



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **USDA CONDUCTING CONFIRMATORY TESTING ON POSSIBLE DETECTION OF 2009 PANDEMIC H1N1 INFLUENZA IN U.S. SWINE**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16, 2009 — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories will be conducting confirmatory testing on swine samples collected at the 2009 Minnesota State Fair between August 26 and September 1. The pigs sampled at the time showed no signs of illness and were apparently healthy. The samples collected were part of a University of Iowa and University of Minnesota cooperative agreement research project funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which documents influenza viruses where humans and pigs interact at such as fairs.

“Like people, swine routinely get sick or contract influenza viruses. We currently are testing the Minnesota samples to determine if this is 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza,” said Vilsack. “We are working in partnership with CDC as well as our animal and public health colleagues and will continue to provide information as it becomes available.”

USDA’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories expects to have confirmatory results within the next few days.

“I want to remind people that people cannot get this flu from eating pork or pork products,” said Vilsack.

An outbreak of 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza occurred in a group of children housed in a dormitory at the fair at the same time samples were collected from the pigs, but no direct link to the pigs has been made. Information available at this time would suggest the children were not sickened by contact with the fair pigs.

USDA continues to remind U.S. swine producers about the need for good hygiene, biosecurity and other practices that will prevent the introduction and spread of influenza viruses in their herd and encourage them to participate in USDA’s swine influenza virus surveillance program. Monitoring and studying these influenza viruses in swine, will help USDA learn about the virus, develop better tools to diagnose and develop new and improved vaccines to protect our U.S swine herds. USDA encourages commercial pork producers to intensify the biosecurity practices that they have in place, particularly during this flu season.

More information about USDA’s 2009 pandemic H1N1 efforts is available at [www.usda.gov/H1N1flu](http://www.usda.gov/H1N1flu).

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