



1 May 2009

Influenza A H1N1 (misnamed as Swine Flu) – Update #4

1. Key Issues

- Refined APL key messages
- WHO has changed its reference to the Swine Flu to its accurate scientific name of Influenza A/H1N1 effective 30 April 2009.
- WHO Alert Phase 5 for the human-to-human virus transmission remains unchanged.
- Extensive media coverage stating that Australian pork is safe and that the virus is by human-to-human transmission however pork sales have softened somewhat.
- Thailand and UAE places ban on all Australian pork and Australian pork offal.
- No additional Australian quarantine regulations
- No Australian cases confirmed; no evidence to date of transmission from people to pigs or vice versa.
- As of 17:00 GMT, 30 April 2009, the WHO has reported 11 countries have officially reported 257 cases of “Swine Influenza” (Influenza A (H1N1)) infection. There have only been 8 deaths worldwide.
- The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations ([FAO](#)), the World Health Organisation ([WHO](#)) and the World Organisation for Animal Health ([OIE](#)) have issued a joint statement stating that "Swine Flu" (Influenza A/H1N1) is not transmissible by eating pork.
- Remember rigorous biosecurity on-farm is critical!

2. Key Messages

- ✓ Pork is safe to eat. It is impossible to contract Influenza A/H1N1 from eating pork. There is no connection between pork products and this disease.
- ✓ Influenza A/H1N1 continues to be a human health issue. It is not an animal health or food safety issue.
- ✓ Consumers are questioning the link between Influenza A/H1N1 and consuming pork. APL is working very hard to ensure that the information gets to consumers that Australian pork remains completely safe to eat.
- ✓ WHO, FAO & the OIE have issued a joint statement regarding the safety of pork- they have officially changed the name of the virus to Influenza A/H1N1 to disassociate the virus from global pork industries. The statement includes the following sentence- “Influenza viruses are not known to be transmissible to people through eating processed pork or other food products derived from pigs.”
- ✓ APL are seeing some signs of consumers reducing their purchases of pork which is a serious concern. We are closely monitoring this situation.
- ✓ The Australian pig herd is free of swine flu. However even in the case of the flu entering the country it would still not be possible to contract the flu through consumption of pork and pork related products.

1. Updated Information

- **Virus name** – from 30 April 2009, WHO will refer to the new influenza virus as influenza A (H1N1). APL is following this lead on the name change in its communications.
- **World Health Organisation (WHO) Alert Phase 5** - The WHO Director-General has maintained the level of influenza pandemic alert at phase 5. **Phase 5** is characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region. While most countries will not be affected at this stage, the declaration of Phase 5 is a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization,



P O R K S A F E N O T I C E

communication, and implementation of the planned mitigation measures is short. **Phase 6**, the pandemic phase, is characterized by community level outbreaks in at least one other country in a different WHO region in addition to the criteria defined in **Phase 5**. Designation of this phase will indicate that a global pandemic is under way.

- **Thailand embargo** - AQIS has advised that Thailand has put in place a temporary ban on all Australian pork and Australian pork offal exports to Thailand. APL has advised AQIS that this is a valuable and important market for Australian offal and this will have an impact on the industry. AQIS will argue the case against these decisions. Our biggest markets, Korea, Singapore and Japan continue to remain stable.
- **UAE embargo** - The UAE has also imposed a ban on all pork imports including Australia.
- **Pork import bans** - at least 30 countries have banned pork imports from the United States and Mexico.
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has stated that countries that have banned US imports of pork is unwarranted and has no basis. Saudi Arabia has halted flights from countries affected by swine flu. The UAE has also banned the import and sale of pork in the country.
- **Australian Quarantine Powers** - Australian quarantine regulations including ready to implement, include thermal scanning at airports, and quarantine protocols for travellers on incoming aircraft remain unchanged.
- **Infection internationally** - According to the official WHO press release, the following countries have reported laboratory confirmed cases with no deaths - Austria (1), Canada (19), Germany (3), Israel (2), Netherlands (1), New Zealand (3), Spain (13), Switzerland (1) and the United Kingdom (8). **No Australian Cases - As of 12pm, 30 April 2009**, Australian Eastern Standard Time, Australia had reported 114 suspect cases under investigations and 0 confirmed cases. The Government has not released any more information regarding suspect or confirmed cases for 1 May 2009..

2. APL Actions

- APL is seeing some signs of consumers reducing their purchases of pork which is of serious concern. APL has engaged a Public Relations firm to assist APL with Issues Management, focussing on retaining confidence in pork. In addition information and updates are being regularly provided to retailers, food service, chefs, processors and wholesalers on a targeted basis reinforcing the message that Australian pork is safe to eat.
- We are escalating our efforts in this area and continue to closely monitor the situation.
- APL is working with AQIS to resolve market issues in Thailand. Thailand has embargoed all pork imports from countries who have reported suspect cases of human infection of the virus. AQIS will be negotiating on the industry's behalf to the Thai Government.

3. Media Coverage

- APL is targeting consumers via talkback radio, national newspapers, and through butchers, restaurants and chefs.
- Producers are encouraged to look at the APL website in case of new information or updates: <http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page141.asp>
- Communications with Stakeholders - APL has to date distributed to relevant stakeholders:
 - Press Release
 - Changed references to Influenza A H1N1 from Swine Flu
 - Frequently Asked Questions



P O R K S A F E N O T I C E

- Media / spokespeople Talking Points
- Producer brief on Enhanced Biosecurity Measures
- Retailer Information Brief
- Industry Issues Alert
- Swine Influenza Animal Disease Factsheet
- Risk Assessment Matrix

This documentation can be sourced through APL's website, which also provides alert messages and useful links

<http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp>

4. Remember Biosecurity On-Farm is Critical!

It is prudent for Australian Pork Producers to implement further strategies in addition to their existing stringent herd biosecurity routines. APL recommends that until advised you also undertake the following:

To prevent person-to-animal transmission

- Exclude contact between pigs and people with any sign of fever or flu-like symptoms
- Exclude contact between pigs and people that have returned from overseas travel within the last 7 -10 days, especially those that have visited the Americas
- See APL's Enhanced Biosecurity Alert available from APL website

5. Other contacts

- **Swine Influenza Hotline:** 1802007 – For the general public and people returning from the Americas with flu-like symptoms.
- **Emergency Animal Disease Watch** hotline - Producers are encouraged to check their properties regularly and if they see anything unusual to call 1800 675 888.

6. Other information

- **APL website** - <http://www.australianpork.com.au/pages/page140.asp> - For more information and updates on Swine Flu
- **Animal Health Australia** - <http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/>
- **Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer** - <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/animal>

7. PorkSAFE (Australian Pork Emergency Response Plan); Incident Control Team

Incident Controller	Kathleen Plowman 0402 794 901 kathleen.plowman@australianpork.com.au	Key contact and liaison point for industry
Deputy Incident Controller	Andrew Spencer 0423769609 andrew.spencer@australianpork.com.au	
Communications Manager	Emily Mackintosh 0418 697 595 emily.mackintosh@australianpork.com.au	Media inquiries
Planning Manager	Darryl D'Souza 0421622900 darryl.dsouza@australianpork.com.au	
Markets	Peter Smith Peter.smith@australianpork.com.au 0431478201	Domestic / international markets