



# HOG COUNTRY

Serving Western Canada's Hog Producers

## Striving For Excellence at Banff Pork Seminar

### F.X. AHERNE PRIZE FOR INNOVATIVE PORK PRODUCTION

The very real threat that livestock haulers can also carry disease has created ongoing efforts to ensure that tractors and trailers are thoroughly cleared of manure and other organic material between loads.

Among those at the leading edge of improving safety for pigs and producers is Manitoba-based Steve's Livestock Transport, whose subsidiary, Blue Water Wash, operates truck and trailer washes in Red Deer, Alta., Blumenort, Man. and Brandon, Man.

Ever mindful of how difficult it is to effectively cleaning the undersides and wheel wells of truck trailers, Blue Water Wash has developed and installed an undercarriage washing system at its Blumenort site.

Its system utilizes a series of rotating pressure heads mounted in the floor. The heads each contain a set of nozzles that spray water into every nook and cranny in the trailer's undercarriage at 580 pounds per square inch (four million Pascal). The undercarriage wash takes a little more than two minutes.

On Jan. 11, Day 1 of the Banff Pork Seminar, Bill Rempel from the firm's Red Deer site accepted the annual F.X. Aherne Prize, which set up to recognize innovations that improve safety and efficiency in pork facilities.

The award was created and developed in memory of the late Frank Aherne, a researcher and professor in swine nutrition at the University of Alberta and co-founder of the Banff Pork Seminar.

Rempel said he and his co-workers at Blue Water Wash have identified some improvements that could be made in the design of their undercarriage washing and disinfecting system. Those changes will be included in new systems to be installed at the Red Deer and Brandon sites.

He said he has seen mixed results from a new type of disinfectant that was on display in the Banff Pork Seminar's trade floor. However, he qualified his findings by stating that Blue Water Wash has not used the full line of products recommended in its system, including a spray that will show any build-up of biofilm.

Laura Iorio, a sales agent for OE Nano Advantage, said a non-toxic disinfectant based on Nano technology was developed by a research team

from Edmonton for biosecurity and infection control of facilities in the protein industry. It is most effective when used in a five-step process that includes initial cleaning through follow-up with a "finder" after disinfection. The finder works in a similar fashion to a product called Luminol, which is employed by forensic technicians looking for traces of human blood.

"We have an ultra-enzymatic cleaner . . . that utilizes enzymes, so that it digests the proteins," said Iorio.

The surfaces are then sprayed with chlorhexidine, commonly used to prepare skin for surgery, to disinfect surfaces. The chlorhexidine is formulated to remain on the surface after it dries, providing continual protection against bacterial growth, said Iorio.

OE Nano developed its technology and processes as an alternative to harsh chemicals that are potentially harmful to workers and the environment, she said.

"You get into confined spaces and you've got all these various chemicals interacting with each other, it's not good for the workers, it's not good for the animals, and the by-product of using all of that is it's going into the soil and it just keeps perpetuating through nature."

OE Nano's line of products biodegrade in the septic system and will not leave harmful residues, said Iorio.

"We're going to save you a ton of money, because you're not going to use as much."

Additionally, barn managers and truck washes following the system as recommended can feel assured that their surfaces are properly cleaned and disinfected, she said. •



Laura Iorio

— By Brenda Kossowan  
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Article appeared in February March 2017 edition of *Prairie Hog Country* on page 15.



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