



The Canadian pork value chain will soon have access to new technology adopted by veterinarians, pork producers and packers in other countries for more than 10 years. Pfizer's IMPROVEST™ received marketing clearance from Health Canada in 2011.

IMPROVEST is a protein that works like an immunization to help protect against boar taint without physical castration. It uses the pig's own immune system to temporarily interrupt testicular function. This allows animals to grow with all the advantages of intact males until the second dose. And since male pigs given IMPROVEST are not physically castrated, the risks of infection or death associated with the removal of testicles are eliminated, decreasing mortality by 1.5%.

Studies confirm that intact male pigs eat less feed and produce more meat, increasing feed efficiency by 7–10% or more. Because intact male pigs eat less feed and produce more pork, there is potential for a reduction in the carbon footprint by as much as 3.6% versus barrows.

IMPROVEST creates an opportunity to capture more value from male pigs. Male pigs are given IMPROVEST later in the finishing phase to manage boar taint as well as male behaviour, so they're able to grow to their full potential more efficiently.

Pork products from pigs which have received IMPROVEST have proven to be excellent quality and safe to eat. IMPROVEST is not transferred to the meat. IMPROVEST has been approved for use in 63 countries, including all of the EU, Japan, the United States and now Canada.

Pfizer has begun pilot projects with IMPROVEST with a number of swine veterinarians, their pork-producing clients and packers across the country. The purpose of a gradual introduction through pilot projects is to ensure a coordinated food chain effort and adoption of best practices. Pfizer Animal Health will work with veterinarians, producers and packers to optimize the benefits from IMPROVEST within different systems, different genetics and different packer models.

Until now, the most reliable way to reduce boar taint has been to physically castrate male piglets early in life or to slaughter them at light weights prior to the risk of boar taint becoming an issue.

Peter van Vloten, Team Leader for IMPROVEST in Canada will describe how IMPROVEST works, how it is implemented on farm and how it will advance production, quality and animal care in the context of pork production today.

[For more information, contact:](#)

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