



African swine fever

– Frequently asked questions



What is African swine fever?

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease of domestic and wild pigs.

Where is ASF found?

ASF has never been reported in New Zealand.

ASF is present in sub-Saharan Africa. The first reports of ASF outside Africa was in 1957 (Portugal) and subsequently other European Union countries (from 1960s to 1980s). ASF was eradicated from the European Union at that time, with the exception of Sardinia, Italy where the disease is endemic.

ASF was introduced into Georgia in 2007 and spread to the Caucasus region and Russian Federation. ASF spread to the European Union in 2014 and China in 2018. The ASF strain circulating in Europe and China is highly virulent and causes acute disease with high mortality in domestic and wild pigs.

Can I get ASF?

No. Pigs are the only animals that can be infected by ASF. It is not a food safety concern.

How do I recognise the signs of ASF in pigs?

The clinical signs of ASF range from mild to severe depending on the strain of virus. With the severe form, almost all affected pigs die. Less severe forms may result in milder clinical signs. Some clinical signs of ASF are:

- Appetite loss
- High fever
- Lethargy
- Weakness
- Blue blotching of the skin and extremities
- Eye and nasal discharge
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Abortions can occur in pregnant sows.
- Death (may be sudden with few signs prior).

ASF can look like other pig diseases that are present in New Zealand, so it is important to report any suspicions to your veterinarian or to Biosecurity New Zealand's Exotic Pest and Disease hotline **0800 80 99 66**.

What should I do if I suspect my pigs have been infected with ASF?

You should immediately phone your veterinarian or the Biosecurity New Zealand's Exotic Pest and Disease hotline **0800 80 99 66**.

Do not move pigs off your property. Separate the sick pigs from the rest of the herd and restrict visitors from entering their area. Use separate equipment, footwear and clothing when handling sick pigs.

How is ASF spread?

ASF can be spread directly from sick pigs to healthy pigs and through contact with infected bodily fluids and excretions (blood, urine, faeces). In Europe, the spread of ASF is mainly attributed to the movement of wild pigs.

Because ASF virus can survive for long periods of time in the environment, contaminated equipment (vehicles, clothing and foot wear, hunting gear) and animal feed can also be a source of ASF. ASF can persist for months to years in fresh and frozen pig meat; thus, ASF can be spread through feeding uncooked food waste to pigs.

What can I do to reduce the risk of my pigs getting ASF?

ASF virus can survive for a period of time in fresh, frozen, uncooked and partially cooked/processed pork products. If you are going to feed pigs food waste that contains meat or has come in contact with meat, make sure it has been heated to 100°C for at least 1 hour. This is a requirement under the Biosecurity (Meat and Food waste for Pigs) Regulations 2005. **Learn more about these regulations.**

To report a pest or disease

Call Biosecurity NZ's Exotic Pest and Disease hotline: 0800 80 99 66
www.biosecurity.govt.nz



ASF can be introduced onto your farm by people (e.g. through contaminated clothing, footwear, equipment, food) who have visited areas affected by ASF. Good on-farm biosecurity practices can help reduce the risk. Learn more about how you can develop your own on farm biosecurity measures from your industry body (www.nzpork.co.nz/sustainable-farming).

Does New Zealand import pig products from countries that have ASF and if so, what are we doing to ensure these imports are safe?

No live pigs are imported to New Zealand.

Personal consignments of pork products from any country are not allowed at all.

Some commercial pork products can be imported into New Zealand but only if they meet strict import conditions to ensure they are free from ASF.

Unprocessed (fresh or frozen pork) can only be imported from ASF-free countries, zones or regions. All other imported pork products must undergo a heat treatment process that destroys the ASF virus.

Biosecurity New Zealand receives rapid notifications of ASF disease outbreaks globally and continually reviews import conditions for pig products to ensure that they are appropriate.

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