

# BRUISING

## What is the condition?

Bruising is damage to the flesh of the carcass. It can be a serious commercial problem, since it decreases the grade and subsequently the value of the carcass. This damage requires the affected area to be trimmed. Depending of the severity of the bruising this can have a negative impact on meat quality as well.

## Disease on-farm

Typical behavioural responses in pigs prior to slaughter may include 'flight or fight' resulting in aggression towards other pigs. These behaviours can make pigs difficult to handle and cause trauma, particularly on shoulders, loins and hams, which can lead to damage and bruising to the carcass.

## How is it caused?

Major factors responsible for bruising of carcasses include fighting among mixed groups of pigs and poor handling pre-slaughter. Possible causes of bruising prior to slaughter can include issues with:

- handling on farm
- mixing with unfamiliar pigs
- fasting and subsequent aggression
- handling at loading/unloading
- transport to the abattoir
- handling in lairage.

## Carcass impacts

Affected tissues are usually trimmed from the carcass. Severe bruising will lead to downgrading of the carcass.

## Prevention

Good management practices pre-slaughter can assist in preventing bruising to carcasses. This includes reducing the mixing of pigs to prevent fighting pre-slaughter, as well as good transport and handling procedures prior to and at the abattoir.