

African swine fever (ASF) - biosecurity resources for producers

DPIRD-208

African swine fever can cause very high death rates in pigs. See what pig owners can do to reduce the risk of this highly contagious virus occurring in Australia.



Image 1: Pigs in a field.

Reducing the risk

African swine fever is a highly contagious virus that causes high death rates in pigs, it is not in Australia. Since 2016 the disease spread has escalated, and African swine fever has been spreading throughout much of eastern Europe. In August 2018 the first case of African swine fever was detected in China. The disease has now spread throughout Southeast Asia and is now present in Australia's near neighbours, Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea. There is no vaccination or other treatment available, and the disease is difficult to eradicate.

Every pig owner has a vital role to play in reducing the risk of this disease occurring in Australia. Below are resources Western Australian pig owners can use to reduce the risk of the disease entering their herd or pet pigs.

1. Pig feed

It is illegal to feed meat, products that contain meat or have had contact with meat and non-Australian dairy to pigs. This is known as prohibited pig feed or swill feeding.

Illegal pig feed can cause a number of serious livestock diseases, including:

- African swine fever (ASF)
- Classical swine fever (CSF)
- Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

Pig owners must ensure:

- anyone who has contact with their pigs knows what they can and cannot feed them
- feral pigs cannot access food waste on their property - including from farm dumps.

More information about what pigs can and cannot be fed is available on our website.



Image 2: Feed pellets

2. Biosecurity

- Ensure that farm visitors and staff do not have contact with your pigs if they have been overseas in the previous seven days. Keep a visitor logbook and have clean (where your pigs are housed and handled) and dirty areas (other parts of the property where access is less controlled) on your property.
- Ensure feral pigs cannot access domestic pigs or pig facilities through appropriate segregation and fencing.

The DPIRD website provides information, biosecurity guides and checklists - including guides for small landholders.

Animal Health Australia (<https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/industry/pigs/>) provides additional information about pork production for industry as well as resources for producers concerning African swine fever (ASF).

Australian Pork Limited (APL) provides additional information concerning biosecurity and pigs (<https://australianpork.com.au/industry-focus/biosecurity>), as well as management plans and others resources (<https://australianpork.com.au/biosecurity/biosecurity-management-plan-and-resources#checklists>).

For information on how the Australian Government is working to keep African swine fever out of Australia, see the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry website (<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/pests-diseases-weeds/animal/asf#passengers--arriving-in-australia>).

3. Feral pig control

All landowners have a responsibility under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* to manage declared pests such as feral pigs on their land.

Control methods such as baiting with 1080 and trapping are preferred. These techniques concentrate feral pigs and provide the best opportunities to significantly reduce feral pig abundance in your area.

Hunting and the use of dogs to catch feral pigs should be avoided, as this can cause pigs to disperse or move to other areas, increasing the risk of spreading African swine fever if it occurred in Australia.

For the best options for management on your property, see the DPIRD website for more information. A case study published in 2013 on the effectiveness of feral pig bait is available on the pestSMART website (<http://www.pestsmart.org.au/pest-animal-species/feral-pig/>).

4. Traceability

Traceability of all pigs during a disease outbreak is crucial for effective disease detection and eradication. Make sure you have registered your ownership of pigs with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

Whenever pigs are moved off a property, livestock movement documentation such as a Pigpass NVD/waybill is required. This includes stock being moved to a different PIC under the same ownership.

Ensure you include your email address as part of your registration so that we can contact you quickly during an emergency.

For help with registering, see the DPIRD website for further information and registration forms, or call 1300 926 547.

5. Report pig disease signs to a veterinarian immediately

If you see signs of disease in your pigs that could be African swine fever, you must report it immediately. The faster a disease is reported, the less chance it has to spread, reducing the impacts of eradication.

Clinical signs of African swine fever include:

- increased death rate
- high fever, loss of appetite, lethargy
- skin reddening of ears, abdomen and legs
- blueness of extremities (including ears and snout)
- coughing and difficulty breathing
- constipation, bloody diarrhoea
- vomiting
- abortions
- neurological signs (e.g. convulsions, incoordination, stiff gait).

Report to your local veterinarian, DPIRD field veterinarian or call the 24/7 Emergency Animal Disease hotline 1800 675 888. To find your closest DPIRD field veterinarian, see the DPIRD website for more information.

6. Stay up to date with livestock biosecurity news

The Department publishes a regular e-newsletter on animal health and biosecurity in WA, called the “Livestock Disease Outlook - for producers”. The newsletter is available on the DPIRD website and can be subscribed to in order to stay up to date on animal health and biosecurity in WA.

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