

Use of COMBAT-Comprehensive Online Management and Biosecurity Assessment tool – in 21 farms in Spain



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INTRODUCTION

One of the pillars of the prevention, control and eradication of Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome is the biosecurity. Identifying and managing internal risks, external risks, management procedures and location of the farms are key factors to help farmers and veterinarians to evaluate and improve the level of biosecurity. Boehringer Ingelheim has developed COMBAT (Comprehensive Online Management and Biosecurity Assessment Tool) that allows pig producers to identify areas of improvement and to correct high risk practices¹. The objective of this study is to evaluate the biosecurity level of a group of Spanish farms using COMBAT.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

COMBAT is based on a set of 58 questions to be answered directly in the application (COMBAT App) or online². The relative risks are calculated in 4 categories: Internal risks (IR), External risks (ER), Location risks and management risks. The risk evaluation output is visualized in a circle chart. 21 Spanish farms completed COMBAT on-line between August 17th and November 17th.

RESULTS

The individual COMBAT scores of the 21 Spanish farms compared with the IR & ER of farms around the world are shown in Figure 1. The most important findings are:

Internal Risks:

- 43% of farms don't have boots and clothes restrictions on people moving between production areas.
- 10% of farms don't clean and disinfect farrowing, nursery or finishing rooms.
- 10% of producers don't use commercial modified live vaccine.

External risks:

- 67% of producers don't have requirements on drying time following the washing of the vehicles used to transport animals.
- 62% of producers don't mark flow restrictions on vehicles used to transport animals.
- 22% of farms receive gilts from a ELISA positive farm.
- 45% of producers are not aware of the use of disinfectant on vehicles used to transport animals.
- 77% of farms have their dead animals managed by another company.

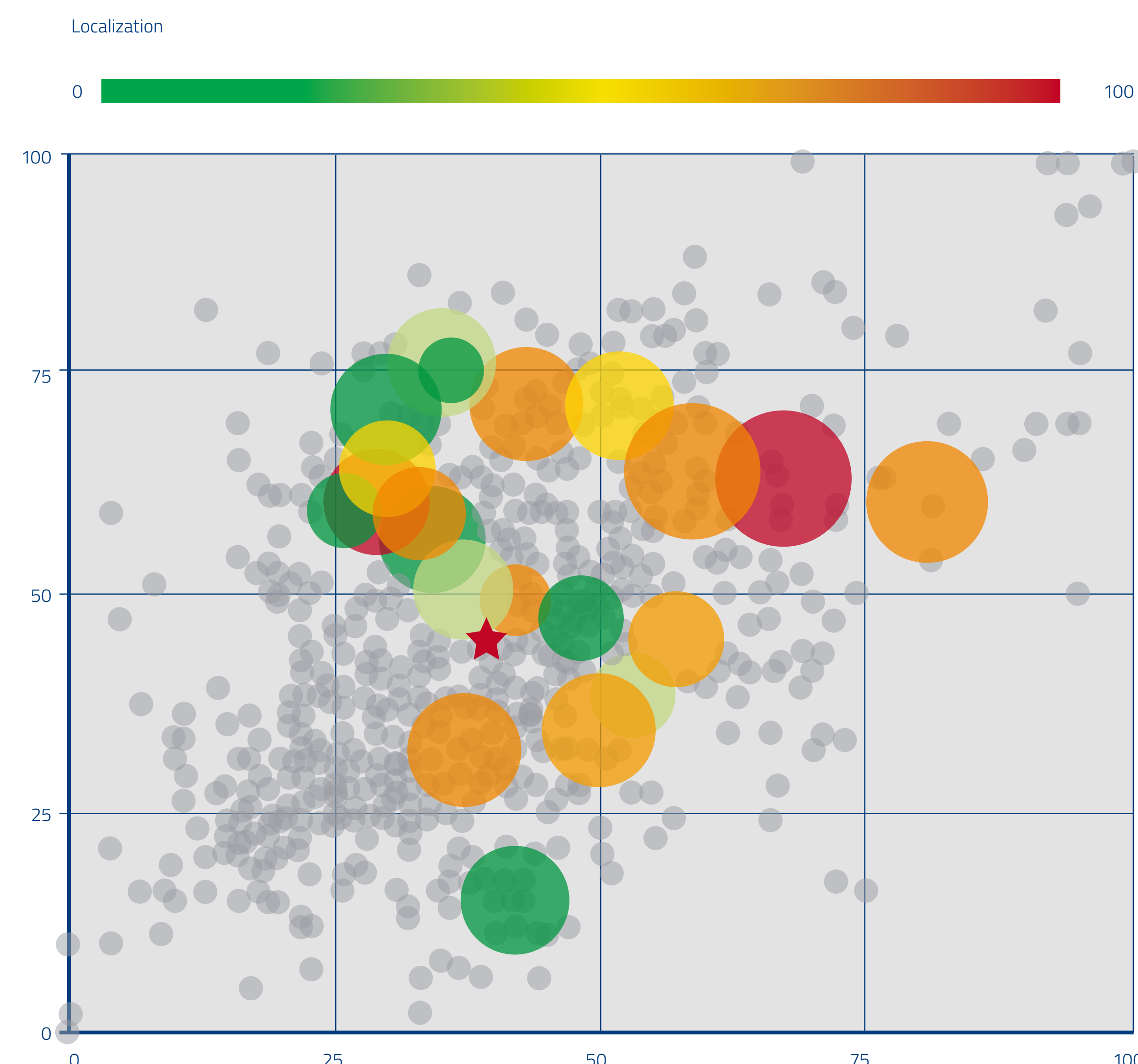
Location risks:

- 45% of farms are located in an area with at least one more farm within 3 km radius.
- In 72% of the farms the nearest neighboring pig farm is PRRS positive.

Management risks:

- 30% of farms don't follow a strict all in all out system.
- 42% of farms leave sometimes weaned piglets in the farrowing room.
- In 32% of farms, pigs younger than 6 months, may have contact with sows or gilts.
- 35% of farms mix piglets from different age groups..

Figure 1. 4 dimension circle chart indicating the internal risk (x-axis), External risks (Y-axis), risks related to location (circle color) and the quality of management and pig flow (size of the circle) in 21 Spanish farms.



DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A successful PRRS control must include taking actions to reduce the risk of new virus introduction, spreading, shedding and transmission. COMBAT is a tool that allows producers to measure risks and benchmark against other production sites. It also helps the producer understand and manage constraints that affect a PRRS control program.

REFERENCES

1. Rathkjen et al 2017 APVSC
2. <http://combat.org/>

