

NADIS disease bulletins are written specifically for farmers, to increase awareness of prevalent conditions and promote disease prevention and control, in order to benefit animal health and welfare. Farmers are advised to discuss their individual farm circumstances with their veterinary surgeon.

Classical Swine Fever (CSF)

We are now into the second week of the outbreak of Classical Swine Fever centred in East Anglia – the first in this country since 1986. As of this morning, 16 August 2000, there are still only 5 confirmed farms affected by the disease – a single privately owned outdoor breeding unit near Banham in Norfolk and 4 nursery sites in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex – operated by BQP – that received weaned pigs from the breeding unit in the last few weeks. All these herds have been slaughtered out and the carcasses rendered down. The meat does not enter either the human or the animal (pet) food chain. The MAFF view is that the single breeding herd is the index case. Other nurseries have been slaughtered out as dangerous contacts without the disease being confirmed.

However, considerable confusion is being caused in the media and with concerned pig farmers with other reports of herds under investigation and these notes are intended to clarify the system.

It should be stressed that MAFF's rightly vigorous approach to this disease is based on the essential need to contain it and protect the national herd. It is entirely predictable and unfortunate that innocent farms will be caught up in the general disruption caused and may well suffer financially as a result.

The system in place for the investigation and containment of Classical Swine Fever in the EU has a number of stages:-

- 1) The first step is the serving of a Form A restriction notice on a farm being investigated. The investigation will be sparked by a number of possible factors:-
 - a) As part of a tracing exercise from known infected premises. This means any herds that have received pigs from, or supplied pigs to, a confirmed farm will be examined and tested for the disease whilst the farm is under a Form A restriction.
In addition, any farms that have links through haulage wagons and other equipment and personnel to infected herds will be caught in the sweep of tracings.
 - b) Notification of suspicion of disease in the herd by the farmer or his veterinary surgeon. It should be noted that the new syndromes of PMWS/PDNS can show clinical and post mortem signs indistinguishable from Classical Swine Fever and, considering that these diseases are widespread across East Anglia and southern England, it would be expected that a more vigorous view will be taken to such cases and be reported as possible Classical Swine Fever to be rather "safe than sorry".
 - c) Notification of suspicious signs at the slaughter house by the OVS or meat inspector. Again, cases of PDNS can be easily confused and are likely to be reported to be on the safe side.

As a result of these features, it is to be expected that a large number of farms will be investigated. This does not mean the disease is widespread. Reports in the media of MAFF investigation going on in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire etc relate to these initial Form A restrictions and testing of the animals as part of the containment process.

Whilst under a Form A restriction notice, no pig movement on or off the farm is permitted but there is no restriction around the farm on any neighbours.

It can take several days for laboratory results to come through but, in general, a positive result is likely to be obtained earlier than a negative i.e. the longer it takes to hear the result the better the news is likely to be.

2) **Confirmed Cases.**

Once disease is confirmed on the farm, all pigs are valued and slaughtered and carcasses removed for rendering. The premises is then sprayed with disinfectant and allowed to stand for 24 hours before fuller washing and disinfection occurs.

A two tier restriction zone is put in place on confirmation of the disease:-

- a) **The Protection Zone.** This is a rigid 3km radius around the infected farm and all pig units within that area are served notice by hand, restricting movement on and off their premises for 21 days, although pigs are allowed to transit the zone provided they do not stop or unload.
- b) **Surveillance Zone.** This is a minimum of 10km around the farm but is a specific area following roads and rivers etc to define its boundary. For the first 7 days, no movement out of this zone is permitted. After 7 days, MAFF have powers to licence movement of pigs out of the zone direct for slaughter. The movement of non-slaughter pigs out of this zone will not be permitted.

The zones remain in place for 30 days after the disinfection of the infected premises, during which time all herds are inspected and tested if any suspicious signs of disease are seen.

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So far, the outbreak has been confined to a single chain of supply and, the more time that passes without further cases being confirmed, the more confident we can be that this potentially devastating disease has been contained. If that proves to be the case, MAFF deserve the credit for a rigorous and efficient operation.

Mark White BVSc DPM MRCVS

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