

Keeping Influenza Out Of Your Herd

The introduction of influenza into pig herds is an ever present risk. The following measures should be implemented to help prevent entry of the virus.

Review bio-security practices

- Influenza can be spread by direct contact between infected pigs, fomite spread (mechanical spread of virus by people, vehicles and equipment) and aerosol spread over short distances.

Control access of people

- Do not allow unnecessary personnel onto your pig farm. Keep records of visitors and ensure they follow biosecurity protocols.
- Anyone with clinical signs of influenza, or who is in close contact with someone with influenza, should avoid contact with pigs this includes vets and other visitors. Pig keepers must, of course, ensure that the health and welfare needs of pigs under their care are met.
- People working with pigs known, or suspected to be, infected with influenza should not have contact with other pigs. If this cannot be avoided, you should ensure that there is at least a 48 hour period between contact with the known infected herd and a 'clean' herd.
- If you have pigs in close proximity to the general public such as on an outdoor unit by a public footpath or open farms you are advised to ensure a distance of 3 metres between the public and any pigs using of perimeter fencing or other appropriate barriers. Aerosols from humans such as sneezing (a potential method of spread from humans infected with H1N1/09v) typically travel for 1-2 metres.

Control movement of pigs onto the farm

- Only source pigs from herds of comparable health status to your own.
- Consider additional ways to minimise the risk of influenza virus entry. For example keep new pigs separated from the resident herd for at least 10 days (to monitor for signs of influenza).
- If pigs of unknown health status enter a unit impose a voluntary movement ban of at least 10 days (excluding movements to slaughter) to allow any clinical signs of influenza to develop, even if the unit is exempt from the compulsory 20 day standstill.
- Be vigilant for signs of disease and seek professional advice if clinical signs of influenza are seen.