

# Skill:

# Giving injections

## Note to instructor

This task should normally be done together with **Recording animal treatments**, familiarization with the relevant **Treatment protocols** and **Calculating the correct dose of medication** - first part: Injected Medicines

## Equipment and facilities

- A group of pigs requiring treatment by injection, either vaccination or for a disease problem
- Bottles of vaccine or medicine
- Syringes and needles of the correct size
- Sterile cotton, alcohol
- A plastic or stainless steel medical tray on which to transport materials
- **Medicines treatment record**

## Objective

To inject the correct amount of a medication or vaccine into the pig with due regard for the health and safety of the pig and the stockperson

## Reasons

Explain to trainee:

- Pigs with disease problems are often best treated by the use of injectable medication
- In addition, farm vaccination protocols require regular injections of vaccines

## Explain procedure

- Go through the preparation and procedures step by step, explaining what needs to be done and why
- Encourage questions

## Explain important points

Stress the key aspects of the procedure and explain  
Ask the trainee why he/she thinks they are important

- Hygiene - cleanliness of hands, equipment and the injection site is essential to minimize the likelihood of introducing infection or leading to an abscess at the injection site. Ideally disposable syringes should be used. Needles should be replaced after 10 sows/boars, 15-20 nursery/finisher pigs and 3 litters of piglets



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## Explain important points (cont'd)

- Correct dose - too little product injected will reduce efficacy, too much will result in unnecessary cost, therefore accurate calculation of the correct dose is essential
- Correct syringe and needle size - the danger of injecting into fat if needle length is too short (larger pigs) and welfare implications of needles being too large. Blunt or damaged needles must never be used
- Injection technique - good technique is essential so that vaccine or medication is placed in the right site - in the muscle or under the skin.  
Intramuscular injection - in the top part of the neck, above and behind the area of loose skin behind the ear, at an angle of 90° to the skin  
Subcutaneous - under the loose skin behind the ear, by pinching with thumb and forefinger to create a fold of skin, with the needle inserted at a slight angle to run under the fold
- Identification and recording - clear identification of treated pigs enables withdrawal periods to be observed. Careful recording in the **Medicines treatment record** is required to meet legal and food safety requirements. For gilts, sows and boars, short treatment details may be entered on the individual record card\*
- Operator safety - explain the risks of using needles through careless handling or due to pig movement during injection. Stress that needles should always be protected with their plastic cap when not in use and pigs that may be difficult to inject should be restrained or snared\*. Data sheets for all injectable products must be available in case of accidental self injection
- Correct disposal of syringes, needles and medicines bottles according to the farm **Waste disposal protocol** for safety and environmental reasons

## Demonstrate

Show the trainee the skill step by step, explaining what is being done and following the procedures exactly. Make sure the trainee observes carefully and understands what is being done



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## Questions

Answer any questions regarding the procedures

## Trainee carry out

Ask the trainee to carry out the whole procedure, with help according to Competence level - explain what help you will give:

## Level of guidance

1. Give detailed step by step instruction through the whole procedure
2. Give guidance only when asked or when a problem occurs
3. Give no guidance: Trainee to describe what he/she is doing throughout the procedure

## Discuss

- Check off each stage on the procedures sheet
- How did the trainee feel he/she did?
- Which parts of the procedure were omitted or caused a problem?

## Problem solve

- Identify procedures not carried out or not done correctly
- Demonstrate them again if necessary
- Allow the trainee to repeat them again if necessary

## Conclude

- Stress the importance of the task and using the correct procedures
- Refer the trainee to the relevant part of the Trainee handbook
- Thank him/her for their efforts
- Sign the trainee's Achievement record
- Arrange a date/time for training at the next Competence level if appropriate, or the Understanding review

