



## agriculture, land reform & rural development

Department:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**9 May 2020**

### **MINISTER DIDIZA ANNOUNCES THE OUTBREAK OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms. Thoko Didiza (MP), hereby announces the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) at Amathole District Municipality in Eastern Cape (EC).

This announcement follows investigations and a post-mortem performed by departmental veterinary services on 13 April 2020, in the Amathole District Municipality, whereby five villages under the Mngquma Local Municipality, where 50 pigs died, were visited. The villages affected in Centanetown are Ngede, Nontshinga and Feni; and the villages affected in Ngqamakwetown are Ngquthu and Toleni. The department has sent a notification to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) accordingly.

The minister notes that this is the first time that an outbreak of AFS has been recorded in this province. In the past three years, outbreaks of ASF outside of the ASF controlled area occurred in the Free State, North West, Northern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. It has not yet been determined whether this outbreak in the EC is linked to the outbreaks in other provinces.

“This outbreak occurred in a communal setting, which makes movement control and biosecurity between the respective pig herds difficult. Control measures currently in place include that all infected pigs should be as far as possible from those that are not and must be housed alone to avoid contact with other pigs in the area, to limit the spread of the disease,” said Minister Didiza.

The areas where the outbreak occurred have been quarantined; no pigs are allowed to move into, through or out of the area. Follow-up investigations by provincial veterinary services are underway, to determine the extent of the outbreak.

Quick facts about ASF:

- It kills almost all infected pigs;
- Other common clinical signs are bleeding on the skin and difficulty in breathing;
- There is no vaccine for ASF;
- There is no treatment for affected pigs; and
- Prevention is better than cure.

The disease is transmitted to pigs by contact with infected wild or domestic pigs and infected soft ticks, contact with people, vehicles, equipment or shoes, and eating contaminated food waste, feed, or garbage. Awareness campaigns have been initiated to inform pig farmers and keepers in the affected areas on how the disease spreads and how they can protect their pigs from the virus.

Pig farmers and keepers should follow these recommendations:

- Enclose your pigs to prevent contact with pigs of unknown health status, including wild pigs and warthogs.
- Only buy healthy pigs from a reliable source.
- Preferably, do not feed kitchen waste, but if you have no option, remove all meats and cook the kitchen waste thoroughly.
- Do not to allow visitors to have contact with your pigs.
- Before having contact with pigs, wash hands, only use clean clothes, shoes, equipment and vehicles (that have not been in contact with other pigs).

The minister would like to assure all citizens that ASF does not affect humans and the consumption of pork is safe. However, any meat and products from affected pigs can be a source of infection to other pigs.

Pig farmers and keepers should therefore ensure that if any swill (kitchen waste) is to be fed to pigs, it should be pre-cooked for at least an hour. This will ensure the inactivation of the ASF virus, as well as other diseases of concern.

If pigs from unaffected commercial pig farms in the area are moved to the abattoir for slaughter, they must be accompanied by health attestations to declare that the herds of origin have not shown any signs indicative of ASF or had higher than normal pig deaths. Commercial piggeries are encouraged to comply with compartmentalisation biosecurity standards to protect their piggeries from infection.

Pig farmers and keepers are requested to be vigilant and to report any sudden illness and deaths of their pigs to the local state veterinary office immediately, so that swift action can be initiated to prevent the spread of this disease.

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For media enquiries, contact the Media Liaison Officer, Mr Reggie Ngcobo on 082 883 2458.

Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development