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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian Pork Limited welcomes funding to help protect Aussie pigs

The Australian pig industry has welcomed \$66.6 million in new funding to continue the fight against African Swine Fever (ASF).

Australian Pork Limited Chief Executive Officer Ms Margo Andrae was at Canberra Airport this morning when Minister for Agriculture, Senator Bridget McKenzie, made the announcement and said the funding would strengthen Australia's biosecurity and increase capacity at our borders as the threat of ASF looms.

"We're pleased the Government is taking biosecurity seriously and welcome these increased protections," Ms Andrae said.

"Australian Pork Limited and the entire industry looks forward to working with government agencies to ensure African swine fever stays out of the country for good."

African swine fever is potentially the biggest animal disease event the world has ever seen and it's travelled quickly through Asia, towards Australia. It's now less than 700 km away in Timor-Leste. There is currently no cure for ASF and millions of pigs will die if it reaches Australia.

The Australian pig industry is continuing to prepare for an incursion of ASF. Vets, scientists, Governments and other agricultural bodies across the country are refining strategies and raising awareness of how all Australians and visitors to Australia can help protect the industry and the rural communities they operate in.

"The risk from African swine fever is unprecedented," Ms Andrae said.

"Everyone in Australia's biosecurity system must play their part to keep this virulent and destructive disease away from Australia's pig farms."

For more information on African swine fever and industry resources, visit australianpork.com.au/asfresources

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Background

- Measures funded through the ASF Response Package:
- 130 more frontline biosecurity officers will start to be deployed from January 2020 to do half a million more passenger screenings a year
- Six new detector dogs to be deployed at airports and mail centres by July 2020
- Two new 3D x-ray machines at Melbourne and Sydney mail centres to be deployed by July 2020
- Biosecurity officers will have a new capability to issue infringement notices on the spot at airports.
- A new biosecurity squad will be established onshore to check products brought into Australia for sale aren't fraudulently labelled.
- Zoning arrangements will be developed to help support continued market access for our pork producers should the unthinkable happen and ASF reaches a part of Australia.