

Consumers Reminded that Pork Remains Safe



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National Pork Board President
Steve Weaver, California

Amid public concern about the reports of swine influenza in humans, the National Pork Board has reassured the public that pork is safe and will continue to be safe to consume. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has posted this statement on its Web site (cdc.org/swineflu):

"Swine influenza viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products."

The CDC and other health organizations continue to caution that the virus is contagious and is spreading from humans to humans. The CDC has said it has not found any evidence to indicate that any of the illnesses resulted from contact with pigs. Also at this time, there is no evidence that this swine influenza subtype is present in pigs in the United States.

Nonetheless, the National Pork Board is encouraging pork producers to maintain strict biosecurity procedures on their farms. You'll find biosecurity reminders for you and your employees in this newsletter, which is brought to you by the Pork Checkoff.

"We share the global health community's concern regarding the spread of this disease," said Steve Weaver, a California pork producer and president of the National Pork Board. "To ensure the good health of our animals and for all those who provide care for the animals, we are urging pork producers to step up their biosecurity measures and to be vigilant in helping to prevent the spread of this disease."

The National Pork Board also has offered its extensive resources about swine to assist public health officials as they address treatment and prevention strategies. 📌

This is a special-topic newsletter sent periodically to you by the **pork checkoff**
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Inside: Biosecurity tips for your pork operation.



📧 pork.org or 📞 the Pork Checkoff Service Center @ (800) 456-PORK

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1. Establish, implement and enforce strict sick leave policies for workers presenting influenza-like symptoms such as fever, cough, body aches, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.

- Prevent workers exhibiting these symptoms from entering swine facilities for at least seven days after presenting symptoms of respiratory illness, even mild ones.
- Recommend that workers with these symptoms be seen by a medical provider immediately and recommend that the person's contact with pigs is communicated to the care provider during the visit.
- Encourage workers to report if members of their household present influenza-like symptoms. Encourage them to receive medical attention and to share that a member of the household has contact with pigs. Encourage workers to report if a member of the household is diagnosed with influenza. Consider restricting the contact that this worker has with the animals.

2. Implement biosecurity for workers reporting international travel.

- This recommendation is not limited to those people who had contact with animals in foreign countries.
- Consider preventing the entry of workers who have travelled internationally, and particularly to Mexico, into your operation.
- If entry is essential, consider requiring that these people use face masks, or preferably N95 respirators, and gloves upon entering and during their permanence inside a swine housing facility.
- If workers reporting international

travel present influenza-like symptoms, restrict their access to the farm. Recommend that they seek immediate medical attention and that they report their travel to the medical professional.



3. Limit visitors to swine facilities.

- Limit the entry of people into your facility to workers and essential service personnel.
- Prevent international visitors from entering your facilities.
- Prevent the entry of people who report international travel (especially from Mexico) as recently as in the past two weeks.



4. Follow the following other generally accepted biosecurity practices.

- Pay attention to ventilation. Ventilation systems in production facilities should be designed to minimize re-circulation of air inside animal housing facilities. This is important to reduce the exposure



of pigs to viruses from other pigs, to reduce their exposure to human influenza viruses.

- Enforce basic hygiene practices. Workers should shower and change into farm-specific clothes and shoes before entering swine facilities. If not possible, enforce at least the use of farm shoes and hand and arm washing before contact with pigs.
- Recommend frequent hand-washing of workers, in barns and in offices.
- Implement and enforce the use of personal protective equipment. Provide basic personal protective equipment (PPE) to the people working in barns. This should include face masks, or preferably respirators; eye protection and gloves.
- Vaccinate pigs against the influenza virus. Vaccination of pigs can reduce the levels of virus shed by infected animals
- Recommend that all workers are vaccinated against the seasonal influenza virus. The vaccine is produced on a yearly basis and contains only human, not swine, strains of influenza viruses. Nonetheless, these vaccines are likely to provide some level of protection against infection with swine viruses of the same type. Vaccination of farm workers will reduce the amounts of viruses they shed if infected during human influenza outbreaks, and limit the potential for human influenza virus infection of pigs.

For more information, log onto pork.org or call the Producer Service Center at (800) 456-PORK. Updates on this influenza outbreak will be posted there as they become available. 📌