



African Swine Fever (ASF)

History

African Swine fever first appeared in domestic pigs in East Africa in the 1900s. It subsequently spread to Europe appearing first in Portugal, Spain and further countries. Eradication was achieved in Europe apart from Sardinia in the mid 1990s. In 2007 it then appeared in Georgia spreading then to Russia, and other Eastern European Countries. Recently in 2018 ASF virus was first reported in China.

What is African Swine Fever (ASF)?

African Swine Fever virus is a member of the family *Asfarviridae*. African Swine Fever is a highly contagious hemorrhagic viral disease that is fatal in domestic pigs and wild boars.

What do we know about ASF (transmission, incubation, clinical signs and treatment)?

Transmission occurs through:

- **Direct transmission** - contact between infected and uninfected individuals. Transmission occurs through infectious bodily fluids and tissue. Importantly wild boar are a reservoir of ASF virus in certain countries.
- **Indirect transmission** - Swill feeding (uncooked pork products), fomites
- **Vectors** - Via soft ticks *Ornithodoros moubata*

ASF virus can remain infectious in uncooked pork for up to 3-6 months. Incubation period can range on average from 2-14 days. Acute forms of the disease can occur within 3-4 days.

Clinical signs can vary with mortality reaching 100%. Peracute to acute signs of the disease can range from fever, cyanosis, hemorrhaging of the skin and extremities to sudden death within 2-10 days. Chronic (less virulent forms) can show mild signs of inappetence, weight loss, necrosis of extremities, and fever.

There is no treatment available for ASF Virus.

How is ASF virus diagnosed?

ASF virus should be considered with presentation of any of the clinical signs described in combination with mild to severe increasing mortality in pigs. Preliminary diagnosis can be done by submitting whole blood in EDTA to designated ASF labs in the United States. Confirmation of a positive is then done by Plum Island USDA lab.

Public Health Risks?

No, there are no risks to human health. The disease is only infectious to swine.

Import/export:

ASF virus is a notifiable disease listed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and must be reported to the OIE if confirmed. ASF virus is considered a Foreigner Animal Disease by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and therefore import of pig or pork product is forbidden from ASF positive countries.



Biosecurity:

- Pigs should be kept in well-constructed pig sties under hygienic conditions with controlled entry to the piggery.
- Movement of pigs inside the country and especially across international borders should be controlled.
- Pigs should not be fed swill that might contain remains of pigs. To ensure safety, swill should be boiled, above 70°C for 30 minutes and cooled before feeding.

Source: FAO, Recognizing ASF, A Field manual

This fact sheet is meant to provide basic information. For specific health concerns please contact your physician or veterinarian. Updated 2018



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Swine Disease Eradication Center