



agriculture, land reform  
& rural development

Department:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Media Statement**

**29 May 2020**

### **AFRICAN SWINE FEVER UPDATE**

Following the first ever case of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Eastern Cape, the veterinary services have been conducting extensive epidemiological investigations and visiting areas to establish the extend of the outbreak. As of 22 May 23 villages were investigated, with 16 reporting that there have been pig deaths and seven reported no abnormal pig deaths. Further investigations are ongoing and more villages will be visited. Samples have been sent to the laboratory and thus far, two villages have tested positive with other test results still awaited.

A separate outbreak of ASF was reported on 15 May 2020 in the Mafube Local Municipality of the Free State, after of 38 of 70 pigs died on one farm. The source of the outbreak is being investigated, with possible connections to movement of animals and/or people.

Since the beginning of 2020, this is the third ASF outbreak reported. A new outbreak was reported from a continuing event since 2019, in the Lekwa Local Municipality, Mpumalanga.

For all these ASF outbreaks, the properties/areas were quarantined and movement controls from these properties/areas implemented. Mortalities were disposed of and registers kept of remaining pigs. Awareness drives highlighting essential biosecurity measures to enable pig owners to prevent infection of their pigs have been initiated.

The disease is transmitted to pigs through contact with infected wild or domestic pigs, infected soft ticks, contact with people, vehicle equipment or shoes and eating contaminated food waste, feed or garbage.

**You can keep your pigs safe by following these recommendations:**

- Enclose your pigs to prevent contact with pigs of unknown health status, including wild pigs and warthogs.
- Only buy healthy pigs from a reliable source.
- Preferably, do not feed kitchen waste, but if you have no option, remove all meats and cook the kitchen waste thoroughly.
- Not to allow visitors to have contact with your pigs.
- Before having contact with pigs, wash hands, only use clean clothes, shoes, equipment and vehicles (that have not been in contact with other pigs).

The department encourages taking lessons from Covid-19 and practicing good measures such as “**social distancing**”—keep your pigs confined, do not allow people access to your pigs, do not introduce new pigs whose health status and origin is unknown to you. “**Self-isolation**”—place new animals under quarantine before you introduce them to your herd until you are sure they are safe. “**Disinfection**”—regularly clean your sties and keep the environment clean at all times.

Where possible, upgrade your establishment/farm to a compartment with the advice and help of a local veterinarian or SAPPO.

**ASF does not affect humans and the consumption of pork is safe.** However, any meat and products from affected pigs can be a source of infection for other pigs. Farmers should therefore, ensure that swill is pre-cooked for at least an hour before it is fed to pigs. This will ensure the inactivation of the ASF virus, as well as other diseases of concern.

Farmers are requested to be vigilant and to report any sudden illness and deaths in their pigs to the local state veterinary office immediately so that swift action can be initiated to prevent the spread of this disease.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Reggie Ngcobo**

**Media Liaison Officer**

**Mobile: 082 883 2458**