must indicate the farm's CHC status on the quarterly veterinary report (QVR). The producer must then declare their controlled housing status accurately on movement licences, which will be verified by assessors during the farm's Red Tractor assessment. Assessors do not need to see the completed risk assessment tool; they will just look for the status as indicated by the vet on the QVR and confirm the producer is declaring the same status on movement documents for eligible pigs.
- The farm's designated vet must re-do the risk assessment at least annually, and whenever level of outdoor access and/or the farm's set-up change significantly.
- **Borderline farms** - Decision can be made on a case-by-case basis where the Red Tractor Pig Vet considers that the producer can adapt its management regime to reduce the Trichinella risk to 'Low'. In these cases, the vet should tick the relevant box on the QVR to indicate the considered controlled housing status, detail any advised changes in the QVR comments box and reapply the risk assessment at the next visit to check these changes have been put in place.