

African Swine Fever

What is African swine fever and what causes it?

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease of pigs. The virus is generally only found in Africa, but outbreaks have occurred in Europe and the Caucasus, South America, and the Caribbean. ASF has been eradicated from the Western Hemisphere and has never occurred in the U.S.

The disease has severe animal health and economic consequences, including export bans. Movement restrictions, depopulation, and strict control measure will be necessary to eradicate the disease.

What animals get African swine fever?

African swine fever affects members of the pig family, including domesticated swine, European wild boars, warthogs, bush pigs, giant forest hogs, and peccaries.

How can my animal get African swine fever?

African swine fever is often introduced into a herd by the feeding of uncooked or undercooked garbage (swill) containing contaminated pork products (**oral**). Once infected, the virus is easily spread between pigs by **direct contact** 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?

Signs of ASF can be variable but often include high fever, decreased appetite and weakness. The skin may be reddened, blotchy, or have blackened lesions. Infected pigs may also have diarrhea, vomiting, coughing and difficulty breathing. Abortions can occur in pregnant sows. Death usually occurs 7 to 10 days after signs of disease are seen, however sudden death, without any signs of illness, is possible in newly exposed herds. Animals that recover from the illness can be carriers of the virus for several months.

Warthogs, bush pigs, and giant forest hogs infected with the virus do not usually show signs of disease, but can carry the virus to other pigs.

Can I get African swine fever?

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

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?

African swine fever is highly contagious. Healthy pigs should not be allowed to have contact with feral swine or domestic pigs suspected to have the disease.

New pigs entering or returning to the farm should be isolated for several weeks before being placed back into the herd. Uncooked garbage should not be fed to pigs. All food scraps fed to pigs should be heated to at least 70°C (158°F) for 30 minutes.

Tick control with acaricides and fly control will also help prevent the spread of African swine fever.

Control of ASF will require quarantine and depopulation of affected animals in order to prevent the spread of the disease. There is no vaccine or treatment for ASF.

For More Information

CFSPH Technical Fact Sheets. African swine fever at www.cfsph.iastate.edu/DiseaseInfo/factsheets.htm

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). African swine fever: A foreign threat to U.S. hogs at www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/pubs/pub_ahasf.pdf

World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) at www.oie.int

