

# STOP AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

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# AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

## WHAT IS AFRICAN SWINE FEVER (ASF)

African swine fever is a serious disease of pigs caused by the ASF virus. It causes haemorrhagic fever in pigs that is very infectious and fatal for pigs. It can spread quickly within and between farms and kill a lot of pigs in a short space of time within an infected farm or area.

## WHERE DID ASF COME FROM?

ASF is a disease that first emerged in southern Africa in 1920s. It has since spread throughout Africa, the Americas and Europe. In August 2018, the disease spread to China in the Asian region. Since then, it has spread throughout the Asian region, affecting many countries including Philippines, Timor Leste and Indonesia in late 2019. ASF was detected in Mendi Munihi district, SHP, in March 2020.

## HAS ASF SPREAD TO OTHER PARTS OF PNG?

ASF spread from SHP to Hela and Enga provinces in March and April 2020. NAQIA and provincial authorities managed to stop any further spread of ASF to neighbouring provinces through road checkpoints and awareness. However, due to illegal movements of infected live pigs and pork meat, ASF has spread to WHP and Jiwaka in November 2020, where it is established and actively spreading. ASF was also detected in Simbu, but this incursion has been eliminated. EHP remains free from ASF. The rest of PNG also remains free from ASF. NAQIA has established road checkpoints especially at the Jiwaka/Simbu border (Miunde) and Simbu/EHP border (Kenangi) to ensure live pigs and pork products are not moved from infected areas to non-infected areas.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ASF?

- High Fever.
- Loss of appetite and weight loss, weakness, lack of movement, sleepiness.
- Reddening of skin, blotchy lesion of skin.
- Bleeding from skin, snout, mouth.
- Diarrhea: Sometimes bloody faeces, can be dark brown or black.
- Abortion in pregnant sows.
- Nasal discharge, difficulty in breathing.
- Death (Within 7-10 days).
- Sudden death: Most times, pigs can die suddenly without showing any signs at all.

## HOW IS ASF SPREAD?

- Pigs catch ASF from coming into close contact with other infected pigs. The virus in infected pigs is shed in the discharges in the mouth and nose as well as faeces, urine and blood.
- Pigs can catch ASF through eating feed that contains infected pork meat e.g., left-overs from meals or mumu feasts.
- Pigs that are free-roaming and accessing public rubbish dump sites.
- The virus is spread by moving infected pigs and/or infected pork meat from an infected farm or area to a non-infected farm or area.
- Through international movement of infected pigs and pork products through shipping and air routes.
- ASF virus is spread through contaminated materials such as farmers' boots, clothes, tools, vehicle tyres, etc.
- ASF is NOT airborne.

## CAN ASF AFFECT OTHER ANIMALS?

ASF only causes disease in pigs alone. Both wild and domesticated pigs are equally susceptible. ASF does not affect other animals apart from pigs.

## IS THERE A VACCINE/CURE/TREATMENT FOR ASF?

There is no medicine or treatment for ASF. There is also no safe vaccine for protection from ASF. There is no medical treatment available to cure or prevent ASF.

## IS ASF CAUSED BY SANGUMA?

ASF is caused by a virus. It is not caused by Sanguma or puripuri.

## ARE HUMANS SUSCEPTIBLE TO ASF?

Human beings are not susceptible to ASF. The ASF virus does not cause any infection or disease in human beings.

## CAN YOU EAT INFECTED PIGS?

Meat derived from ASF-infected pigs are not fit for human consumption. It is advisable not to slaughter, cook and eat pigs infected with ASF. This results in further spread of the virus to non-infected pigs, farms and areas. In addition, as a general rule, it is safe practice not to eat sick or dead pigs and animals. While we concentrate on ASF which does not cause disease in humans, always be mindful that the pig (or any animal) could be sick or dead from other causes that can be harmful to humans.

## HOW CAN I CHECK IF MY PIG HAS A HIGH FEVER?

If your pig has a high fever, it would not be responsive to you when you enter the pig house or pen area. It would normally appear dull, has rapid breathing and may have reddened skin which will feel hotter than usual. If temperatures can be taken, it will be around 39-40 degrees C.

## CAN ASF SURVIVE THE HEAT FROM MUMU STONES?

The heat of mumu stones and the time the mumu remains covered for cooking is sufficient to kill the virus. However, because the pig is usually cooked as a whole carcass or in bulky cuts, the core of the pork meat (that usually remains raw and uncooked after the mumu process) can still harbor live ASF virus capable of causing infection in non-infected pigs.

## WHAT DO ASF CHECKPOINTS LOOK FOR?

At the ASF road checkpoints, authorized personnel will check for restricted items such as live pigs, pork meat, pig bones, dirty farm equipment, contaminated bags or bilum containing pork meat.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MY PIGS FROM ASF?

Pigs can be protected by applying the following bio-security and hygiene measures:

- Don't let pigs roam freely, put pigs into pens and fences.
- Do not mix your pigs with newly introduced pigs from different farms or places. Put them separately and observe for sickness for 14 days. If no signs of disease develops, then you can introduce pigs into your farm/pens.
- Do not allow people or animals unnecessarily through your pig pens. Allow only designated pig keepers and handlers into pig pens.
- Clean your pig pens regularly. Clean their deep litter.
- Feed your pigs feed stuff only from trusted sources. Pig feed must not contain any pork meat.
- Clean yourself and use separate farm clothes when entering farm/pens. Wash your hands and clothes after handling your pigs and before leaving your farm.
- If your pigs become sick or die, report to NAQIA on 1801332 or your local officials.

- Dispose of dead pigs properly by burial. Do not cut open, cook or eat dead pigs.
- Do not move pigs within, between and from the declared Disease Area.

## AFTER DISPOSING ASF INFECTED PIGS FROM MY PENS, HOW LONG BEFORE I CAN RE-INTRODUCE NEW PIGS?

If your pigs have died of ASF, it is best to follow the right advice and dispose them by deep burial. Then clean the pens where the infected pig has been in – remove any rubbish and litter and burn or bury them, wash off any blood or fecal material with water and soap or bleach, ensuring water run-offs are trapped and disposed properly, remove roofing if possible and allow sunlight into the pen area. Allow the pen up 2 weeks or more without any pigs. You can then introduce one pig into the pen and observe for another 2 weeks. If the re-introduced pig remains healthy, then you may introduce more pigs.

## CAN I MOVE LIVE PIGS INTO AND OUT OF INFECTED AREAS?

NAQIA has re-defined the "Disease Area". The entire Highlands region is now considered the infected zone, while the rest of PNG remains non-infected. Movements of pigs are permitted from non-infected zones into the Highlands, as well as movements within the Highlands. Please get a permit from NAQIA before moving your pigs. However, some movements remain prohibited, for example, movement of pigs from the Highlands to the rest of PNG. NAQIA also works with airlines and the National Airports Corporation to ensure movements through the air is controlled. Please seek further advice from NAQIA on 1801332 about whether you can move your pigs or not.

## WHO CAN I CONTACT IF MY PIGS ARE SICK OR HAVE DIED?

- Contact a local public servant.
- Contact your local ward councillor.
- Contact a local didiman.
- Contact a local police officer.
- Contact your local church leader.
- Call NAQIA on 180 1332.