

# CONTAMINATION

## What is the condition?

Contamination refers to the contamination of the carcass before or during processing. It often refers to gut content contamination but may also be related to contact with skin or other contaminants. This could include physical contamination from broken needles, antibiotic or chemical residue and contamination from the environment. As contamination can have impacts on human health, it needs to be managed appropriately.

## How common is it?

The most likely contamination pathway is through issues with evisceration (gut removal) during processing. Feeding the pigs too soon before slaughter will increase the gut "load" and increase the risk of spillage during slaughter. Disease conditions such as peritonitis and pleurisy can affect the ease of evisceration, as can adhesions, volume and fluidity of gut contents. Gut friability can also result in carcasses being contaminated if ruptured. Health conditions that

require extra handling, such as removal of skin lesions, bruises, abscesses, and arthritis can also increase the risk of contamination.

## Carcass impacts

Carcasses with minor contamination may only require trimming of affected areas. If carcasses are chemically contaminated this could result in the whole carcass being condemned.

## Prevention

Making sure that pigs are not overly full when they are placed on the truck may help to reduce this issue through reduced gut volume. Ensuring that pens are relatively clean can help to reduce buildup of environmental contaminants on the skin, although processing will normally remove this. Managing diseases, antibiotic withholding periods and chemical residues within a herd can also reduce the risk of contamination occurring.



Source: MINTRAC



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