



Sam presents a piglet to the AcuShot for its CircoFlex shot.

## An easier way to inject pigs

The piglet's neck is presented to the injector whilst the ham pushes against a red button, which triggers the injection

By Sam walton

I spent the best part of a day on Richard Bradley's unit on top of the Yorkshire Wolds, putting a new needle-free injector through its paces. The AcuShot, from Canada, was launched at Pig Fair, where it created a lot of interest.

If I can operate the thing, having not injected a pig for 13 years, then I guess anyone can.

The first task we were given to do was to give 167 weaners from 14 sows — normal for litter sizes on this unit — their Boehringer CircoFlex vaccine.

The AcuShot can be used for anything between a day old chick and a full grown bullock.

The working part of the machine can be mounted on a swivel stand which can be fastened to any suitable surface, for instance the edge of a meal barrow.

Piglets are presented to the machine with the injection part to the neck whilst the side of the ham pushes against

a round red button, which triggers the injection.

There are no marks on the skin and no bleeding. It is very quick. Iron injections in the ham means turning the pigs round so the shoulder presses the button.

For larger animals the machine can be carried as a backpack, or on the hips, with a plastic tube extension and hand-held gun. This means dry sows in straw yards and sows in maternity crates can easily be injected without the trauma of needles.

A different gas-filled cylinder is used for the various types of animal to give the amount of power required.

Calibration from 0.1cc in bands of 0.1cc upwards to 2.5cc means if you need 10ccs, you simply pull the trigger four times. There is a fail-safe to stop you giving more than the required amount.

It may look a complicated piece of

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kit but actually it isn't, once you see it in operation. When it is taken off its rigid stand it isn't all that big so is easily carried.

There are different ways of attaching various sized bottles. If you want to do a lot of pigs there is a way of having a large plastic bag filled with the product so you don't have to keep stopping to change say a 20cc syringe or a 100ml bottle, which would be what most needle injections would use.

I believe there is going to be a place for the AcuShot. It is much less stressful on the animals and I guess also the operators. There are no blunt, damaged or dirty needles, and no having the wrong-sized needles for the injections in hand. Also there is no blood, and no subsequent sores. And there is no danger of injecting yourself.

Those who inject pigs regularly will know that once you begin to squeeze the syringe, the animal invariably starts to move away, causing you to administer too much or too little.

Anyone treating weaned piglets can operate this on their own. instead of having two people.

Ray Rochester and Kimmo Atkinson, of Vetsonic, are marketing the machine over here. Ray has had more response to his advert for the gun than any from other product.



## Irony enters minister's soul

Well done south-west producer Bill Jones... you have won Farmex's caption competition and a bottle of best Chateau Crabtree Champagne is on its way to you. The minister's speech bubble is doubtless prompted by the impressive grasp that Messrs Houston and Crabtree were displaying of all pig industry matters when they spoke to him at Pig Fair. On the other hand, it is just conceivable that Lord Rooker is being deeply ironic.



**BERNARD BEDINGFIELD RETIRES** Bernard Bedingfield, a well-known figure throughout the British pig industry, has retired after more than 40 years involvement with the engineering and building side of the trade. A key figure in the development of Suffolk-based Quality Equipment (G. E. Baker Ltd), he has helped farmers with both major and minor projects as far apart as Scotland and Cornwall.

## Europe pig herd stable, says Brussels committee

The Brussels pigmeat management committee's view of the European pig market continues to surprise the British pig industry. In June the committee decided the European market is 'stable' (which demonstrably it isn't), but that prices could rise further.