

African swine fever stakeholder update

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Committee:	African Swine Fever Stakeholder Weekly update
Meeting Date:	15 May 2020

Item #	Item Name	ASF preparedness update	Major outcomes, recommendations, actions
1	Australian Pork Limited Ms Margo Andrae	<p>Australia remains ASF free.</p> <p>The Queensland Government recently announced an additional \$10M in Sustainability Loans, available to the pork industry in Queensland to help prepare against ASF. ASF preparedness activities are essential to improve biosecurity and reduce the risk of ASF to the pork industry. The loan can be used to implement a range of activities on-farm including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exclusion fencing, • reconditioning or relocation of sheds to increase biosecurity measures, and • improvements to biosecurity measures at entry points, including acid washes, CCTV, and gate upgrades. <p>For more information please visit http://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/current-programs/sustainability-loan/Sustainability-Loan-Primary-producer</p> <p>Dr Guy Weerasinghe from the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) will present a webinar describing animal health surveillance, disease detection and indigenous training activities undertaken by NAQS. The webinar will provide producers with the opportunity to better understand NAQS activities and will be hosted by Dr Heather Channon on Wednesday 3rd June (more details to follow).</p> <p>Dr Channon and Dr van Breda presented a feral pig and brief ASF update at the WA Pig Biosecurity Consultative Group meeting on Friday 8th May.</p> <p>The AUSVETPLAN ASF manual writing group met on Friday 8th May to evaluate and continue revising the second interim version of the updated ASF manual.</p>	<p>APL continues to respond to the rapidly evolving impact of COVID-19, for more information visit www.australianpork.com.au/covid-19.</p>
2	Industry ASF Technical Committee Dr Ross Cutler	<p>Papua New Guinea National Agriculture and Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA) staff have identified the likely source of the ASF incursion as free roaming village pigs. It was likely that the pigs had access to the kitchen dump from a highway construction camp and took the disease back to their village where they died. Pigs near to the camp started dying and from there the disease followed traditional trade routes and the highway.</p>	

		<p>While illegally imported meat may be the original source, the disease has moved with trade and cultural events. For example, when the disease was first being investigated in March 2020, 35 pigs moved from Mendi (the likely first area infected) to the Western Highlands. On another occasion 200 pigs were moved from all over the Enga province to a funeral in Wabag and then distributed all over Enga with some ending up in Hagen.</p> <p>NAQIA testing, using a rapid test (ELISA) (with samples to be confirmed by the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (formerly AAHL) identified positive cases in the Southern Highlands, in Hela and Enga. A positive case was recorded in the Western Highlands but the history of the case doesn't match the findings and it is thought to be a problem of mislabelling rather than infection.</p> <p>In the highland areas there are about 5 pigs to every household. In the areas that have been tested and the disease detected there are about 720,000 pigs and 144,000 households. NAQIA estimates that the national pig population is 2.0-3.5 million pigs with no wild or feral pigs in the affected areas.</p> <p>ASF is a difficult disease to deal with at the best of times but in PNG there are all sorts of complexities. Covid-19 adds an additional dimension. PNG NAQIA staff are under a great deal of pressure but their work to identify a likely source is first class. The logistics of getting on top of the disease are challenging. Constraints include money, resources, fuel, language, security, PNG Defence Force availability for convoy escort, laboratory submission protocols, search warrants, equipment failures, false reporting, fear and staff skills.</p> <p>The most effective way to protect the PNG village pigs is to for the villagers to lock up their pigs. A decent fence around the pig pens will reduce the risk of infection.</p>	
3	<p>Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment update</p>	<p>Dr Narelle Clegg provided an update at the APL Delegates meeting on Thursday 14th May, highlighting the ASF preparedness activities that the Department continues to support.</p> <p>Off shore;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PNG detection and assistance, • Timor Leste assistance, and • Pacific countries preparedness. <p>At the border;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passengers, mail, cargo, fortnightly update of activities, and • Northern Australia – NAQS work with Torres Strait and Cape, producers. <p>On shore;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ausvetplan manual update progress, • Exercise Razorback, and • Zoning arrangements. 	
4	<p>Animal Health Committee update</p>	<p>Work is continuing but details are not available at the moment.</p>	

5	Next report	The next report will be distributed on Friday 29 th May 2020.	All stakeholders are welcome to continue sending through or asking questions, or raising their concerns with both Ms Margo Andrae or Dr Lechelle van Breda.
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