



AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION
Member Communication



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Swine flu update

The AVA has been monitoring the international outbreak of swine flu and has issued a [media release](#) to inform the public about the important veterinary aspects of the outbreak.

At this stage it is a human health issue, with confirmed or suspected human cases reported in Mexico, US, Canada, France, Spain and New Zealand. While there have been a number of human deaths in Mexico, the confirmed cases elsewhere appear to be recovering from the illness.

While there are no reported cases yet among humans in Australia, Australian pig producers should enhance their biosecurity measures to exclude contact between pigs and people with any sign of fever or flu-like symptoms. Fever-detecting strips are available from most pharmacies and are easily used by placing them on the forehead of all people coming in contact with pigs. The AVA has been in touch with Australian Pork Limited to communicate these recommendations to pig producers.

The World Health Organization has posted some useful FAQs on its [website](#). If clients ask for information, the key points are:

- The disease seems to be transmitted from human to human via contact in Mexico.
- The symptoms are similar to the common flu.
- Doctors and health departments received information about what to do with any suspected cases.
- It's safe to eat pork. There have been no known cases from eating pork. In any case, the virus is inactivated as soon as the meat reaches 70°C during cooking.
- It's very unlikely that the disease will reach Australian pigs as we don't import any pigs.
- Pig farms in Australia have very high quarantine and biosecurity standards to minimise the risk of any disease being transmitted from pigs to humans.
- To avoid any chance of pigs becoming infected from a human with the disease, pig farmers should be extra careful about observing all the usual quarantine and biosecurity precautions, including disinfecting boots and wearing protective clothing. They should deny access to anyone showing flu signs, especially a fever. They can buy fever detecting strips from any pharmacy to test for signs of fever in workers or visitors in contact with pigs.

There is some more detailed advice for pig farmers available on the [AVA website](#), courtesy of Victoria's Department of Primary Industries.

FEEDBACK

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