The Canadian Swine Health Intelligence Network
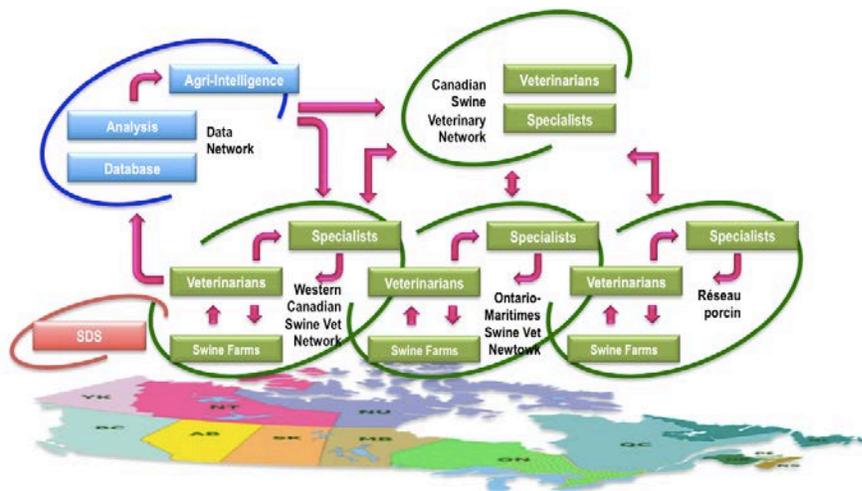
The Canadian Swine Health Intelligence Network was developed based on the recommendations of a report commissioned by the Canadian Swine Health Board. The study identified gaps in Canadian surveillance for emerging diseases of swine such as Porcine Circovirus.   Gaps in knowledge, the use of laboratories, communication between stakeholders, commitment to and lack of coordination in responses were identified. The Canadian Swine Health Intelligence network is a combination of a formal communication network of swine health professionals and syndromic data obtained from veterinary records. Its purpose is to operate a swine health intelligence network that will add value to the swine industry by helping to manage health conditions on the farm, provide infrastructure to identify, verify and assist with the control of events and to support Canada's pig and pork markets.

The Swine Veterinarian Communication Network

The social network component consists of three regional networks [Canada-West Swine Health Intelligence Network, Ontario Animal Health Network-Swine, Quebec RAIZO (Réseau porcin)] that include all swine health professionals (practitioners, researchers, pathologists, and epidemiologists). A panel in each region meets each quarter during the same week to review changes to swine health during the previous three months. Information

used consists of the results from a Clinical Impressions Survey sent to all members of the network, laboratory findings, input from the Chief Veterinary Officers, the CFIA, a review of international changes to swine health and, in western Canada, reports from a veterinary practice based syndromic data network. Representatives of the regions then meet about two weeks later to discuss the findings in each region.

A short report summarizing findings for practitioners and another for producers are shared with a few weeks. The system was based on the Réseau porcin that has operated in Quebec for a decade.

Industry and veterinary representatives review the reports and other communications. Their role is to ensure that information is correct and with proper context, particularly if potentially sensitive. The broader decision-making body of the CSHIN consists of the funding groups, the Canadian Pork Council and the Canadian Association of Swine Veterinarians. The knowledge gained by the network provides assistance with a coordinated response and communications when disease events may occur. Although established to deal with emerging health challenges, the primary function of the network is to provide a means of increasing the knowledge and ability of the veterinarians to assist the industry with ongoing health challenges. The first meetings and reports were held in July 2012 and have continued every quarter since. The response by the veterinarians has been strongly positive to the CSHIN with more than 90% of pork production represented by participating veterinarians.