

MEDIA STATEMENT

9 May 2020

MINISTER DIDIZA ANNOUNCES THE OUTBREAK OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms. Thoko Didiza, MP would like to announce the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) at Amathole District Municipality in Eastern Cape.

This announcement follows investigations and a post mortem performed by departmental veterinary services on 13 April 2020, in the Amathole District Municipality whereby five villages were visited under the Mnquma Local Municipality in which 50 pigs have died. The villages affected in the town of Centane are Ngede, Nontshinga and Feni; and villages affected in the town of Ngqamakwe are Ngquthu and Toleni. The department has sent a notification to the World Health Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) accordingly.

The Minister notes that this is the first time that an outbreak of AFS has been recorded in this province. In the past 3 years, outbreaks of ASF outside of the ASF controlled area occurred in the Free State, North West, Northern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga Provinces. It has not yet been determined whether this outbreak in the Eastern Cape is linked to the outbreaks in other provinces.

“This outbreak occurred in a communal setting, which makes movement control and biosecurity between the respective pig herds difficult.

Control measures currently in place include that all infected pigs should be as far as possible from those that are not and must be housed alone to avoid contact with other pigs in the area to limit the spread of the disease” said Minister Didiza.

The areas where the outbreak occurred has been quarantined; no pigs are allowed to move into, through or out of the area. Follow-up investigations by provincial veterinary services are underway to determine the extent of the outbreak.

Quick facts about ASF:

- It kills almost all infected pigs
- Other common clinical signs are bleeding on the skin and difficulty breathing
- There is no vaccine for ASF
- There is no treatment for affected pigs
- Prevention is better than cure

The disease is transmitted to pigs by contact with infected wild or domestic pigs and infected soft ticks, contact with people, vehicles equipment or shoes, and eating contaminated food waste, feed, or garbage. Awareness campaigns have been

initiated to inform pig keepers in the affected area on how the disease is spread and how they can protect their pigs from the virus.

Pig owners and keepers should follow these recommendations:

- Enclose your pigs to prevent contact with pigs of unknown health status, including wild pigs and warthogs.
- Only buy healthy pigs from a reliable source.
- Preferably, do not feed kitchen waste, but if you have no option, remove all meats and cook the kitchen waste thoroughly.
- Do not allow visitors to have contact with your pigs.
- Before having contact with pigs, wash hands, only use clean clothes, shoes, equipment and vehicles (that have not been in contact with other pigs).

The Minister would like to assure all citizens that ASF does not affect humans and the consumption of pork is safe. However, any meat and products from affected pigs can be a source of infection to other pigs.

Farmers should therefore ensure that if any swill (kitchen waste) is fed to pigs that it is pre-cooked for at least an hour. This will ensure the inactivation of the ASF virus, as well as other diseases of concern.

If pigs from unaffected commercial pig farms in the area are moved to the abattoir for slaughter, they must be accompanied by health attestations to declare that the herds of origin have not shown any signs indicative of ASF or had higher than normal pig deaths. Commercial piggeries are encouraged to comply with compartmentalization biosecurity standards to protect their piggeries from infection.

Farmers/pig keepers are requested to be vigilant and to report any sudden illness and deaths in their pigs to the local State Veterinary office immediately so that swift action can be initiated to prevent the spread of this disease.

For media enquiries contact Reggie Ngcobo Media Liaison Officer 082 883 2458

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