

## African Swine Fever

Unfortunately the recent news of the discovery of African Swine Fever (ASF) in wild boar in Germany acts as a timely reminder for us all to remain vigilant and ensure that we do all that we can to protect both our individual pig herds, and also the national pig herd. The first confirmed case in Germany was found in a decomposing female feral boar in the East of the country, 6km from the Polish border, and only 30km from the last confirmed case of ASF in Poland. There have since been a number of additional infected feral boar found. This has impacted hugely on pig exports from Germany to a number of non-EU countries, including China, Mexico and Brazil.

ASF is not spread by aerosol unlike other diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease, so it can often be kept out of commercial herds through good biosecurity to avoid spread from pig to pig or via humans. The virus is capable of surviving for over a year in fresh meat and many months in cured meats such as salami. Whilst the law is clear that pigs should not be fed kitchen/catering waste or meat, please also remember the Red Tractor standards in which:

- No pork products should be consumed within the biosecure areas
- Designated areas for the consumption of human food must not be within pig areas

It is also important that any left over human food or food packaging is disposed of in a bin with a lid and is not left within range of scavenging birds or animals.

Clinical signs of African Swine Fever include:

- Deaths of 30-100% of pigs across all age groups (depending on biosecurity between them)
- Red discolouration of the ears, nose and hindquarters
- Fever with increased respiratory rate and struggling to stand/incoordination
- Vomiting/constipation/diarrhoea/bloody diarrhoea
- Haemorrhage from the nose, ears, vulva, anus and eyes

If you have any concerns regarding ASF, please contact your vet and the DEFRA Rural Services Helpline immediately on 03000 200301.

## Veterinary Medicines Record Books

We now have new medicines books available – these can be ordered through dispensary. A donation for every book printed will be made by the practice and shared between the following charities:

- The Farming Community Network (FCN)
- You Are Not Alone (YANA)
- Lincolnshire Rural Support Network (LRSN)
- The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI)
- Samaritans



**Veterinary Medicines**  
Record of Administration

Name:   
Farm location:   
Farm:   
Address:   
Book started:  Book finished:



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## 'Flu Vaccinations – Annual Reminder

Swine influenza, 'flu, is caused by Influenza A infection in pigs and can cause respiratory signs, weight loss and reduced productive performance, causing problems in both breeding and finishing herds. Although individually affected pigs usually recover within two weeks, the virus often continues to circulate throughout the herd and also lowers the resistance of animals to other diseases so that secondary infections can occur, giving a variety of clinical signs.

There are four main influenza virus strains that affect pigs in the UK, but the virus is prone to mutation whereby previously infected herds can then be re-infected with different strains. The virus is spread between pigs through the air, via contaminated surfaces and equipment, and through nose-to-nose contact. This spread can occur before the animal starts to show clinical signs of being unwell. Clinical disease is common throughout the UK, particularly during the winter months as the virus survives best in cold weather.

It is possible for stockworkers infected by 'flu to spread this to the pigs under their care. Similarly, stockworkers are also susceptible to catching 'flu from infected pigs. We therefore advise that anyone suspected of being infected with influenza should avoid working with pigs during that time frame, and that all people working with pigs, provided they are able to do so, visit their doctor's surgery or pharmacist for their annual 'flu vaccination.

## What are we seeing out there - Ergot

We are hearing reports of some crops of this years rye, wheat and barley being significantly affected by Ergot. There are a number of risk factors for this fungus, including a cool, wet flowering season. Whilst it has little effect on yield, if contaminated grain is fed to pigs it can have a wide range of effects, including damaging the mammary glands of sows in late pregnancy which results in a failure to secrete milk during lactation (agalactia). High doses of the alkaloids in Ergot are also capable of causing vascular necrosis and gangrene of the feet, tails and ears of all ages of pig.

We therefore remind those on a home mill and mix system to remain particularly vigilant for any sign of Ergot.

**Please contact your vet with any questions you may have regarding Ergot**



<https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/ergot-in-cereals>

## Feedback

Please let us know if there is anything that you would like including, or more information on, in a future newsletter.



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