



## Swine Flu Advice for Consumers, Pig Owners

**Organizations offer farmers and consumers basic advice for how to deal with the swine flu situation; report no U.S. pigs with swine flu and no risk to humans who eat pork.**

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Pig owners and consumers alike have plenty of reasons to want to learn more about the recent swine flu outbreak.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports 64 cases of swine flu in humans in the United States, as of April 27, 2009.

For farmers who own pigs, Purdue University Veterinarian Sandy Amass, who specializes in swine production medicine, offers three basic, common-sense ways to approach the situation and protect their pigs:

Do not permit people, including employees that have the flu or flulike symptoms, in or around barns.

Do not allow any visitors to the farm, especially international visitors who have had contact with other livestock.

If pigs show flu symptoms - coughing, runny nose, fever and a reduction in feed intake - call a veterinarian and have them tested.

Another good practice for pig owners--and any livestock owner: Clean up!

If you've been around other animals, clean your shoes and clothing that may have been in contact with the animals. Also, wash your hands with warm water and soap thoroughly before and after handling your own pigs--or any livestock.

### No Pigs with Swine Flu

No reports of U.S. pigs having the current swine flu virus, known as H1N1 (currently causing illness in humans), have been made, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Still, Purdue's Amass says pork producers should take the suggested precautionary measures to protect their herds from being infected with any flu virus. The USDA, as well, has put U.S. pork producers on a high alert for safety.

### Pet Pigs

If you have pigs as pets, the same precautions apply.

Pig owners--or prospective pig owners--according to the USDA, should:

Learn the warning signs of swine flu and if your pig is showing any of these signs, call your veterinarian.

Buy your animals from reputable sources and ensure that you have documentation of your new pet's origin.

Have new animals checked by a veterinarian.

Keep your pigs and areas around them clean.

### If You Eat Pork: No Worries

If you are a consumer of pork--or a farmer who has encountered consumers with questions about eating pork--Purdue University nutrition specialist Melissa Maulding says there is no risk to the food supply.

Because the flu virus is not a food-borne pathogen, you cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products, she says.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Agriculture also have reported that



influenza is not passed through food.

Instead, pork consumers should simply follow the normal pork cooking guidelines, says the USDA:

Properly cook pork to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F kills all viruses

Prevent cross-contamination between raw and cooked food by washing hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw pork

Keep raw pork away from other foods

After cutting raw meat, wash cutting board, knife, and countertops with hot, soapy water

Sanitize cutting boards by using a solution of 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water

More Swine Flu Information

To stay up-to-date on the swine flu situation, here are some places to obtain information:

For more information about swine flu and biosecurity measures, contact Amass at 765-494-8052, [amass@purdue.edu](mailto:amass@purdue.edu)

[World Health Organization \(PDF\)](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)