



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

October 27, 1999

**VETERINARY SERVICES NOTICE NO. 99-13**

Marketing and  
Regulatory  
Programs

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Washington, DC  
20250

**Subject:** Implementing Additional Surveillance for Classical Swine Fever in  
Geographic High-Risk Areas

**To:** Directors, Veterinary Services Regions  
Area Veterinarians in Charge, Veterinary Services

To protect the U.S. swine industry and to maintain the confidence of our international trading countries, adequate numbers of swine need to be tested for classical swine fever (CSF), also known as hog cholera. However, too little CSF testing currently is being done. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has received \$2.9 million through the Commodity Credit Corporation to increase CSF surveillance in the United States and its Territories.

The purpose of this Notice is to provide guidelines for developing a CSF surveillance program in the most at-risk areas. However, all Area Veterinarians in Charge (AVIC's) should attempt to increase field contacts with all segments of the swine industry. High-risk areas include California, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Texas, and areas around military bases in all States.

The AVIC's of the areas listed above must identify high-risk premises--such as waste-feeding and backyard swine operations and feral swine hunt clubs--within their areas. The number of premises and the number of swine on each premises must be identified and the location plotted using Geographic Positioning System coordinates in a Geographic Information System database.

In addition, methods must be identified to obtain diagnostic specimens from adequate numbers of animals. This may include use of samples from animals originally identified for other purposes. The Frankfort Brucellosis Laboratory in Kentucky, for example, routinely collects specimens from cull sows and boars for pseudorabies testing. When the commercial enzyme-linked immunosorbent serum assay (ELISA) test kits become available, a sample of 10 percent of the specimens collected for pseudorabies virus testing at this lab will be submitted to APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for CSF testing as well.



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Producers should be given printed materials about CSF as well as information on ways to contact an APHIS/Veterinary Services official in case of any pig illness. Veterinary Medical Officers must promote CSF awareness by developing educational programs, especially for high-risk groups, and by using the communications media (e.g., promotional radio and TV ads) and the services of extension agents to increase producers' understanding of the disease. Assistance can be provided by Tyrone Kemp, CSF Public

Affairs Specialist, Legislative and Public Affairs, APHIS, who is stationed in Miami, Florida (telephone: 305-526-2926; fax: 305-526-2929).

It is especially important to identify high-risk swine (e.g., pigs from States with slaughter plants that commonly process swine from waste-feeding premises). Accordingly, contacts with plant owners and Federal or State inspectors need to be fostered and CSF surveillance programs established or expanded. Important liaisons for surveillance programs can be developed through presentation of educational talks for plant managers, plant personnel, and food safety inspectors. The sampling of condemned carcasses for septicemic conditions compatible with CSF should be encouraged and rewarded with monetary compensation.

### **Incentives**

Contacts must be made with premises operators to develop good working relationships and to determine the best methods of surveillance. To help gain the cooperation and confidence of operators, the following financial incentives may be offered: (1) purchase of sick pigs for diagnostic purposes, (2) use of swine feed vouchers (\$10-\$50) for information leading to the identification of sick pigs, and (3) payment for additional diagnostic testing at State laboratories. Purchases of sick pigs and use of swine feed vouchers should be documented on Standard Form 1034 (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal).

Payment to State laboratories may be arranged through cooperative agreements with the States. If the "mutual benefit" provision that normally is required in cooperative agreements does not exist, contracts and/or blanket purchase orders can be issued to facilitate payment.

### **Feral Swine**

Feral swine are more likely to be infected by meat products contaminated with the CSF virus than are biosecure, commercially produced swine. Feral swine in some States are regulated by fish and game laws rather than by State agriculture laws. Each AVIC should identify the agency that regulates feral swine in his or her State and work in concert with this agency to develop plans for CSF surveillance of the animals.

Feral swine are likely to be difficult to monitor other than at the time of slaughter. In Texas, commercial slaughter of feral swine for the Gulf Coast States occurs in three plants. Blood samples from the approximately 50,000 feral swine slaughtered annually in Texas will be collected and submitted to NVSL.

Specimens from hunter-killed feral swine should be collected at check stations or at local plants that commonly process such animals. Attempts to access animals for sampling via trapping or shooting should be made in high-risk areas such as Mona Island, Puerto Rico.

German CSF studies demonstrate that animals of less than 6 months of age have a greater prevalence of antibodies and viral titers than do adults. Therefore, feral swine studies should be based on samples from young animals, and data from hunter-kill studies, which typically are based on healthy adult animals, should not be relied upon exclusively in determining CSF-free status.

### **Conclusion**

AVIC's in high-risk areas must submit a monthly report to the Regional Directors detailing all CSF surveillance activities.

This Notice does not restrict CSF surveillance to high-risk areas. All AVIC's should attempt to increase field contacts with all segments of the swine industry in order to monitor for CSF.

AVIC's who have questions regarding this Notice may contact Dr. Keith Hand, Emergency Programs staff, APHIS (telephone: 301-734-4866; fax: 301-734-7817; e-mail: Keith.A.Hand@usda.gov).

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