# Introducing Dr. Catalina Picasso to the MSHMP Group

We are excited to introduce our participants and recipients to Dr. Catalina (Cata) Picasso who will be working with the Morrison Swine Health Monitoring Project for the near future. She is a veterinary epidemiologist working on the integration of research and science for the epidemiological and economic assessment of animal health programs. Her primary interest is to use science to inform decision-makers in the development of strategies and policies to mitigate the impact of infectious diseases in animals and human populations.

After receiving her DVM in 2009 in her home country, Uruguay, Cata worked as a government veterinarian for 6 years. Her decision to pursue her graduate degrees brought her to the University of Minnesota in 2014 where she completed her masters (2014) and her PhD (2019). Her graduate work was on the epidemiology and diagnosis of Bovine tuberculosis using Bayesian tools. She focused on the implementation of analytical tools such as epi-diagnostics, network analysis, risk assessment, and modeling to evaluate current disease management programs and identify areas of improvement. These findings were utilized to enhance the bovine tuberculosis control program in Uruguay.

Cata currently works as a postdoctoral associate at the Center for Animal Health and Food Safety at the University of Minnesota. She is part of the Data Analyses Research Team (DART) focusing on building the capacity of epidemiological tools to improve animal health and food safety globally. She is also an associate professor at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Uruguay where she teaches statistics and advanced epidemiology courses.

Dr. Picasso's in depth understanding of pathogen dynamics, quantitative epidemiology, diagnostics strategies, data analysis, and background of international veterinary services provides her with a unique and valuable approach to animal disease work.

As part of the MSHMP team, she will be focusing on data collected from swine transportation trucks, working towards multiple goals. The overarching project goal is to gain a better understanding of different movement patterns within a production system, and how those affect disease spread within the system. After untangling this difficult question Cata will be working on how this translates into applied and meaningful surveillance and control strategies that can be used by a system to prevent infectious disease introduction and spread within the industry.

Those of us at the MSHMP team are very excited to have Cata working with us. We know she will be an asset to the team and to the swine industry as well.