

African Swine Fever Prevention Efforts

What the Minnesota Board of Animal Health is doing to prevent the introduction of ASF into Minnesota.

African Swine Fever Disease Exercises

The Board has been coordinating with multiple federal and state agencies and the Pork industry to develop a response plan to be implemented in the event that ASF reaches the United States. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Pork Board are working with Minnesota and 13 other states to develop nationwide policies in preparation for ASF. Participating states organized planning workshops, which will culminate in multiple emergency response exercises designed to evaluate a state's readiness to react to a hypothetical ASF outbreak.

Emergency Response

Prompt reporting, early detection and immediate action are critical to a successful disease response. The Board employs veterinarians throughout the state who are specially trained as Foreign Animal Disease Diagnosticians (FADDs) responsible for conducting investigations when suspected foreign animal diseases are reported. This is why it's important the Board educates producers and veterinarians about the signs of diseases like ASF.

Outreach and Education

The Board works with state, federal and industry partners to provide education to all Minnesotans on how they can prevent the introduction and spread of ASF. Examples of initiatives include:

- Identifying garbage feeders and teaching farmers and restaurants about garbage feeding regulations.
- State veterinarian appeared in University of Minnesota outreach videos.
- Distribute disease FAQ's and information to veterinarians and clinics.
- Share social media messaging from USDA, National Pork Board and other partners about ASF.

Feral Swine Importation Laws

Feral swine are pigs that live in the wild. Feral swine pose a significant threat because they can spread dangerous diseases like ASF to domestic pigs. For this reason, Minnesota prohibits importation of feral swine, swine who were feral at any point in their lifetime and feral swine carcasses.

Garbage Feeding

Feeding food waste to livestock, garbage feeding, has been identified as a potential source for ASF introduction. Minnesota producers are only allowed to engage in this practice after they have obtained a permit from the Board.

The Board conducts routine inspections of permitted farms to ensure appropriate precautions are being observed to prevent the introduction and spread of disease.

- Food waste containing meat or that has come into contact with meat must be cooked to at least 212°F (100° C) for at least 30 minutes.
- Cooked and uncooked food waste must be separated and stored appropriately.
- Rodents and pests must be kept away from uncooked food waste.
- Feeding areas and trucks must be cleaned and sanitized as needed, and trucks used for hauling food waste over public roads must be leak-proof.
- Unconsumed food waste and dead livestock must be disposed of properly.
- All livestock on permitted farms must appear healthy.

Secure Pork Supply

The Board is working with Minnesota veterinarians and swine producers to develop Secure Pork Supply plans, which allow producers to continue operating their businesses during a disease outbreak. The purpose of these plans is to provide a workable continuity-of-business plan for commercial pork producers that is acceptable to state and federal animal health officials while providing a safe supply of pork for customers in the event of a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) outbreak. Veterinarians should become familiar with the Secure Pork Supply so they can assist their clients in participating.

Biosecurity

One of the greatest risks of pathogen introduction to a herd is bringing in infected stock. Direct contact between infected and susceptible pigs is the most efficient way to spread disease. Isolation of incoming stock provides a safeguard against such transmission. Isolation allows time for the producer to observe new stock for signs of disease before herd entry. Isolation also gives the producer the opportunity to test animals for infection with certain pathogens and to acclimate or vaccinate incoming replacement stock against current herd diseases.

The Board is encouraging anyone who raises pigs to remain vigilant and adhere to stringent biosecurity protocols.

- When visiting, clean yourself and your clothing before and after.
- Before driving down the road, consider where you are going and be sure your vehicle is clean and free of dirt, manure and other organic material.
- Always remember that only clean tools and other work-related items should be taken into a barn.