



## SWINE INFLUENZA: CLINICAL SIGNS AND BIOSECURITY TIPS FOR PIG OWNERS/HANDLERS

Swine influenza may be caused by different strains of influenza viruses. It is a reportable disease - if you suspect the disease immediately contact your veterinarian, state or territory animal health officer or call the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline - 1800 675 888.

At the moment, the A/H1N1 influenza virus is in the news as it has caused an influenza pandemic in humans and outbreaks of influenza in several pig herds (including some Australian cases).

There are some basic signs of swine influenza you should be able to recognise. There are also simple biosecurity measures that will reduce the risk of swine influenza being introduced to your pigs.

Swine influenza affects pigs in a similar way as the 'seasonal flu' affects humans. The current A/H1N1 strain is easily transmitted, and produces a range of clinical signs such as high temperature, coughing, runny nose and poor appetite etc. Young, pregnant and nutritionally and/or physically stressed pigs are more susceptible to catching this disease, and some of these animals might die. However, the majority of pigs will experience only mild signs and will then fully recover.

### SIGNS

YES

NO

If you tick yes to one or more of the signs below you should consult your veterinarian immediately.

Do your pigs have any of the following signs?

Coughing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watery nasal discharge, (this may be thick and smelly)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laboured breathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stiffness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A fever (with a temperature above 39°C)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact your private veterinarian or a government veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pig/s has signs of swine influenza.  
Or phone the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.**

**Disclaimer:** Care is taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document. However AHA and PHA cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information or opinions contained in the document. You should make your own enquiries before making decisions concerning your interests. [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au)



## PROTECTING YOUR PIGS

Looking after these farm biosecurity risk areas will minimise the risk of swine influenza for your pigs: consider the risk areas in relation to your property/herd and implement risk mitigation measures appropriate for you.

### ANIMAL MOVEMENT

**Isolate any newly arrived pigs from your existing herd for at least 14 days.**

*Pay particular attention to pigs that have come from saleyards, have been transported over long distances by commercial transport, come from places with unknown or questionable husbandry practices or recently returned from events (shows, etc). (Where space limits the isolation of new arrivals, pay more attention to good hygiene and disinfection practices, use separate equipment where possible, and handle them last.)*

**Seek immediate veterinary advice at the first sign of sickness**

*Animals showing signs consistent with swine influenza need to be isolated immediately until swine influenza has been ruled out. The disease is reportable so you must check with your veterinarian.*

**Handle, feed and water ALL sick pigs last**

*Use separate clothing and equipment when handling sick pigs. If feasible, use separate staff. You must clean and disinfect all equipment and clothing after each use and wash any bare/exposed body parts with soap.*

**Maintain records of the movements of your pigs**

Good records ensure that any contacts can be traced in the event of a disease outbreak.

### EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

**Use fresh needles and syringes for every pig when vaccinating or giving medicine.**

**Keep any equipment used on sick pigs separate from the other pigs.**

*Clean and disinfect after each use. Thoroughly clean all surfaces by removing all snot/mucus, soil and organic material before disinfecting.*

**Ensure common handling areas and equipment in contact with pigs are regularly cleaned and disinfected.**

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## PEOPLE AND PEOPLE MOVEMENT

**Prevent anyone with flu-like symptoms from entering your property and especially keep them away from your pigs.**

*Ask infected workers to stay at home until well.*

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**Conduct a risk assessment of anyone coming into contact with your herd.** *Find out how high a risk the visitor may pose to your herd by asking questions like 'Have you been in contact with other pig herds?', 'Do you currently have flu or any flu symptoms?' etc. If they present a high risk you may have to refuse entry to protect your herd. A visitor risk assessment template can be downloaded from [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au).*

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**Where possible, restrict visitor access to your property.**

*Minimise the number of visitors and try to restrict them to people who have not had contact with pigs during the previous 48 hours. Record all personnel entering your property and where they have previously been for the purposes of tracing.*

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**Ensure anyone exposed to a herd that has or is suspected of having been infected with swine influenza minimises their contact with others until given the all clear.**

*Especially, ask them to stay away from other herds to avoid transmission.*

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**Where possible you and your staff should avoid, or at least minimise, visits to other properties where pigs are kept.**

*You do not know the level of security these pigs are kept under.*

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**Ensure you and your staff are aware of the methods for the prevention, identification and control of swine influenza.**

Further information about swine influenza can be obtained from the Farm Biosecurity website.

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**Clean and disinfect all clothing and footwear and if possible, use separate staff and equipment.**

*Disinfection can be achieved with the use of household products. The virus is readily killed by the standard use of common detergents and soaps, household chlorine bleach, hypochlorites and citric acid.*

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**Ensure hygiene practices are used when handling different groups of pigs**

*Wash hands (including under finger nails) and any exposed skin with soap/detergent between handling different groups of pigs.*



## VEHICLES

### **Ensure all vehicles are regularly cleaned and disinfected**

*Thoroughly clean all surfaces by removing all mucus, soil and organic material before disinfecting.*

### **Check all livestock vehicles entering your property for cleanliness.**

*If you feel they pose a risk, you should request that they be cleaned before allowing them to enter.*

### **Where possible, ensure visitor vehicles are limited to a designated parking area.**

*Do not allow visitor to enter livestock housing areas unless strictly necessary.*

## OTHER BIOSECURITY ISSUES TO REMEMBER

### FEED AND WATER

#### **NEVER feed swill to pigs.**

*Swill feeding is one of the highest risks for the introduction of disease into a pig population. It is illegal in Australia.*

#### **Ensure water troughs are high enough to avoid contamination by faeces**

*Water can easily be contaminated by faeces so troughs should always be cleaned regularly and positioned high enough to avoid contamination.*

### PESTS AND WEEDS

#### **Ensure boundary areas are maintained and checked regularly to minimise contact with other animals.**

*Wild animals may carry diseases that can infect your pig herd if they are exposed. Secure boundary fences will protect your herd and minimise this risk.*



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