

Four steps to keep exotic pig diseases out



Exotic diseases are infectious diseases that do not occur in Australia. Pigs are 'high risk' animals for bringing in exotic diseases – through the feeding of prohibited substances (swill) that contain exotic viruses. The exotic diseases most likely to be introduced into Australia through illegal swill feeding are foot and mouth disease (FMD) and classical swine fever (CSF).

Pig producers play an important role in preventing the introduction and spread of exotic diseases. It is important that you:

- 1. Know what swill is.*
- 2. Don't feed swill to pigs.*
- 3. Can recognise foot and mouth disease and classical swine fever.*
- 4. Report any unusual or suspect disease signs.*

Step 1: Know what swill is

Any meat product (including pies, sausage rolls, bacon and cheese rolls, pizza, deli meats, table scraps, restaurant waste) are classified as "swill". It is illegal to feed pigs swill or anything that has been in contact with swill (such as in meat trays and take-away food containers).

Step 2: Don't feed swill to pigs

You must not feed meat, meat products, or anything that has been in contact with meat to pigs. These restrictions apply to all pigs, including pet pigs. It is also illegal to allow pigs to feed on carcasses. Pigs that feed on carcasses are at risk of contracting anthrax and Salmonella, which are contagious to humans.



Foot and Mouth Disease - ulcers on feet



Foot and Mouth Disease - crusty ulcers on feet



Foot and Mouth Disease - blister on nose



Classical Swine Fever - discoloured extremities

Step 3: Be able to recognise foot and mouth disease and classical swine fever

Foot and mouth disease

Clinical signs of foot and mouth disease include fever and fluid-filled blisters (vesicles). Affected animals will salivate excessively and will most likely be lame. The skin covering the feet and the gums will have fluid-filled blisters and ulcers. These vesicles can form on the snout, nose, inside the mouth, on the tongue, at the top of the feet, between the claws of the feet and on the heel bulb. Vesicles may be seen on teats, shoulders and hocks.

Classical swine fever

Classical swine fever last occurred in Australia in 1961 and was eradicated. It was thought to be introduced in Australia through the feeding of prohibited substances to pigs. Severe cases can present as reluctance to rise, conjunctivitis, arched backs, drooping heads or tails, loss of appetite, fever, constipation followed by diarrhoea, discoloration of the extremities, and nervous signs, including a staggering gait. Many affected pigs die after being sick for 1-2 weeks. Less severe cases may show wasting and diarrhoea. Reproductive problems may also be noticed.

Step 4: Report any unusual or suspect disease signs to the Disease Watch Hotline.

It is a legal requirement that you report any unusual or suspect exotic disease signs to your veterinarian, State Government Livestock Agency or the Disease Watch Hotline (Telephone 1800 675 888). Key signs of an exotic disease include:

- blisters or vesicles on animals' snout, or feet
- unusually high number of lame animals
- unusually high number of sick animals
- unusually high number of deaths
- unusually high number of animals with fevers (39-41°C)
- unusually high number of animals not eating
- unusually high number of animals that do not want to get up
- discoloration of the ears, belly, rump, legs, or tail

Need More Information?

For more information on keeping diseases out, contact the State Government Industry representative listed at the end of this brochure.



Classical Swine Fever - drooping heads



Classical Swine Fever - loss of body condition