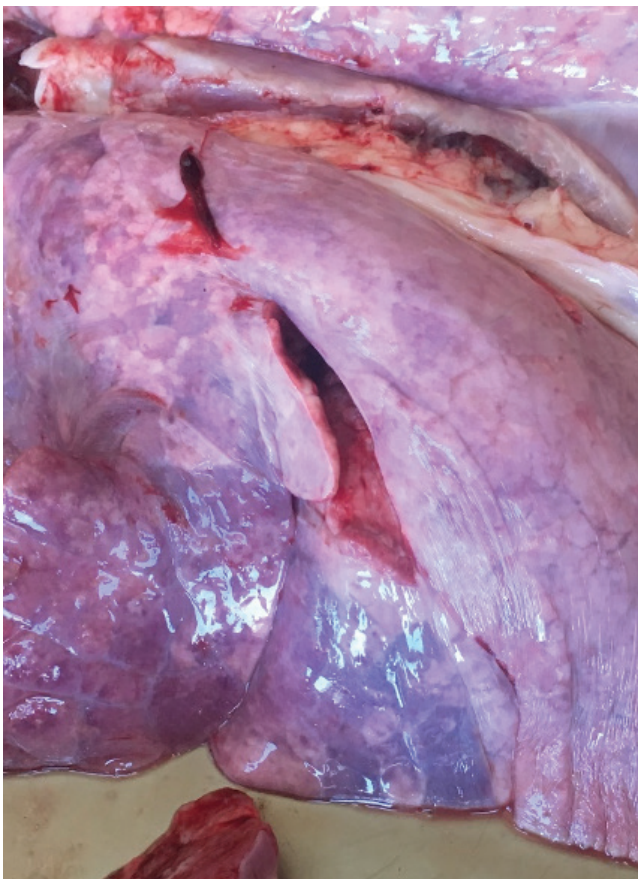


PNEUMONIA

What is the disease?

Pneumonia is an infection that causes damage and inflammation of the alveoli in one or both lungs. Depending upon the cause of the pneumonia, infection can also be present in the tonsils, trachea and/or bronchi (bronchopneumonia) leading to the accumulation of fluid and pus.

When pneumonia first impacts on a herd, widespread coughing may be seen, with more developed cases showing severe signs of respiratory distress including rapid breathing, loss of body condition, dehydration, inappetence, fever, poor circulation and discharge from the eyes.



Bronchopneumonia in the anterior ventral lobes • Source: R Fogarty

Disease on farm

Pneumonia is not common in mature animals; however, it is common in progeny pigs with 80% of herds in Australia having mycoplasmal pneumonia as a primary lung pathogen. Leading bacterial causes are *mycoplasma*, *actinobacillus*, *pasteurella*, *haemophilus*, with porcine circovirus also a primary viral pathogen.

How is it spread?

Pneumonia is caused predominately by bacteria and is spread by coughing pigs. Vaccines do not eliminate the disease or stop its spread but reduce its severity. After an animal becomes infected, the disease is most likely to spread from pig to pig through direct contact or through airborne means but may also be spread by contaminated feed, water, clothing and other shared implements.

Factors increasing the risk of disease spread include overcrowding, poor ventilation, incorrect temperature/humidity, dust, stress, poor nutrition, animal movements, bringing in new animals and the presence of other diseases or infections.

Carcass impact

The lungs will be condemned and if there is pleural involvement, the pleura and/or ribs may also be trimmed/condemned. If there are signs of acute systemic involvement, then the whole carcass will be condemned.

Treatment

As pneumonia can be caused by a variety of different bacteria or viruses, consult a veterinarian for treatment.

All-in all-out production flows and age segregation are useful in managing the impact of this disease, and depopulation programs have proven to be a successful approach to eliminating the disease from a production system.

