



U.S. Pork Response African Swine Fever Prevention

On September 5, 2018, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Food and Drug Administration officials met with U.S. pork sector groups – including the American Association of Swine Veterinarians, the National Pork Board, the National Pork Producers Council and the Swine Health Information Center – to evaluate additional measures to prevent the spread to the United States of African swine fever (ASF) currently active in China and some European nations. Diagnostic preparedness, surveillance and response to infection were also discussed. We will provide updates on these topics shortly.

The following Q&A reflects topics discussed and the status of measures being taken to prevent an ASF outbreak in the United States.

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What is the status of testing of imported feed and feed additives?

USDA and FDA believe a variety of data gaps and other unknowns make it impossible to accurately define or validate feed risk. Without the ability to accurately determine the potential risk associated with feed, the design and implementation of a feed testing strategy is not currently feasible. In addition to data and other information gaps, USDA and FDA cite these factors:

- Logistics issues -- including the availability of validated test and sampling methods, determination of entities to conduct sampling, and funding sources for testing and storage or shipping-related charges while product is held -- that would present challenges.
- Potential consequences of testing, including the variety of industries impacted by testing, overlap of ingredients used for both human and animal food, and the likelihood that testing requirements would be imposed on U.S. exports of products.

To mitigate feed risk, U.S. pork is working directly with the feed industry to develop programs to address feed safety. The USDA and FDA are willing to help with these discussions and processes. Feed safety begins with a [list of questions](#) that pork producers should pose to their feed suppliers. Pork-industry funded research is exploring other potential risk-mitigation solutions, including: potential feed additive risk-reduction products, validating a way to reliably test bulk feed shipments for the presence of swine viral pathogens, potential holding time to allow any viruses present to degrade before processing, minimum infectious dose of ASF and FMD from feed materials, a HACCP-like approach, and blockchain to verify feed safety from the point of origin through delivery. The FDA is willing to facilitate expedited regulatory review of possible feed-additive products to address the animal health concerns associated with African swine fever and other foreign animal disease transmission.

Will Veterinary Diagnostic Labs (VDLs) honor requests to test feed?

Producers and feed/feedstuff distributors are requesting ASF virus PCR testing at VDLs where these capabilities exist. However, at this time, we are advising against this unofficial testing due to unintended consequences of “positive” findings on trade and because the true value of “negative” findings is unknown and may lead to a false sense of security. The USDA’s National Animal Health Laboratory Network will put out guidance directing the Veterinary Diagnostic Labs not to conduct unofficial foreign animal disease testing.

What is the status of meat imports from countries that are ASF positive?

The USDA’s Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) import restrictions prohibit the entry of untreated animal products, including meat and meat products, from countries with certain diseases. Fresh/frozen pork is prohibited from regions affected with foot-and-mouth disease, classical swine fever, swine vesicular disease and African swine fever, while meat that has been cooked to standards at least equivalent to those set by the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service is allowed under APHIS regulations.

What precautions are being taken specific to ASF outbreaks in Europe?

European outbreaks are investigated and managed by the individual country’s veterinary authorities. Affected regions are cordoned off from swine movement and pork trade with unaffected regions. The European Union is transparent in their review and zoning of the current ASF situation and APHIS is in regular contact with the EU about current zoning status. Safe trade in meat and meat products around the world is built on the understanding that government veterinary authorities in the country of origin inspect and certify products in accordance with the requirements of the country of destination. Imposing additional requirements – such as testing products for viruses after arrival in the country of destination – destroys the credibility of the certification system and leads to reciprocal, unwarranted testing of U.S. exports.

U.S. swine casings are shipped to China for processing and then shipped back to the U.S. What is the status of trade with this product?

Swine casings that originate from ASF positive countries/regions are prohibited entry into the United States under APHIS regulations. APHIS acted to deny entry of Chinese-origin swine casings in transit when ASF was found in China. APHIS regulations allow U.S.-origin swine casings shipped to ASF-affected countries/regions to be processed under certain conditions. APHIS is working, with the strong support of the casings industry, to review the processing of U.S.-origin swine casings in Chinese facilities. U.S. casings coming back to the United States are shipped with six weeks transit time to and from facilities in saturated brine solutions that will inactivate foreign animal diseases as referenced in World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines.

How is the Swine Health Protection Act being enforced to guard against spread through waste feeding?

Authority to ban the feeding of plate waste containing meat is under the regulatory authority of the states, not with the USDA. USDA has committed to evaluating the need to improve inspection of swine feeding sites licensed to feed plate food waste and enforcement on sites doing so that are unlicensed.

What about international garbage that come in on ships and planes?

APHIS has had controls in place for decades on international garbage, including food waste from ships, airlines and international conveyances. These controls require all international garbage to be disposed of appropriately and under APHIS supervision. Internationally transported garbage must be moved under seal to approved incineration facilities.

How is communication being handled around this situation?

USDA is setting up biweekly calls for U.S. pork industry stakeholders to provide updates and discuss ASF-related issues.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**USDA**

The USDA has set up and will update the following website dedicated to ASF.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/swine-health>

American Association of Swine Veterinarians

<https://www.aasv.org/aasv%20website/Resources/Diseases/ForeignAnimalDiseases.php>

National Pork Board

Many ASF and other foreign animal disease resources for producers can be found at www.pork.org/fad. These resources include information on the virus and biosecurity, international visitor guidelines, training materials for recognition of disease in pigs, and information on how to get ready to enroll in the [Secure Pork Supply Plan](#) for Continuity of Business.

National Pork Producers Council

NPPC published the following paper providing background on ASF and measures being taken to prevent its spread to the United States.

<http://nppc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Meat-of-the-Matter-ASF-August-2018-FINAL.pdf>

Swine Health Information Center

Domestic and Global Swine Disease Monitoring Reports

<https://www.swinehealth.org/global-disease-surveillance-reports/>

<https://www.swinehealth.org/domestic-disease-surveillance-reports/>

Swine Disease Matrix

<https://www.swinehealth.org/swine-disease-matrix/>

SHIC Rapid Response Program

<https://www.swinehealth.org/rapid-response-to-emerging-disease-program/>

Support for Diagnostic Fees

<https://www.swinehealth.org/shic-support-for-diagnostic-fees/>