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## THE GAP IN GAPs: SOME KEY LESSONS FOR UPTAKE AND POLICY

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### INTRODUCTION

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) certification with quality labels as signals is a central component of modern consumer policy in developed agri-food market systems (Jahn et al 2005). In developing country settings where informal markets remain dominant preferred outlets for food, establishing credible GAP certification schemes pose institutional and policy challenges (Lapar and Tiongco 2011, Reardon and Farina 2002). Previous experience of GAPs in developing country settings has shown mixed results, mainly in horticulture (UNCTAD 2007; Schreinemachers et al., 2012; Ha et al. 2014; Montano et al., 2016). In Vietnam and for livestock, VietGAHP has been rolled out through a development project (LIFSAP). Important policy questions remain unanswered. Are GAPs such as VietGAHP effective? Are there sufficient incentives to engender adoption and compliance? Are these transferable and scalable? We investigate VietGAHP adoption and evaluate impacts using quantitative and qualitative indicators. The findings provide empirical evidence to guide strategies for uptake and scaling.

### RESEARCH APPROACH

- Identify exposed site (Dien Chau district) and non-exposed site (Hung Nguyen district) in Nghe An Province, one of the project sites of LIFSAP (Livestock Competitiveness and Food Safety Project), and a study site of the Pig Risk project.
- Semi-structured surveys on 112 pig raising households and focus group discussions (FGDs, two in each commune, 10 men and 10 women) were implemented.

Study sites in Nghe An province	Exposed sites (Dien Chau District)		Non-exposed site (Hung Nguyen District)
	Adopters	Non-adopters	Control
<b>Semi-structured survey (pig raising households)</b>	42	40	30
<b>Focus group discussions</b>	Dien Tho commune: 10 men, 10 women Dien Trung commune: 10 men, 10 women		Hung Phuc commune: 10 men, 10 women



Focus group discussions in Nghe An. Photo by VNUA

<sup>1</sup>(Good Animal Husbandry Practices), promulgated through Decision 1506/QĐ-BNN-KHCN dated 15 May 2008. A revised set of guidelines based on the original VietGAHP but targeting household-based pig production was issued in 2011 (MARD 2011). VietGAHP includes 29 practices on which compliance for VietGAHP certification is being evaluated.

<sup>2</sup>Livestock Competitiveness and Food Safety Project, funded by the World Bank and implemented by MARD.

### RESULTS



VietGAHP adopters use posters and other communication materials to increase awareness about compliance with good practices, such as biosecurity measures as shown above. Photo by VNUA.

- 40% of adopters had high compliance with VietGAHP practices. Feed and water practices had high levels of compliance by at least half of the adopters; only 1 in 10 adopters had high compliance with keeping records and waste management practices.
- Incidence of mortality was higher among non-adopters (1.3%) than adopters (0.7%), but similar with the control group (1.4%).
- More non-adopters reported deaths in their pig herd (10 out of 40) as compared with adopters (2 out of 42), and the control (7 out of 30).
- Fewer adopters reported having sick pigs (17 out of 42) as compared with non-adopters (26 out of 40), and the control (23 out of 30).
- Adopters had shorter production cycle (a week shorter), higher productivity (13% higher liveweight per head), more pigssold (89% higher per household), and heavier pigs sold (10% heavier/head) (Table 1).
- There were no significant differences in total production costs between adopters and non-adopters, although there were differences in input cost shares (Table 2).

Table 1: Production metrics, comparison between adopters and non-adopters, exposed site

Indicator	Adopter	Non-adopter	Remark
Length of a cycle (days)	95.0	102.5	Shorter production cycle
Kg liveweight/head produced	66.3	58.6	higher liveweight/head
Ave. no. of pigs sold/HH	12.5	6.6	more pigs sold/hh
Total liveweight pigs sold/HH	828.4	395.7	Higher volume sold
Kg liveweight/head sold	66.3	60	heavier pig sold
Selling price/kg liveweight	37.4	36	higher selling price

Table 2: Production cost, revenues, and profit (calculated for 100kg gained weight)

	Unit	VietGAHP exposed		Non-exposed	All
		Adopter	Non-adopter	Non-adopter	
Breeding stock	000d	489.94	554.22	596.25	541.37
Concentrate feed	000d	195.20	375.80	110.74	237.08
Complete feed	000d	1268.43	575.92	2135.70	1253.41
Rice bran	000d	606.79	778.28	313.98	589.61
Maize bran	000d	241.02	521.75	181.58	325.36
Other raw feed	000d	33.63	63.67	61.00	51.69
Veterinary	000d	43.30	29.55	26.27	33.83
Others	000d	22.11	16.64	10.51	17.05
Total	000d	2900.4	2915.8	3436.0	3049.4
Revenue	000d	4554.7	4486.3	4804.8	4597.3
Profit	000d	1654.3	1570.4	1368.8	1547.9

Notes: 1. Exchange rate: 1USD = 22,000 VND at the time of survey. 2. Production cost is calculated based on the latest production cycle.

Source of data: ILRI-VNUA VietGAHP adoption survey, 2015.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- Productivity gains from adoption are possible from a more streamlined version of VietGAHP that is less costly to implement and could encourage uptake by a wider, more economically diverse group of users.
- Exposure via demonstration effects could facilitate scaling up. Non-adopters in exposed sites have been observed to apply practices that are affordable, easy to apply, and aligned with VietGAHP guidelines.
- Peer-to-peer learning is an effective strategy to enhance capacity for uptake; capacity development of target users who could transition as trainers to potential adopters could be explored.
- Producers recognize economic incentives from healthier pigs that are preferred by traders. Market incentives from consumer demand for VietGAHP pork in fresh pork markets remains to be tapped.
- Future work will continue to explore credible market signals of VietGAHP that consumers trust and are willing to pay for, with complementary supporting institutions to support uptake.

