

## Samples taken from wild pig carcass test positive for ASF virus

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (May 30) announced that samples taken from a wild pig carcass under the surveillance programme for African swine fever (ASF) have tested positive for the ASF virus.

A debilitated wild pig was found in the area near Tai Lam Wu, Sai Kung, by AFCD staff, while following up on a wild pig sighting report from a member of the public recently. The wild pig subsequently died and samples were collected by the AFCD from the wild pig carcass for testing. Results are positive for the ASF virus. The AFCD will report the findings to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and continue to monitor any wild pig deaths that warrant attention, and maintain surveillance in the wild pig population.

There is one pig farm located within three kilometres of Tai Lam Wu, Sai Kung. The AFCD will arrange veterinary inspection to this farm and follow up if necessary. At the moment, no pig farms are found affected by this case. All local pig farmers have been immediately notified about the case and have been advised to enhance farm biosecurity to prevent intrusion of wild pigs and introduction of the ASF virus into their farms. Local pig farmers are also reminded to notify the AFCD if their pigs show any health issues. The AFCD has been closely monitoring the health condition of pigs on all local pig farms and samples will be collected for testing if necessary.

An AFCD spokesman said, "ASF is a highly contagious disease affecting domestic and wild pigs. However, it is not a zoonotic disease and does not infect humans and hence does not cause any food safety risk. Well-cooked pork is safe for consumption. The case will not affect the supply of live pigs to the local market."

The spokesman stressed that for personal safety and prevention of foods contaminated with the ASF virus to be introduced to wild pigs, members of the public should keep away from them. Do not feed any wildlife, including wild pigs, and put garbage in lidded bins. If any dead wild pig is found, please report via 1823.

With a view to strengthening the surveillance of ASF on local wild pigs, the AFCD has been working with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on a surveillance programme for ASF since late 2019. This has involved testing of the ASF virus in wild pig carcasses reported by the FEHD. The programme includes the New Territories and Kowloon. Other areas found with a large number of wild pig deaths are also included. To enable early detection, samples collected from humanely dispatched wild pigs are also tested for the ASF virus.