

Wild pig carcass samples test positive for ASF virus

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (September 3) announced that samples taken from a wild pig carcass had tested positive for African Swine Fever (ASF) virus under the surveillance programme for ASF. It is the first case of ASF detected in the wild pig population in Hong Kong.

In light of the recent abnormal wild pig deaths in the Siu Sai Wan area on Hong Kong Island, the AFCD arranged the wild pig carcass which was found at Cape Collinson Path to undergo laboratory tests. Samples taken from the carcass have tested positive for ASF virus. No other abnormal deaths have been observed in other areas in Hong Kong so far. The AFCD will continue to monitor for any abnormal deaths, and maintain surveillance in the wild pig population.

Currently, no pig farms are affected in relation to this case. There are no pig farms on Hong Kong Island. The AFCD has notified all local pig farmers about the case immediately and they have been advised to enhance farm biosecurity to prevent intrusion of wild pigs and introduction of ASF virus into the farm. Local pig farmers are also reminded to notify the AFCD if their pigs show any abnormal health conditions. The AFCD has been closely monitoring the animal health conditions in all local pig farms and samples will be collected for ASF testing as 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, hence does not cause any food safety risk. Well-cooked pork is safe for consumption. The case will not affect the supply of fresh pork to the market."

The spokesman stressed that for personal safety and to prevent introduction of ASF virus contaminated foods to wild pigs, the members of the public should keep away from them. Do not feed any wildlife, including wild pigs. Any garbage located outdoor should be kept tightly in closed containers. If members of the public notice any dead wild pig, 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 ASF virus in wild pig carcass found and reported by the FEHD. The programme includes the New Territories and Kowloon. Other areas with a large number of wild pig carcasses with abnormal death are also included. In order to aid in early detection, samples collected from wild pigs of the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme are also tested for ASF.