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TITLE
ONLINE MONITOR OF PIG HEALTH IN THE NETHERLANDS: BENEFITS AND CONCERNS

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CONTENT
Background
The Dutch pig health monitoring system is extended with an obligatory clinical signs surveillance by practitioners, the Online Monitoring. This system provides useful health information for the industry but also encounters challenges like sustainable data entry via motivated participants.
The Dutch pig health monitoring system is carried out by GD Animal Health in Deventer. Since 2002 GD collects and analyses disease data from approximately 2500 submissions for post mortem investigation, 1400 veterinary questions to a telephone helpdesk and 30 farm visits by GD specialists. As from 2016 this monitoring is complemented with the Online Monitor, recording also health data.

Method
Using an online application, veterinary practitioners register during monthly farm visits whether clinical signs are present. If so, they record the age group involved (piglets, finishers, sows), 'syndrome' (e.g. respiratory problems), main clinical signs (e.g. coughing) and most likely diagnosis (e.g. Influenza). Registering health data using the Online Monitor is made compulsory by the pig industry. Practitioners receive monthly overviews of the reported health issues compared to national and regional results.

Results
By 2018 approximately 80% of all Dutch pig farms have monthly records in the Online Monitor. The system enables estimation of the prevalence of health problems, even if the prevalence is low, due to the fact that from many herds disease data but also the absence of clinical signs are recorded. Furthermore, seasonal fluctuations and differences between consecutive years can be assessed.

Conclusion
The Dutch Online Monitor provides very useful data for practitioners and the pig industry, but the quality of the data is a concern. On the longer term, it is necessary to keep participants motivated to continue recording data, for instance by making interactive digital dashboards to provide practitioner and farmers opportunities to analyse their own data in near real-time.