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6855	19.07.2022	20.07.2022	Kerala	www.thehindu.com/English https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/african-swine-fever-outbreak-may-hit-pig-farming/article65658143.ece
Title:	African swine fever outbreak may hit pig farming, Kerala			
Action By CSU, IDSP –NCDC	Information communicated to SSU- Kerala			

As no vaccine is available, preventive measures should be tightened

An outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) may hit pig farming, one of the emerging and profitable ventures in the livestock sector.

North-eastern States are reeling under the threat of the disease. The Union and State governments have enforced strict control on the trade of pigs, piglets, and pork products as part of containment measures.

Classical swine fever had been reported even before. But strategic vaccination can prevent the disease. But the current outbreak of African swine fever may affect the pig population as no vaccine is available, according to experts.

Prevention is the only measure as there is no effective vaccine for the disease, says A.P. Usha, Director of Farms, Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVASU).

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

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“It is caused by a DNA virus and chances of mortality are almost 100%. Inter-State trade of pig and pig products should be strictly stopped. Infection can be caused even from frozen meat. Chances of infection should be prevented by chemically disinfecting pig farms. Biosecurity measures should be adopted,” she says.

The university and the Animal Husbandry department have been providing awareness classes for farmers on prevention measures. It is difficult to identify African swine fever from classical swine fever as symptoms are almost similar, says Dr. Usha. Though no cases have been confirmed so far in the State, informal reports are coming from some areas, she says.

Though ASF is not zoonotic, it will affect profit. Movement of pigs and pork-related manure has already been controlled. In case of wide infection culling is the only possible way, which will cause huge loss for farmers, says B. Suni, head of the Veterinary Public Health Department, KVASU.

“Across the world, the largest consumed meat is pork. However, in India pork production is only 1.7 % of the total meat production. Consumption of pork is only 2.95 lakh tonnes in India in 2022. North-eastern States consume more pork compared to other States. But domestic production is unable to meet the growing demand,” says T.P. Sethumadhavan, former Director of Entrepreneurship, KVASU.

“Productivity of local pig varieties is less when compared to cross breeds or exotic varieties. Large White, Duroc, and Landrace are the exotic varieties more prevalent in the country. Scarcity of piglets exists in all the States,” he says.

Recent trends reveal that consumption of pork is increasing in the country. In India, gradually, the trend is moving towards a global consumption pattern taking into account geopolitical situation.

Pig production has a lot of challenges in India such as scarcity of superior germplasm, low productivity, conservation of local varieties of pigs, and increasing cost of production. Issues in processing and value-addition, emergence of viral diseases, and waste management add to the woes, Dr. Sethumadhavan says.

When the country is trying to strengthen pig production taking into account nutritional, food security and livelihood issues, the outbreak of African swine fever may affect the Indian pig industry.

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