

Swine Flu Information

- As of April 28, 2009, the swine flu outbreak that has impacted the United States and Mexico has **NOT** been linked to swine.
- “Swine flu” is a general name used for many years when describing a Type A influenza virus that originally did come from swine; however, genetic recombination and mixing of human, avian, and swine strains of influenza make this term somewhat misleading today.
- Historically, influenza viruses have been only marginally transmissible from swine to humans. It is when the virus mutates in human hosts and becomes more transmittable from human to human that it becomes more of a public health threat.
- Such viruses are **NOT** spread through eating pork products.
- Classical swine influenza (hog flu) is not uncommon in North America, but no unusual activity has been reported from around the USA.
- Hog flu has not been identified in Alaska for many years.
- Signs of hog flu in pigs include rapid onset and spread of depression, anorexia, fever, and respiratory distress. The virus is spread through aerosolized viral particles and direct contact. Mortality rates average 1-4% of the herd, with most animals recovering within a few days.
- Hog flu is a reportable disease in Alaska, with licensed veterinarians being required to report suspected or confirmed cases.
- The OSV urges any livestock producer who experiences a possible disease outbreak to contact their local veterinarian and our office. The Environmental Health Laboratory can perform initial screening tests for swine flu.
- There are no specific import or export restrictions regarding swine flu for interstate or international movement of swine at this time. Standard health certifications are all that is required.
- Related Links;
 - For the Alaska State Public Health update: www.pandemicflu.alaska.gov
 - For USDA animal health update:
<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/04/0131.xml>
 - For World Organization for Animal Health update:
http://www.oie.int/eng/en_index.htm
 - For Centers for Disease Control updates: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>