



# AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

## WHAT IS AFRICAN SWINE FEVER?

African swine fever ('ASF') is a highly contagious viral disease which infects and kills wild and domestic pigs. While ASF is NOT a risk to human health, it affects animal welfare, causes severe production and economic losses, and can threaten food security. Fiji is free from ASF however; carelessness can spread the disease and bring the disease into Fiji.

## OCCURRENCE OF ASF

African swine fever is enzootic in most countries such as Asia, Africa and Europe. A total of 23 Countries/Territories notified new or ongoing outbreaks to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE); 12 in Europe (Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine); 9 in Asia (China, Indonesia, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Korea (Republic of), Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste and Vietnam) and 2 in Africa (Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa).

The most recent outbreak of ASF was recorded in Papua New Guinea ('PNG') and officially reported to OIE on 30 March 2020. A total of 396 free ranging pigs were reported dead while 700 susceptible cases were recorded in PNG.

## WHY ASF SHOULD NOT ENTER FIJI?

In recent past, this disease has devastated the global pig industry particularly in Asian region and killed about 800 million pigs. Given that the disease has reached the Pacific it is imperative to ensure it does not reach other countries in the Pacific. The reason being if it is introduced to other countries, including Fiji, it will impact the pig industry, food security and also the livelihood of people subsequently leading to severe economic loss to the countries.

Moreover, there is no vaccine or treatment against ASF, thus leaving no prevention strategies. If this disease enters Fiji, it will require culling of all pigs to eradicate or control the spread of ASF leaving the industry vulnerable to huge economic loss. Considering PNG are not very far from Fiji, it poses a great threat to Pig Industry in Fiji.

## HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

The epidemiology of ASF is complex and varies depending on the environment, types of pig production systems, the presence/absence of competent tick vectors, human behavior, and the presence/absence of wild pigs. Routes of transmission can include:

- direct contact with infected domestic or wild pigs;
- indirect contact, through ingestion of contaminated material (e.g. food waste, feed, or garbage);
- contaminated fomites, or biological vectors (soft ticks of the genus *Ornithodoros*) where present.

## WHICH ANIMALS CAN SPREAD SWINE FEVER?

Hosts of the virus are African wild Swine, bush pigs, giant forest hogs, domestic pigs, European wild boar, American wild pigs.

## HOW CAN ANIMALS GET ASF?

ASF is spread by contaminated blood, tissues, secretions and excretions of sick and dead animals, animals which have recovered from infections may become persistently infected, acting as virus carriers; especially in African wild swine, and in domestic pigs in enzootic areas. It is also spread by soft ticks. Moreover, it can be spread to pigs via untreated swill feeding or contaminated kitchen scraps.

Hunters and pig farms can easily spread the disease through improper hygiene, lack of personal protective equipment and carelessness.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT ASF FROM ENTERING FIJI?

Everyone has a role to play to avoid carrying the deadly virus across regional or national borders. Responsible travelers, commercial pig farmers, hunters, transporters and customs check point staff are also involved in the prevention.

In early 2019, the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) implemented immediate ban of personal importation of pork products in to Fiji in order to minimize the risk of ASF introduction. However, pork products are only allowed with BAF Import Permit (IP) and zoosanitary health certificate from Australia and New Zealand.

It is your responsibility to adhere to BAF current regulations which is in place and do declare all animal products and previous farm visits in your arrival cards. False declaration will result in heavy penalties and legal actions taken on noncompliance according to the Biosecurity Act 2008.

## SIMPLY RESPECT GENERAL PRECAUTIONS:

- Declare any suspicious case of (dead or alive), pork or pork products to Biosecurity staff (services) at the border
- Avoid carrying pork or pork products for personal usage
- Contact BAF for the importation of Pork and Pork products prior to importing into Fiji.
- Clean and disinfect material and equipment
- Do not visit pig farms in affected areas and declare on arrival card if you have visited piggeries in overseas countries
- Prevent direct or indirect contact with wild boar and declare if contacted in overseas countries
- Proper disposal of waste food from aircraft or ships/ vessels arriving from overseas countries and efficient sterilization of garbage
- Ensure that all your workers and visitors are aware of farm biosecurity.
- If you are in regular contact with domestic pigs, do not hunt or approach wild pigs
- Implement best farm practice for pigs on farms
- Avoid Swill Feeding

## BAF'S ENGAGEMENT IN ASF

BAF is actively involved in preventing the introduction of ASF into Fiji. There are strict biosecurity measures taking place particularly at the borders. These include:

- 100% screening with modern X-ray technology and manual inspection of baggage consisting animal products
- Inspection of all food and necessary transmissible items (eg. Shoes) that can carry ASF
- More vigilant and thorough (100%) inspection of flights or vessels from possible infected countries or transiting through affected countries.
- Enhanced national sanitary measures on waste disposal from aircrafts/vessels/passengers
- Enhanced on farm biosecurity measures

SOURCE: WWW.OIE.COM

Note: Please contact BAF on any unusual number of deaths in your pig farm or wild / backyard pigs in your locality

## For Further Information Please Contact:

Biosecurity Authority of Fiji on 3312512 or

Animal Disease Surveillance-5997 or

email-info@baf.com.fj or visit

BAF website [www.baf.com.fj](http://www.baf.com.fj)