

African Swine Fever

What is African swine fever and what causes it?

African swine fever (ASF) is a severe viral disease of pigs that can spread very rapidly in pig herds.

The disease occurs in many African countries; outbreaks have also occurred in other parts of the world, including Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia (Russia and the Caucasus region), and China. Cases have occurred in the Western Hemisphere (South America, the Caribbean), but are now eradicated. ASF has never occurred in the U.S.

ASF has serious animal health and economic consequences, including export bans on pigs and pork products. Movement restriction, herd depopulation, and other strict control measures are necessary to eliminate the disease in affected areas.

What animals get African swine fever?

ASF affects members of the pig family, including domesticated swine, wild boars, feral swine, warthogs, bush pigs, and giant forest hogs.

How can my animal get African swine fever?

The African swine fever virus is often introduced into a herd after the feeding of uncooked/undercooked contaminated pork products which are ingested by a pig. The virus is then easily spread between pigs by **direct contact** with an infected animal, its body fluids (nasal, oral, feces, blood) or tissues (meat), or indirectly from contact with contaminated objects (**fomites**), such as vehicles, equipment, footwear or clothing.

Some species of ticks (**vector**) can transmit the virus. Blood sucking flies or insects may possibly spread the virus between pigs. Aerosol transmission is limited.

How does African swine fever affect my animal?

African swine fever causes severe illness and high death rates in pigs. All ages of pigs are affected. Signs of illness include high fever, decreased appetite, and weakness. The skin may be reddened, blotchy, or have blackened lesions, especially on the ears, tail, and lower legs. Other signs may include diarrhea, abortion, and respiratory illness (nasal discharge, coughing, difficulty breathing). Death usually occurs within 7 to 10 days, but sudden death is possible in newly exposed herds. Animals that recover from the illness can be carriers of the virus for several months.

Can I get African swine fever?

No. Humans are not susceptible to the African swine fever virus.

African Swine Fever
is a severe viral disease
of swine that results in
major animal health and
economic impacts.



Skin lesions on an ASF infected pig. From USDA Plum Island Animal Disease Center.

Who should I contact if I suspect African swine fever?

Contact your veterinarian immediately. African swine fever is not currently found in the United States. Suspicion of disease requires immediate attention.

How can I protect my animals from African swine fever?

ASF can spread easily. The virus is highly resistant in the environment, especially at low temperatures. It is also highly resistant to many disinfectants.

Do not feed raw or undercooked pork products (swill, garbage or waste) to pigs. Prevent contact with feral or wild hogs. Whenever possible, house pigs indoors. Monitor your animals daily for any signs of illness. Isolate any pigs that are ill and contact your veterinarian to determine the cause. Isolate any pigs entering the farm for several weeks before placing them with the herd. Control tick and other insect vectors (e.g., flies).

Control measures for ASF will require quarantine and depopulation of affected animals. There is no vaccine or treatment for ASF.

For More Information

- ➡ CFSPH Technical Fact Sheets. African swine fever
- ➡ U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). African swine fever
- ➡ National Pork Board. African swine fever: what you need to know
- ➡ World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)