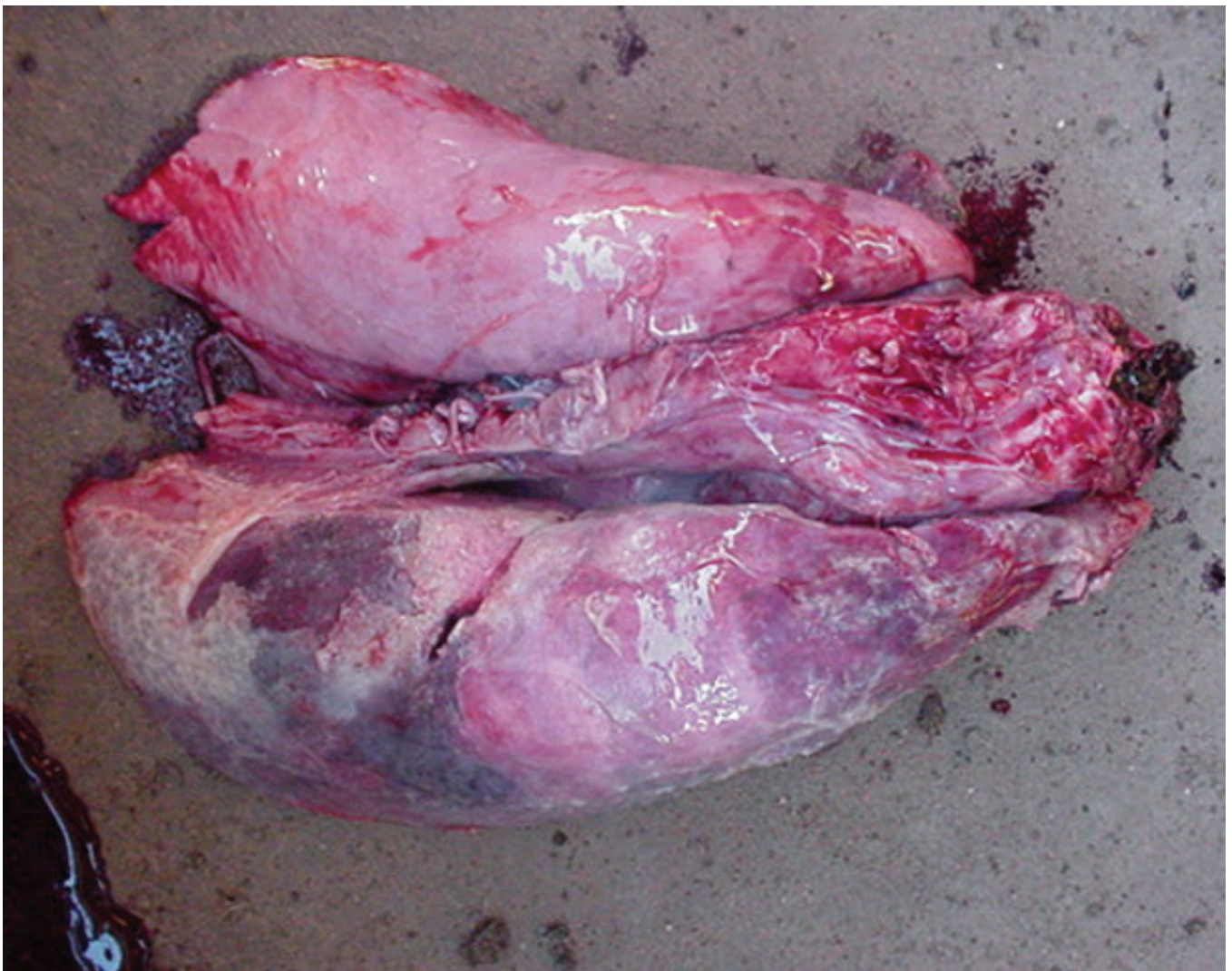
Prevention

To prevent pneumonia occurring within a herd it is important to develop and implement biosecurity practices that will prevent the spread of pathogens i.e. avoid introductions of live pigs into the herd. Operating practices need to incorporate the maintenance of high levels of hygiene, appropriate stocking densities, strict environmental control and good handling practices.

Vaccines for certain types of pneumonia are available at the advice of a veterinarian. They tend to reduce the clinical severity of the disease but will not eliminate it.



Resolving lung abscess often associated with pleuropneumonia • Source: Holyoake & Fahy Pig Research Centre



Typical pleuropneumonia affected lung during the acute stage is only one side of the lungs affected, extensive pleurisy over the lesions, evidence of haemorrhage and necrosis in the affected lobes • Source: Holyoake & Fahy Pig Research Centre