



August 3 2009. 18:00

Issues Alert 18 - Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 INFLUENZA A/H1N1 confirmed in NSW piggery

- A diagnosis of Influenza A/H1N1 has been confirmed in pigs at a piggery in NSW. Workers at the piggery have been confirmed with having had influenza A H1N1.
- The farm has been quarantined, and movement controls (facilities, equipment and feed) have been instituted for pig premises around the affected piggery. Once the pigs are clear of clinical symptoms and approved by a qualified person (to be appointed by NSW DPI) as healthy, they will then be able to go to slaughter and enter the food chain. It is considered that the virus is eradicable from the pig herd in this piggery by the implementation of an agreed emergency response plan based on bio-security arrangements within the piggery and the progressive marketing of clinically healthy pigs
- APL, other livestock industries and state and federal governments are a signatory to the Emergency Animal Disease Agreement (EADRA) which goes to the response, management and funding of specified diseases such as swine influenza for eradication. (Under EADRA, swine influenza is a category 4 disease meaning that the costs of response and eradication are shared with industry funding 80 percent and governments 20 percent.)
- As required under EADRA, the National Management Group (NMG - comprising APL, state and federal governments and other key stakeholders) met this afternoon to consider the recommendations and emergency response plan agreed by the technical experts (APL and the state and federal CVOS and others) as well as other issues such as market access and communication.
- The NMG agreed to invoke the EADRA noting that this is the first recorded occurrence of any form of influenza in pigs in Australia (true classical swine influenza is common in nearly all other countries except New Zealand and pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has been reported in pigs in Canada and Argentina). Further apart from occupational health and safety implications, influenza in pigs has no a public health or food safety impacts.
- NSW DPI is the lead agency managing the situation and Australian Pork Limited is working closely with the NSW CVO, the office of the Australian Chief Veterinarian and the farm in question.
- With Influenza A/H1N1 confirmed in one Australian piggery, stringent biosecurity on-farm remains critical! APL recommends that visitors to a piggery should be discouraged. Piggery employees, especially those in close contact with the animals, should notify their manager or leading hand if any members of their family or any people they have frequent contact with are exhibiting flu or flu-like symptoms.

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- Both national and international food authorities firmly state that pork is safe to eat. It is impossible to contract Influenza A/H1N1 from eating pork and pork related products. There is no connection between pork products and this disease.
- APL has been liaising with the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer, who has progressed our request with the relevant health authorities to put pig farmers and workers (including vets) at the top of a list to be vaccinated when a vaccine becomes available (likely to be August). APL has made a request that abattoir workers also be given priority vaccination.
- APL has an updated Biosecurity Fact Sheet and Swine Influenza Fact Sheet as well as information for veterinarians. See the APL website for further information.
- No retail impact has been reported at this stage and no reported market access issues
- There has been extensive national media coverage of this outbreak in recent days. International reaction continues to be monitored.

ESCALATE YOUR ON-FARM BIOSECURITY!

With a diagnosis of Influenza A H1N1 found on an Australian piggery, it is **critical** that pork producers are vigilant with biosecurity to protect against disease incursion. If in doubt contact your vet. APL is recommending that all farms:

1. **Establish, implement and enforce strict sick leave policies for workers presenting influenza-like symptoms** such as fever, cough, body aches, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhoea.
 - Prevent anyone working with the pigs exhibiting these symptoms from coming to work for 7-10 days after presenting symptoms of respiratory illness, even mild ones.
 - Recommend that people with these symptoms be seen by a doctor immediately
 - Sick farm workers or family members should inform their doctor of their contact with pigs to obtain a medical certificate
 - Any person not able to get a medical certificate in these circumstances should contact their local public health unit
 - Encourage all farm workers especially those in close contact with the animals to notify the owner if any members of their family or any people they have frequent contact with are exhibiting flu or flu-like symptoms. Consider restricting the contact that this worker has with the animals.
2. **Limit visitors to farms**
 - Conduct a risk assessment of anyone coming into contact with your herd and implement mitigation measures for any risks that are considered too high.
 - Maintain a register which visitors have to sign indicating that:
 - they have showered and changed clothes since their last exposure to pigs;

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- they have not returned from overseas travel within the last 7-10 days;
- they are not experiencing fever or any flu-like symptoms.
- Unnecessary visitors that will have contact with your pigs should be discouraged. If this is not possible ensure that the visitor register (including name, address, phone number) is filled out, they shower in or at least wash their hands & scrub fingernails.

3. Follow other generally accepted biosecurity practices

- Routinely clean clothing and footwear
- Implement and enforce the use of personal protective equipment
- Control entry to the farm
- Implement a policy which does not permit staff to own or work with other pigs
- Specify to staff that they must not come to work if they have a fever or are ill
- Maintain a visitor register which visitors have to sign indicating that:
 - they have showered and changed clothes since their last exposure to pigs;
 - they have not returned from overseas travel within the last 7-10 days;
 - they are not experiencing fever or any flu-like symptoms.
- Keeping non-farm vehicles outside of farm or at least their drivers inside their vehicles
- Recommend that all workers are vaccinated against the seasonal influenza virus.
- Assess the health of any pigs coming onto the property, utilise quarantine principles and prevent those assessed as a high risk from entering.
- Regularly inspect your herd for unusual signs of disease and report any problems to your veterinarian, state or territory government animal health officer or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline - 1800 675 888.

KEY MESSAGES

- NSW DPI is managing the situation and Australian Pork Limited is working closely with the NSW CVO, the office of the Australian Chief Veterinarian and the farm in question.
- Both national and international food authorities firmly state that pork is safe to eat. It is impossible to contract Influenza A/H1N1 from eating pork and pork related products. There is no connection between pork products and this disease.
- Strict biosecurity measures remain critical for Australian pig farms. All farms should look at their on-farm biosecurity measures and refer to the welfare guidelines set out by APL, available online via the APL website.
- **See APL's Enhanced Biosecurity Arrangements for Producers Alert available from APL website <http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp>**

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- See APL’s Enhanced Biosecurity Arrangements for Farm Visitors and Employees:
<http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp>
- APL’s website provides alert messages and useful links
<http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp>

Other contacts

- **Emergency Animal Disease Watch** hotline - Producers are encouraged to check their properties regularly and if they see anything unusual to call 1800 675 888.
- **H1N1 09 Hotline:** 1802007 – For the general public with health concerns.

Other information

- **APL website** – <http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp> - For more information and updates on **Pandemic (H1N1) 2009**
- **Animal Health Australia** - <http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/>
- **Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer** - <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/animal>
- **NSW DPI:** <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/pigs/health/swine-flu>

Key APL Contacts:

General H1N1 Inquiries	Kathleen Plowman	0402 794 901
Media Inquiries	Emily Mackintosh	0418 697 595