



H1N1 Influenza A discovery in livestock not a food safety issue

Ottawa, ON [May 3, 2009] – While awaiting definitive lab results, the CFIA has announced a swine farm in Alberta is under quarantine after the H1N1 virus was detected in the farm's livestock.

The international scientific community, including the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO), agree that H1N1 Influenza A is not a food safety issue. Consumers and international trading partners need to know that H1N1 Influenza A is not transmitted through pork products.

"Canada is committed to strong animal health monitoring, food security and transparency," said Jurgen Preugschas, Chair of the Canadian Pork Council. "We are confident that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is taking the appropriate action to address the presence of the flu virus in one Alberta herd. We also want to take this opportunity to assure consumers they can continue to be confident in the safety of Canadian pork."

An outside contractor who had returned from a vacation in Mexico on April 12, 2009 commenced work in the barn on April 14, 2009. This was prior to any public awareness of a disease outbreak. At some point, the worker suffered influenza-like symptoms. When flu symptoms were later observed in the swine, the farm owner contacted his veterinarian who in turn notified government authorities.

Additional testing is underway to confirm this is actually the H1N1 A Influenza virus. The swine in the barn are recovering and no pigs died as a result of the infection.

In order to ensure animal health remains protected, producers must fully enforce proper biosecurity measures. "Producers must continue to be vigilant", said Jean-Guy Vincent, First Vice-Chair of the Canadian Pork Council, "particularly with personal hygiene measures such as hand washing and showering."

The Canadian Pork Council serves as the national voice for hog producers in Canada. A federation of nine provincial pork industry associations, our organization's purpose is to play a leadership role in achieving and maintaining a dynamic and prosperous Canadian pork sector.

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