

## African swine fever and feral pigs

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**Members of the wildlife community should be alert to signs of disease in Australian feral pigs.**

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease of feral (wild) and domestic pigs. It has established itself in Asia and parts of Europe and continues to spread. ASF has no vaccine and kills about 80 per cent of the pigs it infects. Due to its high economic impact and lack of a commercially available vaccine, ASF is considered one of the most important diseases of pigs worldwide and is listed as a disease of international significance by the OIE World Organisation for Animal Health.

**ASF has never occurred in Australia. However, it has been reported in other areas of the world and most recently in Timor Leste. Its changing distribution means that it is a significant biosecurity threat to Australia. An outbreak would have significant impacts on pig production and health. It would also damage Australia's trade and the economy.**

Signs that are seen in infected pigs can be variable but include red, blotchy or black skin lesions; nose and eye discharge; coughing or difficulty breathing; incoordination; convulsions; abortions. Sudden death can also occur with no prior signs of disease.

**We are requesting that all members of the wildlife community be alert and if you see sick or dead feral pigs (or domestic pigs) phone the [Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline](#) on 1800 675 888 immediately. This will put you in touch with your state or territory animal health authority. Suspect cases of ASF must be reported to animal health authorities.**

ASF spreads easily by direct contact between pigs or indirectly by contaminated items including feed, feed ingredients, equipment, vehicles, clothing and footwear. It can also be spread through meat from infected animals, and vectors (such as some ticks). If you locate a sick, dead or suspect animal call the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline immediately and they will advise on appropriate hygiene protocols.

**Find out more about [Keeping African swine fever out of Australia](#) on the Australian Department of Agriculture website, including what signs to look out for in pigs, biosecurity requirements for incoming passengers and for people who are purchasing goods online from overseas as well as a summary of action by biosecurity authorities. You can also visit your relevant State or Territory Department of Agriculture websites for information.**

## References and links to key information

### Australian resources:

- Find out more about [Keeping African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease out of Australia](#) on the Australian Department of Agriculture website.
- [SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: AFRICAN SWINE FEVER VS. SWINE INFLUENZA](#) - Confused about the difference between ASF and swine influenza (swine flu)? Whilst both are diseases of pigs, they are caused by different viruses and affect pigs in different ways. Check out this fact sheet to find out the differences between the two.
- You can also visit your relevant **State or Territory Department of Agriculture websites** for information ([ACT](#), [NSW](#), [NT](#), [Qld](#), [SA](#), [Tas](#), [Vic](#) and [WA](#)), including [Recognizing exotic diseases of pigs](#) (PIRSA), [African swine fever guide for veterinarians](#) (Qld), and [Biosecurity guidelines for pig producers](#) (NSW) and feral pig specific messaging [[NT](#), [Qld](#), [Vic](#)].
- [A field guide for Australian veterinarians](#) – This field guide provides information on important emergency animal diseases that do not exist in Australia or that are rare. **Early identification and reporting is critical to minimise the devastating impact that these diseases.** This guide will help vets identify emergency animal diseases in the field, ensure they consider priority diseases when conducting diagnosis and take appropriate action when they suspect signs of a biosecurity threat. The 270 page resource is available on the Outbreak website at [outbreak.gov.au/for-vets-and-scientists/emergency-animal-diseases-guide](http://outbreak.gov.au/for-vets-and-scientists/emergency-animal-diseases-guide)
- Australia's **Disease Strategy for the control and eradication of African swine fever** is available as part of the AUSVETPLAN series. Wildlife considerations as part of response are addressed in the WARS AUSVETPLAN. Both can be found at: [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents/](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents/).
- Additional information for **producers and farmers** is also available on the [Animal Health Australia](#) website, which includes a number of Fact Sheets including one on a [Responding to African swine fever](#) and a second which outlines the [types of control measures](#) which may be used in an outbreak. Control measures. Further information can be found on the [Australian Pork Industry Focus](#) webpage.
- Information available on distribution and abundance of **feral pigs in Australia** can be accessed through "[Distribution and abundance of significant invasive vertebrate pests](#)" (West 2008), on the [PestSmart](#) website and via [Feral Pig Scan](#).
- Feral pig management – visit your relevant **State or Territory Department of Agriculture websites** for information ([ACT](#), [NSW](#), [NT](#), [Qld](#), [SA](#), [Tas](#), [Vic](#) and [WA](#)),

### International resources:

- [World Organisation for Animal health \(OIE\)](#) webpage on ASF lists the key facts about the disease, [clinical signs](#) to watch out for, and contains reports about the global situation.
- The OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South East Asia has been developing a series of [ASF related webinars](#). These webinars aim at providing scientific information, shared experience, tips, options to countries of the sub-region.

- The OIE has also collated repository of [ASF information and outreach materials](#) developed by numerous countries.
- [FAO African Swine Fever Asia Updates](#) - The FAO updates include a list of affected provinces, a map, actions taken to date by affected countries, cumulative numbers of affected communes/week and FAO recommendations and actions in addition to a number of useful links.
- An evidence-based overview of African Swine Fever ecology and biosecurity for European populations of wild boar has been published by Guberti V et al 2019. [African swine fever in wild boar ecology and biosecurity](#). FAO Animal Production and Health Manual no. 22. Rome, FAO, OIE and EC.
- OIE and NZ poster on [biosecurity for hunters and trampers](#).

#### European Food Safety Authority Publications

- Jun 2018 - [ASF in wild boar](#)
- Jul 2019 - [Research gap analysis on African swine fever](#)
- Jul 2019 - [Scoping document on the integration of ASF data collection, analysis and reporting](#)
- Nov 2019 - [Understanding ASF spread and emergency control concepts in wild boar populations using individual-based modelling and spatio-temporal surveillance data](#)

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