

Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, regarding an African Swine Fever laboratory test result at the Central Government Offices yesterday evening (May 31):

Reporter: Professor Chan, can you talk about the number of pigs to be culled at the slaughterhouse? Last time, all the pigs were culled and generate strong opposition. This time, you are going to cull all the pigs again. So have you reach a consensus with the traders? Have you come up with other contingency measures in response to other future incidents? For example, are you going to inspect all the pigs waiting to be culled at the slaughterhouse?

Secretary for Food and Health: This time, we will be culling about 4 700 pigs. Actually, since the last incident of African Swine Fever (SWF), we have enhanced our surveillance at the boundary. For example, at the Man Kam To Checkpoint, we actually check all the pigs before coming in. Also, when pig trucks arriving at the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse, our veterinarians will check all the pigs before they go into the slaughterhouse. As you may all know, ASF has an incubation period of four to 19 days, so there is a possibility that some of the symptoms may not have exhibited even upon checking.

Reporter: Have you reached a consensus with the traders?

Secretary for Food and Health: As I have said earlier, the culling of pigs after we have found a positive sample of SWF is an international practice. We have tried, even last time, to explain to the traders that it is the measure to protect everybody, and that it is an international practice. It is not a matter of consensus. It is a matter of following international practice. It is to protect the public and ensure that we should have the supply of pork as soon as possible and that the disease does not transmit to the local community.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)