

# Recognising exotic diseases of pigs

Classical swine fever and  
African swine fever



## Protect what we've got

The Australian agricultural industry is internationally recognised as being free from devastating diseases that plague livestock industries in other countries. The introduction of exotic diseases such as classical swine fever and African swine fever would cause serious production losses to Australia's pig industry and jeopardise export markets for pig products. There are a range of parasites and diseases that can seriously affect the health and productivity

of pigs; many can spread from pig to pig and from one herd to another.

Some of these diseases are exotic to Australia and 'notifiable' under NSW legislation. This means you must notify authorities immediately if you know or suspect that an animal has one of these diseases. If you see clinical signs or deaths in animals, call **Local Land Services** on **1300 795 299** or the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**.

## Say NO to swill!

Swill feeding is the traditional name for the feeding of food scraps to pigs. It is a dangerous practice that can introduce and spread disease, placing livestock industries and the whole economy at risk.

Prohibited pig feed ('swill') includes meat, meat products and anything that has come into contact with meat or meat products.

It is illegal to feed swill to pigs in all Australian states and territories. This includes allowing or failing to prevent pigs having access to swill or directing another person to feed swill to pigs.

Make sure your pig feed is safe by looking for quality assured feed and asking your feed supplier for a vendor declaration.

For more information on what you can and can't feed your pigs, visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/swill-feeding](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/swill-feeding)

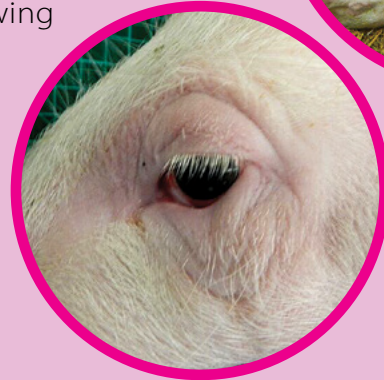


## Classical swine fever ('hog cholera')

Classical swine fever is a highly contagious viral disease of pigs. It is caused by a pestivirus. There have been several outbreaks in Australia that have been eradicated in the past with no outbreaks since the early 1960s. All Australian outbreaks were suspected to be a result of feeding infected swill to pigs.

Signs of infection usually appear 5-10 days after exposure to the virus. In very acute cases, young pigs can die without showing any clinical signs. Acute cases can present with a fever, depression, loss of appetite, conjunctivitis, constipation followed by diarrhoea, discolouration of the extremities, and nervous signs including a staggering gait.

Many affected pigs die after being sick for one to two weeks. Chronic cases can present with wasting and diarrhoea. Reproductive issues may also occur including abortions, mummified foetuses, weak and stillborn piglets, and persistently infected piglets.



## African swine fever

African swine fever is a highly infectious viral disease of pigs. Australia has never had a reported incident of the disease.

African swine fever occurs in the warthog population in Africa due to the soft argasid tick. Similar ticks are found associated with kangaroos in Australia. The African swine fever virus spreads by direct contact with infected pigs, through contaminated material from the environment and the feeding of infected swill

to pigs. The spread of the disease internationally has been linked to swill feeding of garbage from international airports or seaports to pigs.

Pigs of all ages can be affected. The first sign is usually the development of a fever. Pigs become depressed, stop eating, huddle together, seek shade and in severe cases, may die before other clinical signs develop.

Pigs often develop a swaying gait with the hind legs appearing weak. Flushing of the skin, particularly over the abdomen and extremities in white-skinned pigs, commonly develops in pigs that survive for longer than a day, which may deepen to a bluish-purple colour. Pigs may have difficulty breathing, and foam, often blood-tinged, may appear at the nostrils. Pigs may show signs of abdominal pain. Vomiting is common. Nasal and eye discharges can be seen in severe cases. Some pigs become constipated, while others may develop a bloody diarrhoea. Sows may abort at all stages of pregnancy. Diagnosis can only be confirmed by laboratory testing.



## For more information

For more information contact Local Land Services on **1300 795 299**, visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) or call the **NSW Department of Primary Industries Biosecurity Helpline** on **1800 680 244**.

If you see any unusual signs of disease or death, call the

**EMERGENCY ANIMAL  
DISEASE WATCH HOTLINE  
1800 675 888**