



Canadian Pork Council
Conseil canadien du porc

CPC And CSHB Encourage Producers To Review And Strengthen Existing Biosecurity Practices To Prevent The Introduction Of The New Influenza Virus Into Canadian Operations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2009

A new influenza virus strain has emerged in Mexico that is causing human disease and the infection has been identified in a number of people in the United States and more than 1,300 in Mexico. The Public Health Agency of Canada's National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg has confirmed four cases from Nova Scotia and the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control identified two additional cases from British Columbia that are the same virus strain that has been found in the U.S. and Mexico.

The new influenza is being called swine flu because of the genetic makeup of the virus and is a human health situation which may affect our swine.

The new influenza virus is a mixture of type A H1N1 strains, it appears to be a recombination of swine, bird, and human strains, and the media refers to it as swine flu. At this point there have been no clinical reports of disease in swine.

The Canadian industry is fortunate that our northern climate, vast open spaces and low population densities provide an excellent growing environment for the commercial production for high quality premium hogs and world class breeding stock. The sheer scale of Canada land mass enables the country to be a major food producer with less than 5% of its land dedicated to agriculture. Livestock production is spread over such a large area that animal density is low, despite the size of the industry.

At this time, no pigs have been found to be infected or sick with the new hybrid influenza virus. However, the Canadian Pork Council and Canadian Swine Health Board are urging producers to take extra precautions to protect workers and animals and prevent the introduction of the new influenza virus strain into your operation. We are suggesting that you review and strengthen your existing bio security practices.

- Visitor traffic to pig barns should be minimized to essential services only, and persons recently returning from affected regions should have no contact with pigs for at least 7 days;

- Barn entry requirements should be enhanced with a minimum of a change of clothes and boots and a thorough hand wash. If masks are available, they should be used, with a N95 respiratory mask and gloves being the preferred choice;
- Insure ventilation systems are functioning and minimize re-circulation of air inside animal housing facilities;
- No workers suffering “flu” like illness should contact swine, workers should not return to swine facilities until 7 days after having respiratory illness. The same should apply if a farm workers household has been diagnosed with influenza. Influenza-like symptoms could include one or more of the following, fever, cough, body aches, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea;
- Any unusual respiratory disease in pig herds should be investigated by the herd veterinarian and diagnostic samples (lung tissues and nasal swabs) from acutely-ill pigs with a fever should be sent to the regional veterinary diagnostic lab;
- The decision to vaccinate swine herds with existing swine vaccines should be made with your herd veterinarian.

For the health of workers in contact with swine:

- report any unusual respiratory disease to your doctor
- use masks and gloves are recommended and safety goggles when necessary
- Recommend that an annual flu vaccination be discussed with their doctor as part of their health management plan,

The Canadian Swine Health Board (CSHB) has a mandate over the next two years to develop and implementation of biosecurity best management practices, research projects, and long term disease risk management solutions, all of which promote industry awareness and activities to maintain a healthy Canadian hog herd.

The Canadian Pork Council (CPC) is a member-driven, not for profit national producer association committed to Canadian competitiveness in the global market. It is the collective voice of Canada’s hog producers – an effective advocate on a broad range of public policy issues that has a direct impact on Canadian pork production. Through its network of provincial member associations, productive relationships with government departments and agencies, and key international contacts, the CPC responds quickly and effectively to capitalize on opportunities to enhance prosperity for its producers and the industry.

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