



NEW SOUTH WALES

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Energy,
Minister for Mineral Resources, Minister for State Development

Influenza A detected at NSW piggery

A piggery in NSW has been placed in quarantine after returning positive tests for Influenza A H1, Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today.

“The NSW Government is responding immediately, members of the NSW Department of Industry and Investment’s First Response team have been called up, including veterinarians and emergency disease response specialists,” Minister Macdonald said.

“I want to stress that it is safe to eat pork and pork products. Our pork industry is among the most biosecure in the world. Only healthy pigs are sent for slaughter at abattoirs in Australia.

“Samples taken from pigs were tested at the NSW Government’s Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute (EMAI) laboratories and Influenza A H1 has been confirmed.

“This is the first case of Influenza A H1 in an Australian pig herd - but not in the world - and at this stage we believe it was most likely introduced by people working with the animals.

“The affected 280-sow piggery which is currently housing about 2,000 pigs has been placed in quarantine and strict biosecurity measures are in place to ensure the virus does not spread.

“Veterinary investigators are now tracing movements of people, animals and equipment on and off the property to get a clearer picture of how the disease is behaving.

“We know that no pigs have been introduced to the property in the last two years and no pigs have moved off the property in more than a week.”

NSW chief veterinary officer, Dr Bruce Christie, said the pigs started coughing late last week and were investigated by a private veterinarian earlier this week.

“Since a similar recent outbreak of Influenza A H1N1 in a Canadian piggery, Australia has been reviewing its plans for dealing with Influenza A H1N1 in a local piggery, and is prepared,” Dr Christie said.

“The National Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Disease is meeting tonight to coordinate the best response to the incident.

“NSW Department of Industry and Investment is working closely with NSW Health, NSW Farmers Association, Australian Pork Limited and the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities.”

Advice from the NSW Food Authority:

- Pork, including bacon and ham, is safe to eat
- Sick animals have not entered into the human food chain
- The NSW Food Authority does not permit the slaughtering of sick pigs for human consumption

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