



Needle-free injections are safer, faster, and animal friendly

The AcuShot needle-less device Myron Peters of Select Weanlings of Rosenfeld, MB uses to inject thousands of pigs leaving his facility is safer, faster, better use of the vaccine product, and is animal and user friendly compared to injecting weanlings using the traditional poke 'em with a needle method.

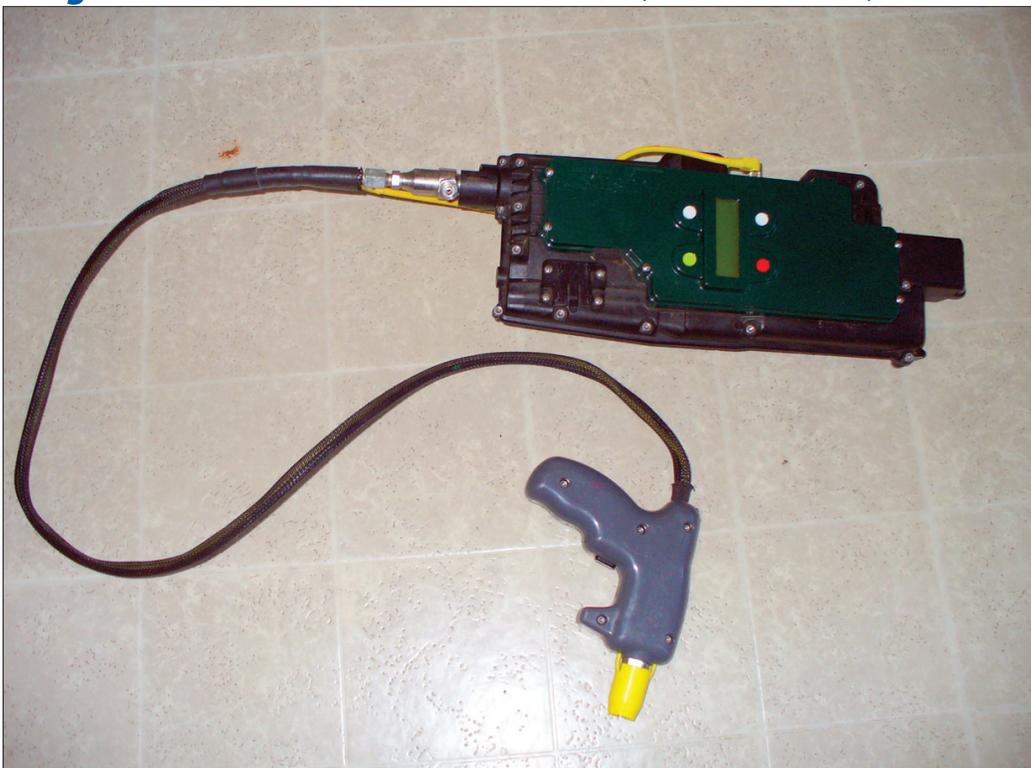
"It is faster doing vaccinations, especially when doing hundreds at a time because you don't have to change vaccine bottles," said Peters in a recent interview from his barn office. "I believe there will be a benefit, we'll know better, shortly, by getting better use of the vaccine because you get the Subcutaneous and the trans-dermal effect where the vaccine actually has more use in that trans-dermal area."

The barn manager likes the fact the weanlings don't even flinch when injected.

"It's as if they don't even know it is happening; no screaming and no muscle tightening," he said. "The hole is about 1/8 the size of a hole created by a normal needle. It is much less intrusive, less stressful on weanlings going out the door. They don't have to recover from a needle injection."

Select Weanlings is a multiplier barn with purebred DanBred animals running about 1,200 to 1,300 sows.

"We raise and create breeding stock for the commercial barns that buy from us," said Peters. "We usually ship our weanlings at about 24 days. All our gilts go to



The AcuShot power cylinders act much like a gas shock absorber on a car. The power cylinder is retracted by an electric motor, powered by a rechargeable battery. As the power cylinder retracts, it draws the injectable solution into the injector. When releasing the power cylinder, by using the double triggering mechanism, the cylinder forces the injectable solution through the orifice of the injector, penetrating the skin of the animal and applying the solution to the desired location.

Nebraska and our barrows go to Iowa."

Peters chose the AcuShot needle-less system because the industry is moving in that direction and he liked the service Cal Funk of AcuShot offered and the training provided to get them going, safely and accurately.

"Once the company did the basic training, about an hour, we were on our way," said Peters. "It is quite user friendly and easy to clean. It is almost like Windows Vista - if you do something wrong, it tells you how to remedy easily, and quickly."

Dr. Tony Nikkel, the corporate veterinarian for Puratone Corporation at Niverville, MB likes the needle-less injection system because of the potential of saving money in using less vaccine product, health and safety in the workplace, and from a packer and consumer viewpoint, food safety.

Dr. Nikkel recognized about a year ago,

the industry was likely going the direction of needle-free, particularly for mass injections. The topic of intra-dermal injection tweaked his interest. "This involves your run of the mill vaccines, normally used in pigs, and putting them into the skin at a lower dose, thereby saving money in the cost of the vaccine."

Following some other work on the issue, he ran some trials using the more common vaccines he used in the company's pig population.

"The initial results show in some cases you actually do get a better immune response using the same vaccine, same dose, but pushed through a needle-free device, instead of the needle," said Dr. Nikkel.

The needle-free devices are much more welfare friendly for injecting product into animals.

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"It causes much less pain than a needle because it makes a much smaller hole through the skin of the pig: eight or ten times smaller than the hole from the needle," he said. "There is a general feeling the weanling has much less pain after the injection. It becomes quite evident when you watch the needled pigs as compared to the needle-free vaccinated pigs, there is much less screaming and yelling from those pigs. It is quite noticeable immediately."

Cal Funk, Director of Business Development for AcuShot Inc. said, "It's been exciting to witness the advent of AcuShot needle-free technology and its entry into the global market place. So many livestock and poultry producers have commented on how glad they are to finally see a reliable, safe, and cost effective alternative to needles."

AcuShot Inc, with head offices in Winnipeg, MB has distributors in Scandinavia, Germany and the Netherlands and in the UK shortly. The company has marketing agreements in the US, Mexico, Korea and Japan with staff selling directly to producers in Canada.

"We do not require CO2," said Funk. "Our power cylinders act much like a gas shock absorber on your car. The power cylinder is retracted by an electric motor, powered by a rechargeable battery. As the power cylinder retracts, it draws the injectable solution into the injector. When releasing the



Myron Peters, Barn Manager of Select Weanlings, Rosenfeld, MB likes the AcuShot needle-free technology because it saves time, is safer to use, and causes much less stress on the animals.

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Peters of Select Weanlings believes it sends a real positive message to the consumer when the hog industry is focusing on making better use of the vaccine, greater care for the animal, and no chance of broken needles.

"There is no chance of a broken needle, and if we improve the use of the vaccine, it is a huge benefit to the consumer," he said. •

— By Harry Siemens
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